

Halton Borough Council

Draft Design of New Residential Development

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Public Consultation
Month & Year

Presented for public consultation
between date and date

to:
Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Contents

1 Summary and outcomes

- Non-technical summary
- Statement on the difference the process has made
- How to comment on the report

2 Sustainability appraisal rationale

- Approach adopted to the SA
- When the SA was carried out?
- Who carried out the SA?
- Who was consulted, when and how?

3 Background

- Purpose of the SA process and the SA Report
- Purpose of draft Design of New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive/Regulations

4 Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

- Links to other strategies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives
- Description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline
- Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data
- The SA framework, including objectives, targets and indicators
- Main social, environmental and economic issues and problems identified

5 Plan issues and options

- Main strategic options

considered and how they were identified

- How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in comparing the options and choosing the preferred option.
- Other options considered, and why these were rejected
- Proposed mitigation measures

6 Assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the draft Design of New Residential Development SPD.

- Significant social, environmental and economic effects of the draft SPD
- Consideration of social, environmental and economic problems in developing the draft SPD
- Proposed mitigation measures
- Uncertainties and risks

7 Implementation

- Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level
- Proposals for monitoring

Appendices

- A Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF)
- B Statement of Consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Assessment (SA) process
- C SA of the Design of New Residential Development SPD - Determination Statement
- D Testing the purpose of the SPD against the SAF

- E Options considered for delivering the purpose of proposed SPD
- F Further Information

1 Summary and outcomes

Non-technical summary

1.1 This document contains the information relating to the appraisal of the draft Design of New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation to how it contributes to meeting environmental, social and economic objectives. Put simpler, this document assesses how the SPD contributes towards achieving development that ensures a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The technical name for this document is a Sustainability Appraisal or SA for short. The SA is required to be produced because of new government guidance and legislation relating to the planning system.

1.2 The objectives that are used to test whether the Design of New Residential Development SPD contributes towards achieving sustainability have been taken from the information gathered during the production of the Core Strategy SA and from other documents that identify the sustainability priorities of the local community. The main source of these objectives is the Community Strategy, produced by the Halton Strategic Partnership in consultation with the people of Halton, which was based on a new State of the Borough Report and a telephone survey of residents.

1.3 The objectives that are used to test the sustainability of the SPD

are set out in a table (Appendix A), this table is called the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). This table sets out how the Council will measure each of the objectives to see if quality of life in Halton is improving. Earlier this year, in advance of producing the full SA, the Council asked a number of bodies if they agreed with the objectives that we included in the SAF. These bodies agreed with us, all their comments and how the Council responded is set out in Appendix B.

1.4 At the same time as asking these bodies about the SAF, we also asked if they agreed with us if we needed to produce a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) of the SPD. The SEA is like an SA but looks in more detail at the effects that the SPD could have on the environment. SEA is required by a European Directive on plans and programs that could have a significant effect on the environment. The Council made an initial screening of whether a full SEA was needed to be produced, and decided it was not. The bodies agreed with us. This decision has been set out in the Design of New Residential Development SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.

1.5 The Council then tested the draft SPD against the objectives in SAF, to appraise if the SPD contributes to achieving sustainability. This is set out in a table (Appendix D). The appraisal recognises that the

SPD is supplementary policy and will not make dramatic changes to the way that we live, but will make small changes to the design of new residential development. Therefore, the SPD will not significantly affect any of the environmental, social or economic objectives set out in the SAF.

- 1.6 Overall, the appraisal shows that the SPD will have a positive effect upon contributing towards achieving sustainability, but there is one objective that is difficult to test the SPD against because the Council is unsure how the SPD will affect those objectives. The appraisal also tells us that the positive effects will mainly only be seen in the longer term because the SPD will make gradual changes to places over many years as new development happens.
- 1.7 This SA is not the end of the process, if you think that the appraisal has missed something out, or hasn't properly realised the effect that the SPD could have on a particular objective then let us know by following the instructions in section 1.10 – 'How to comment on the Appraisal'. A final SA, which includes all the comments received on this appraisal, will be published alongside the SPD when it is adopted. Sources of further information about the process and purpose of Sustainability Appraisals can be found in Appendix F.

Statement on the difference the process has made

- 1.8 Although the scope of the SPD is

not significant, it is supplementary policy, providing practical guidance in relation to policies contained within Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the SA process has made a valuable contribution to the process of producing the SPD. Firstly, it focused attention at the pre-production scoping stage to identify the key areas that the SPD needed to address. This was achieved through the analysis of baseline information. This process has helped to shape the purpose of the SPD, which has provided a strong foundation upon which the rest of the SPD has been constructed.

- 1.9 Secondly, by testing the SPD against the SAF it has helped to recognise the limitations of the SPD and how these might be overcome through additional planning policies or by other means (such as the need for better training within the planning section to understand 'design' better). The 'testing' process has also helped create a sharper more responsive SPD focused upon its purpose and contributing to achieving sustainability. The SA process has made a real difference to help ensure a quality end product.

How to comment on the Appraisal

- 1.10 If you would like to make comments on the SA or the SPD, which it has been produced to appraise, please complete one of the representation forms, which can be obtained from places of inspection, from the Council's website or by contacting the

Planning & Policy Division.
Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specific address of the adoption of the SPD and hence the publishing of the final SA. The formal period of public participation in relation to the SPD and this SA, commences on **date**, for a six week period until **date**.

2 Sustainability Appraisal Rationale

Approach taken

2.1 The methodology selected to be applied within this Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been chosen to ensure that the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and the Local Development Framework (LDF) as a whole, is tested against the most appropriate sustainability criteria.

2.2 SA is fundamentally based on an objectives-led approach whereby the potential impacts of a plan are gauged in relation to a series of objectives for sustainable development. In other words, the objectives provide a methodological yardstick against which to assess the effects of the SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF) – as the Guidance refers to it – consists of objectives and associated targets and indicators, the SAF is set out Appendix A.

2.3 The methodology of the SA has therefore been drawn from the information collected during the production of the LDF and the priorities, objectives and targets of other documents such as the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This approach has been agreed by both the Council and the Statutory Environmental Bodies and has been used for earlier SAs, which have assessed earlier SPDs. However, the SAF used in these earlier documents has now been updated using the information

collected as part of the production of the Core Strategy.

2.4 It is our intention that the objectives, targets and indicators that form the SAF within this document will be broadly consistent throughout all future SAs that the Council undertakes. However, as the SAF evolves there may be situations that require the framework to be reviewed. These situations could include:

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that information within the framework needs amending, such as through consultation on this SA Report.

When the SA was carried out?

2.5 The SA process began in February 2007 with the production of the SA Scoping Report; this document was consulted upon between 15th February and 22nd March 2007. The responses to the Scoping Report were considered and have informed and lead to the production of this document. The SA process has been an integral part of the production of the SPD, and has been prepared to enable its publication to coincide with the public consultation on the draft Design of New Residential Development Supplementary Planning

Document.

2.6 It is not now considered necessary to re-consult on the Scoping Report, since the document remains unchanged. Therefore, it is unlikely that any further issues would arise as a result.

Who carried out the SA?

2.7 Halton Borough Council has conducted the entire process of the production of the SA, with consultation at the appropriate stages with statutory consultation bodies (for the SA and SEA process) and other stakeholders as necessary. This approach was felt to be commensurate to the intended purpose of the SPD. Responses to the Scoping Report, particularly those from the statutory consultation bodies, acknowledged the scope of the SPD and did not raise any significant issues that would deem it necessary for the SA to be produced externally / more independently.

Who was consulted, when and how?

2.8 The scope of the SA was formally consulted upon between 15th February and 22nd March 2007. The consultation was targeted at those who the Council felt were best placed to further shape the SA process and the purpose of the proposed SPD. A list of those consulted, their comments and the how these have been addressed in the SA is contained in Appendix B.

3 Background

Purpose of the SA process and the SA Report

3.1 The Design of New Residential Development SPD will form part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF). This document will not form part of the Statutory Development Plan for Halton. To be able to be formally adopted as part of the Halton LDF, the process of forming the SPD must comply with Part Five of The Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Part Five requires the production of a SA for SPDs. The purpose of preparing a SA is to encourage sustainable development, through improved integration of sustainability considerations throughout the preparation and adoption of land use plans and policies.

Purpose of Design of New Residential Development SPD (Draft)

3.2 The purpose of the Design of New Residential Development SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), to provide additional practical guidance and support for those involved in the planning and design of new development within Halton Borough. Specifically this SPD will help to: -

- a Design new residential and mixed use developments that understand their context and embrace the principles of good urban design;
- b Seek the use of quality

materials that respond to the character and identity of their surroundings and reduce environmental impact;

- c Ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling size and type within new development to create mixed and inclusive communities which meet the Borough's housing needs;
- d Create better, more sustainable places where people will want to live; and
- e Secure "sustainable and environmentally friendly new housing developments, including affordable housing" (Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing).

3.3 The geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore borough wide.

Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations

3.4 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004, the SA Scoping Report included a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening statement. The Council's intermediate determination of the statement was that the proposed SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a SEA to be produced. The four statutory agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Countryside Agency) were consulted as part

of the pre-production scoping stage and they agreed with the Council's determination, their comments are set out in Appendix B.

- 3.5 Therefore a formal determination can be made that the Design of New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document is unlikely to have significant environment effects and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This decision has been set out in the Design of New Residential Development SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.

4 Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

Relationship to other relevant plans and programmes

4.1 In producing the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the Core Strategy the Council considered a large number of relevant plans, policies and programmes. However, in relation to the proposed SPD a smaller number of documents with a specific relationship to new residential development have been identified.

National Planning Statements

4.2 **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Creating Sustainable Communities**, states "Planning authorities should plan positively for high quality design." Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context should not be accepted.

4.3 **Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing**, promotes the creation of places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, which are attractive, have their own distinctive identity, and positively improve local character. It also promotes the use of designs and layouts that are inclusive, safe, take account of public health, crime prevention and community safety, ensure adequate natural surveillance and make space for water where there is flood risk.

4.4 **Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural**

Areas, promotes the use of tools such as Landscape Character Assessments, Village or Town Design Statements and the design elements of Village or Parish Plans. It also encourages a positive approach to innovative, high-quality contemporary designs that are sensitive to their immediate setting and help to make country towns and villages better places for people to live and work.

4.5 **Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation**, highlights the need for biodiversity and geological conservation within development.

4.6 **'Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3: By Design'** published by the DETR in 2000 provides specific urban design advice to help deliver the objectives of PPG3. This companion guide considers the principles of urban design and the features of urban form, together with advice on the design and layout of successful residential housing developments, such as understanding character, privacy, orientation and safety.

4.7 Additional good practice guidelines include **'Planning - A Guide for Householders'** published by the DETR (2002). This document states that the purpose of the planning system is to protect amenity and the environment in the public interest. Further advice contained in this

document state that a well-designed building or extension is likely to be much more attractive to you and to your neighbours and it is also likely to add value to your house when you sell it.

Regional Spatial Strategy & Sustainability Framework

- 4.8 The vision for the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (September 2008) is to offer high quality living environments that meet the needs of inhabitants of North West towns and cities.
- 4.9 Policy DP1 sets out the spatial principles which underpin the RSS. These include promoting sustainable communities, making the best use of existing resources and infrastructure, managing travel demand and reducing the need to travel and promoting environmental quality.
- 4.10 Policy DP2 is aimed at promoting sustainable communities by building places where people want to live and work and meeting the diverse needs of existing and future residents, promoting community cohesion and contributing to a high quality of life.
- 4.11 Policy DP4 is aimed at making the best use of existing resources and infrastructure, by directing new development towards brownfield land firstly.
- 4.12 Policy DP5 states that development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel and that all new development should be genuinely accessible by public transport.
- 4.13 Policy DP7 is aimed at promoting

environmental quality. Paragraph 4.10 states that good design, creativity and innovation, are essential to improve the built environment and make better use of land to support sustainable patterns, for example promoting energy efficiency or car-free neighbourhoods. Policy DP7 states that environmental quality should be protected and enhanced by: "promoting good quality design in new development and ensuring that development respects its setting taking into account relevant design requirements, the NW Design Guide and other best practice."

- 4.14 In addition Policy L2 promotes the understanding of housing markets in order to influence across all types, sizes, tenures and values to ensure the needs of the wider population are met. Policy L4 encourages the monitoring of the availability of land for housing, and Policy L5 promotes the provision of affordable housing.

Unitary Development Plan

- 4.15 The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was adopted in April 2005, contains a number of strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part 1 of the UDP. In relation to environmental quality, these include creating a safe and healthy Halton, and ensuring that future development is of a quality of design that enhances the built environment and encourages the use of energy efficient design. At the centre of these strategic aims and objectives is the desire of the Council to create sustainable places that all people will want to

live and work within.

4.16 Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part 1 of the UDP Plan. The proposed SPD is intended to support Policy BE1 General Requirements for Development & BE2 Quality of Design, which state that development must be of a high quality of design in respect of character, layout and compatibility with surrounding uses. Further to this Policy H2 Design and Density of New Residential Development states that where feasible new development should incorporate a mix of dwelling types and sizes, at varying densities to meet a wide range of housing needs.

4.17 The UDP was subject to a SA at two key stages in its production. These were the UDP First Deposit and Second (Revised) Deposit stages. This process has helped to ensure that the policies that this SPD is based upon contribute towards achieving sustainable development.

4.18 On 27th March 2008, Government Office North West (GONW), acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, confirmed the UDP policies that are saved, and those that expire after 6th April 2008. Six policies have now expired, and the remaining UDP policies saved until superseded by policies within the Local Development Framework in due course. The UDP Proposals Map has also been saved in its entirety.

[Community Strategy & Corporate Plan](#)

4.19 The intended SPD will be

produced to contribute to the priorities, principles, objectives and targets of the Halton Community Strategy (2006). This strategy co-ordinates the resources of the local public, private and voluntary organisations towards common purposes.

4.20 Two of the main priorities set out in this strategy cover issues that are expected to be raised in the proposed SPD, within the priority to *Halton's urban renewal* one of the objectives to support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet peoples expectations and add to their enjoyment of life. Within the priority to a *Safer Halton* one of the objectives is to create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents to improve public perceptions and attractiveness.

4.21 Halton Borough Council is signed up and committed to contributing to achieving the priorities of the Community Strategy. The Council's priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan. This plan also has five priorities, including 'safe and attractive neighbourhoods' and 'promoting urban renewal'.

4.22 The intended SPD is being produced to help meet this target and others set out within the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan are based on the priorities set by the people of Halton. These were

identified through community involvement via area panels, focus groups, and a telephone questionnaire. The Corporate Plan was based on the same community involvement and statistical information compiled for the State Of Borough Report, 2005.

Baseline Information

4.23 The baseline information for this SPD can be put into two categories. Firstly, information relating to specific residential design issues that will be covered by the intended SPD; and secondly, other generic sustainability baseline information that is consistently applied as a baseline to all appraisals within Halton and that was collected as part of the production of the SA of the Core Strategy.

Residential Issues

4.24 The composition of the population in Halton in terms of age and household size is also changing, with the following points being particularly relevant for housing taken from the 2001 census:

- The number of households has increased by 3,000 from 45,857 in 1991 (although the Council's own council tax records suggest an increase of nearly 6,000 to 51,000);
- The over 75-year-old group has increased by 17%;
- The average household size has fallen from 2.8 in 1991 to 2.44 in 2001; and
- The proportion of single person households has increased from 22.7% to 27% over the same period.

4.25 Additional Population and housing baseline information taken from the 2001 census is set out below:

Household Composition 2001

- One person households 27.3%
- Couples with no children 16.5%
- One parent families with children 13.6%
- Families with children 30.5%

Housing Tenure

- Total dwellings 2004 51,855
- Private 71.9%
- Council 12.9%
- Housing Association 15.2%

Housing Type 2001

- Detached 19.2%
- Semi detached 33.0%
- Terraced 37.5%
- Other (flats etc.) 10.3%

Generic sustainability baseline information

4.26 The Council has identified a range of generic sustainability baseline information that it feels needs to be considered by all SA applied to land use plans and policies. This baseline information can be found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report. The key elements of this baseline information have been included within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF), which can be found in Appendix A.

Predicted future baseline information

4.27 The current generic baseline information will continue to be used until such a time as it is felt a review of the baseline is required. Situations that may require the baseline information to be reviewed could include

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that baseline information needs amending.

4.28 It is felt that the current generic baseline information represents a competent rationale for assessing the sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area, specific baseline information to assess the effect of the proposed SPD.

Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data

4.29 Ideally the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report and in the SAF (Appendix A of this document), should relate to 2007, unfortunately due to the time it takes to collate data this has not been possible in many cases. As far as possible the most up to date information has been used for each set of data provided.

4.30 The information tables also contain some omissions because, in some cases, it has not been possible to establish the most appropriate targets, figures or sources. Some difficulties in collecting data have also been associated with the reliance on external bodies to collect the data. For example, where external bodies have collected data for their own purposes, in the future the data may not be available, or not available in the

same format, in order to make reliable comparisons. Where possible the Council will look to overcome these problems by including information that is known to be collected by the Council or will be collected by the Council in the future. This may require further monitoring and data collection to be undertaken in the future.

4.31 It should be noted that the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report, represents a 'work in progress' in the sense that it will be added to / amended as new indicators / sources of baseline information come to the attention of the Council.

Sustainability Issues

4.32 In determining an appropriate SA approach to apply to this SPD, it is important to draw upon sources that identify those sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area. This can be achieved by identifying issues that are based upon sound quantitative analysis; and / or involved extensive community participation.

4.33 The key sustainability issues for Halton and the wider area include:

- **Unemployment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Disparity in employment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Access to Employment** - State of the North West Economy

- (Sub-regional Report) (Oct 2004)
- **The need to raise the levels of education & skills** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
 - **The need to foster enterprise and entrepreneurship** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
 - **Reliance on a narrow economic base and low wage economy** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
 - **The need to improve the Economy** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
 - **The need to revitalise the Town Centres** - Community Strategy (2006)
 - **The image of the Borough** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
 - **The need to improve health & life expectancy** - North West Public Health Observatory & Community Strategy (2006)
 - **Long-term ill** - 2001 Census & Community Strategy (2006)
 - **Ageing residents & the need to grow the health-care sector** - Department of Health
 - **Perception of crime levels and fear of crime** - 'Quality of Life Survey' of 1999
 - **Increased demand for affordable housing** - Land Registry and Housing Needs Study
 - **Providing an appropriate and balanced housing supply** - Draft Housing Strategy 2005/06 to 2007/08
 - **Providing appropriate sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers** - Circular 01-2006 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites'
 - **Improve access to Services from the East of Runcorn** - Local Transport Plan 2
 - **Improve access to Services in Widnes** - Local Transport Plan 2
 - **Improve access to Services to those who do not own cars**
 - **Community facilities**
 - **Amount, location and access to Recreational Space** - PMP Open Space study
 - **Population** - Nomis
 - **Deprivation** - 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
 - **Water quality** - Environment Agency
 - **Conserving biodiversity, habitats and species**- Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
 - **SSSI** - English Nature, April 2005
 - **Waste Management** - Halton's Waste Management Strategy 2004
 - **Transport congestion & pollution** - Local Transport Plan 2
 - **Air Quality** - Local Transport Plan 2
 - **Design quality in development** - Housing Audit (CABE, 2005)
 - **Protecting cultural & built heritage** - English Heritage (2005)
 - **Obtaining energy from renewable sources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
 - **Requiring energy efficiency improvements** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
 - **Ensuring the most effective use of land** - Draft RSS (2006)
 - **Water resources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK

Sustainable Development Strategy

- **Climate change** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Industrial legacy** - Community Strategy (2006)

4.34 The issues highlighted blue are those issues which are considered to be of particular importance with regard to the proposed Design of New Residential Development SPD.

5 Plan issues and options

Main strategic options considered and how they were identified

5.1 Three strategic options for delivering the purpose of the draft SPD were considered. These were identified and considered as part of the Design of New Residential Development SPD SA Scoping Report. This approach was taken as it was felt important that before the Council resources were committed to progressing the policy response selected to deliver the intended purpose of the SPD, the option selected was:

- a based on which would address the issues identified in the scoping report;
- b most likely to contribute to achieving sustainable development, and
- c supported by the statutory consultation bodies and other stakeholders.

5.2 In summary, the options considered during the pre-production scoping stage were identified based on the preliminary purpose and geographical coverage of the intended SPD. Significantly the coverage of the SPD is borough wide and does not directly relate to an identified geographical area. The preliminary purpose and coverage were consulted upon, and neither has been amended as a result of responses to the SA Scoping Report consultation exercise. The comments received in relation to the Pre-Production Scoping

Report consultation and the Council's responses are contained in Appendix B.

5.3 The preferred option identified and selected in the Scoping Report is the option appraised within this SA. For comprehensiveness the options considered at that stage in the process are contained in Appendix E.

How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in comparing the options and choosing the preferred option.

5.4 As stated in 5.1 the purpose and coverage of the intended SPD were tested as part of the Scoping Report and have not been amended as a result of the SA Scoping Report consultation exercise. The report included the formal screening exercise required by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations. This exercise made an initial assessment of the characteristics of the proposed SPD, and its (environmental) effects, and of the area likely to be affected by it. This assessment demonstrated that the purpose and coverage of SPD would not have a significant environmental effect.

5.5 This process also contributed to identifying the limited scope of the SPD, that it will only provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process,

which are adopted in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This recognised that the UDP itself had been through the Sustainability Appraisal process. The screening process identified that the purpose of the SPD is to promote sustainable development by creating a better designed, more pleasant, healthier and safer environment. The statutory SEA bodies and other stakeholders have agreed with the Council's conclusions during the screening process.

- 5.6 The preferred option for delivering the purpose of the intended SPD has been established and tested through the Scoping Report, it is recognised as contributing to achieving sustainability and that its scope is only to provide additional practical guidance. This is felt to represent a sufficient scrutiny of comparison of the options identified. It also establishes that the preferred option that has been selected is commensurate to the scope of the intended SPD.

Other options considered, and why these were rejected

- 5.7 This was established and consulted upon as part of the Scoping Report. The relevant extract is contained in Appendix E.

Proposed mitigation measures

- 5.8 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary at this stage in the process, because of the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP.

6 Assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the draft Design of New Residential Development SPD

Significant sustainability effects of the draft SPD

6.1 The Scoping Report, which incorporated the formal SEA screening statement, established that the intended SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect. Additionally, the screening statement established that the intended scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies within the adopted UDP. Within the context of this, an assessment of the likely social, environmental and economic effects can be made to accompany the draft Design of New Residential Development SPD, this is set out in Appendix D.

6.2 The assessment tests the likely effects that the proposed SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives, indicators and targets set out within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). These objectives, indicators and targets have been derived from the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This will ensure that the SPD is tested against local, sub-regional and regional priorities. The SAF was established in the Scoping Report and is

contained in Appendix A.

Consideration of sustainability issues in developing the draft SPD

6.3 The pre-production stage enabled the identification of the social, environmental and economic issues relevant to Halton and to the intended purpose of the SPD, this was mostly through the collection and analysis of baseline information. This process influenced the preliminary purpose of the SPD and the preferred option to achieve its delivery. Additionally, the approach taken in relation to the SA, was also identified. These issues were ‘tested’ and consulted upon through the Scoping Report consultation. The outcome of this consultation led to the production of the draft SPD which has continued to take into account the relevant social, environmental and economic problems that can be addressed through the purpose of the SPD.

Proposed mitigation measures

6.4 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary after the testing of the SPD against the objectives contained within the SAF because the assessment did not identify any issues that could be suitably mitigated for. Additionally, the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing

supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP means that necessary policy checks are in place that afford greater protection to areas such as protected wildlife habitat, which the SPD is supplementary to.

Uncertainties and risks

6.5 The assessment of the likely effects that the proposed SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives (as set out in Appendix D) identified that the effect of the SPD on a number of objectives was difficult to determine. This creates a degree of uncertainty in relation to the effects of the SPD. Additionally, the incremental cumulative nature of the changes that the SPD will make to places is difficult to test and predict against the objectives in the SAF.

7 Implementation

Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level

7.1 The strategy for implementation of the proposed SPD, once adopted as a formal SPD will include Council Officer training in relation to the guidance set out in the SPD. This is to ensure that its purpose is achieved more consistently across the Borough. The SPD will also be actively signposted by relevant Officers to ensure that the general public and the development industry is fully aware of the content of the SPD, and take it into account within their proposals.

Proposals for monitoring

7.2 The objectives, targets and indicators contained within the SAF will be monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. This will bring together the monitored data from their source, such as the Regional Sustainable Development Framework for the North West monitoring report, and collect data deficits where appropriate.

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Economic	1. To continue reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increase the economic activity rate	Social inclusiveness Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage new employment that is consistent with local needs? 	Population in employment and unemployment	To bring Halton's employment and unemployment rates in line with England and Wales rate by 2021.	40% of people aged 16-74 in Halton are economically active and in full time employment, whilst 4.5% are economically active and unemployed. Compared to 40.6% of people aged 16-74 in England & Wales who are economically active and in full time employment with 3.4% economically active and unemployed. (Source: Office of National Statistics, April 2001)
				Job Density	To bring Halton's job density in line with England and Wales densities by 2016.	The 2003 job density, the ratio between total jobs to working age people, in Halton (0.76) is lower than the regional (0.81) and national average (0.83). The 2005 job density in Halton (0.81) is higher than the regional (0.80) but still lower than the national (0.84) average. (Source: Nomis)
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment	Social inclusiveness Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide improved access to vocational training, education and skills for young people? Will it provide improved skills and 	% of 15 yr olds achieving five or more GCSE's at grades A-C or equivalent	Increase proportions achieving five or more GCSE's at Grades A*-C to 60% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	49.2% (does not have to incl. Maths and English) (2005) 33.3% (incl. Maths and English) (2006) 52.6% (does not have to incl. Maths and English) (2006) (Source: Department for Children, Schools and Families)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
			<p>knowledge in the workplace?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide local employment opportunities for local people by linking in to local businesses? 	% of adults educated to NVQ level 2, 3 or 4	<p>Increase the % of adults qualified to Level 3 to 70% by 2010.</p> <p>Reduce the number of adults with no qualifications to 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)</p>	<p>NVQ2 and above: Halton – 54.3%, GB – 61.5%</p> <p>NVQ3 and above: Halton – 33.1%, GB – 43.1%</p> <p>NVQ4 and above: Halton – 15.7%, GB – 25.2%</p> <p>(Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, Nomis, Mar 2003-Feb 2004)</p> <p>NVQ2 and above: Halton – 55.1%, GB – 62.9%</p> <p>NVQ3 and above: Halton – 35.4%, GB – 44.4%</p> <p>NVQ4 and above: Halton – 18.5%, GB – 26.5%</p> <p>(Source: Nomis, Local Area Labour Force Survey, Jan 2005- Dec 2005)</p> <p>No qualifications: Halton – 20.2%, GB – 13.8%</p> <p>NVQ2 and above: Halton – 57.2%, GB – 63.8%</p> <p>NVQ3 and above: Halton – 33.9 %, GB – 45.3%</p> <p>NVQ4 and above: Halton – 16.8%, GB – 27.4%</p> <p>(Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, Nomis, Jan 06 – Dec 06)</p>

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Economic	3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business development	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage the growth of indigenous businesses? Will it improve the number of new, competitive businesses that last? Will it provide or contribute to the availability of a balanced portfolio of employment sites? 	Total number of VAT registered businesses	To increase the number of VAT registered businesses by 15% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	2,185 (2004) 2,305 (2005) (Source: Nomis)
				Percentage of business registrations and de-registrations	To increase the % of VAT registrations whilst decreasing the % of de-registrations	10.8 % VAT registrations and 9.8% de-registrations (Source: InterDepartmental Business Register (IDBR), Nomis, 2004) 10.8 % VAT registrations and 7.4% de-registrations (Source: DTI Small Business Service - vat registrations/deregistrations by industry, Nomis 2005)
	4. To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve business development and enhance competitiveness? 	Gross Value Added (GVA) per head	Sustain levels of GVA at above the regional norm. (Community Strategy)	GVA per head for Halton and Warrington was £17,190 (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2005)
	5. To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide an improvement to one or more of the town centres? 	Footfall within the town centre	Increase footfall through each town centre by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Average weekly footfall within Halton Lea of 292,605 Average monthly footfall for Widnes 595,747 (July – Nov 2005) Average monthly footfall for Runcorn Old Town 187,207 (July – Nov 2005) (Source: Halton Lea – Brandspace, Runcorn and Widnes – Halton Borough Council Footfall Counters)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
				Vacancy rates within the town centre	Decrease vacancy levels year on year.	Number of vacant units in 2005 Halton Lea – 35 Widnes – 4 Runcorn Old Town – 41 (Source: Town Centre Survey 2005, Halton Borough Council)
	6. To improve and promote the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage inward investment? 	Number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions (enquiries that are translated into actual, completed investment or expansion projects).	To increase the number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions.	317 enquiries 42 conversions (2004/5) (Source: Economic Development, Halton Borough Council)
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities	Population and human health, Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the standard of healthcare, particularly for the elderly? Will it support healthy lifestyles? 	Years of healthy life expectancy	Narrow the gap between life expectancy, at birth, in Halton and the national average by at least 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton: Males – 73.90 years Females – 78.21 England: Males – 76.0 years Females – 80.6 (2000-2002) (Source: North West Public Health Observatory)
				Number of people who have a long-term illness	To reduce the % of residents in Halton with a long-term illness to within 1.5% of the England & Wales % by the 2011 Census.	21.5% of residents in Halton considered themselves to have a limiting long-term illness, compared to 18.2% for England and Wales as a whole. (Source: 2001 Census)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage crime-sensitive design? Will it target, reduce and sustain a reduction in crime? Will it reduce the likelihood of violence and antisocial behaviour? 	Recorded crimes per 1,000 population	To reduce number of offences per 1,000 pop.	Halton offences per 1,000 population: Violence against the person 04/05 – 23 Sexual offences 04/05 –1 Robbery 04/05 – 1 Burglary dwelling 04/05 – 4 Theft of a motor vehicle –7 Theft from a vehicle – 11 (Source: Basic Command Unit - Recorded Crime for Six Key Offences 2004/05, Crime in England & Wales 2004/5, Home Office)
				Number of people reporting fear of crime	Reduce levels of expressed fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	16.4% of people in Halton thought reducing crime would improve their local area. Just under three tenths (29.2%) of residents stated that they feel 'fairly unsafe' (17.3%) or 'very unsafe' (11.9%) when they are outside in their local area after dark.(Source: Halton Strategic Partnership Consulting the Communities of Halton 2005, March 2005)
	9. To provide well designed, good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide for affordable housing for local people? Will it ensure that new housing is of a high standard of design and layout? Will it provide safe, secure and decent housing? 	Proportion of different housing types and tenures	To meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.	Housing Type 2001: Detached 19.2% Semi detached 33.0% Terraced 37.5% Other (flats etc.) 10.3% Housing Tenure 2004: Private 71.9% Council 12.9% Housing Association 15.2% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve transport provision and accessibility? Will it provide for local retail needs? Will it improve public access to services and amenities? 	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	To ensure that all new housing development is within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a town centre.	<p>% of housing completions 2004/5 within 30 minutes public transport time of key services: GP – 100% Hospital (Halton) – 48% Primary School – 100% Secondary School – 100% Employment – 100% Town centre – 100% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p> <p>% of housing completions 2005/6 within 30 minutes public transport time of key services: GP – 100% Hospital (Halton) – 21% Primary School – 100% Secondary School – 92% Employment – 100% Town centre – 93% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2006)</p>
	11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace	Social inclusiveness Biodiversity, fauna and flora, Cultural heritage and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it ensure that all people have access to public open space within a reasonable distance from where they live? Will it improve access to natural greenspace? 	Number and area of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	Ensure no loss of LNR (number or area).	10 LNRs covering an area of 142.02ha (Source: Halton Borough Council, 2004)
Number of Green Flag Parks				To maintain and if possible increase the number of Green Flag Parks.	2005 - 5 parks 2007/8 – 6 parks in Halton have Green Flag Awards. (Source: the Civic Trust – Green Flag Awards)	

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected? 	Index of Deprivation	For Halton to become less deprived and to move outside the 40 most deprived districts in England by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton is ranked 21 st , out of 354, in the average of ward scores where rank 1 is the most deprived. (Source: Indices of Deprivation 2004, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)
				Average household income	To increase average household income in Halton to 90%+ of the national average by 2010. (Community Strategy)	The average household income in Halton is £27,898 which is 89.4% of the UK average (UK average salary is £31,200). (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2006)
Environmental	13. To minimise the risk of flooding in relation to both new & existing development whilst, protecting, improving and where necessary, restoring the quality of inland.	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the quality of controlled waters? 	Water quality (chemical & biological) classification of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters and percentage lengths in different classes	To increase the % of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters that classified as either good or fair year on year.	Halton: Biology 2004 Good – 0% Fair – 13.18% Poor – 79.39% Bad – 7.4% Chemistry 2004 Good – 11.0% Fair – 60.43% Poor – 20.55% Bad – 8.02% (Source: Environment Agency)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it ensure that area within Flood Risk Zones 2 & 3 does not increase? 	New development with sustainable drainage systems installed.	To ensure Flood Risk Zones 2 & 3 do not increase.	The Council are currently preparing a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
	14. To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity	Biodiversity, Fauna & Flora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it protect sites and habitats of nature conservation value from inappropriate development? Will it improve the number and diversity of sites and habitats of nature conservation value in the Borough? 	Number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	To maintain the number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	<p>1 RAMSAR – 918.7ha 3 SSSI – 923.99ha 61 SINC – 742.65ha</p> <p>The RAMSAR site is also designated as a SSSI site therefore 918.7ha of the SSSI sites is also contributed as a RAMSAR. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p> <p>It should be noted that the Council will be undertaking Habitats Regulations Assessments as part of the production of the LDF. An Habitats Regulations Assessments is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan on European Sites for Nature Conservation, such as the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area.</p>
				Condition of SSSIs	95% of SSSI land should be in favourable or recovering condition by 2010. (Public Service Agreement (PSA) target)	<p>Flood Brook Clough SSSI - 100% unfavourable recovering (01/04/05) Flood Brook Clough SSSI - 100% favourable (13/03/06) Mersey Estuary SSSI - 99.95% favourable, 0.05% unfavourable recovering (Various 08/02- 03/04) Red Brow Cutting SSSI - 100% favourable (06/01) (Source: Natural England)</p>

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental	15. To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it result in a reduction in the amount of waste requiring treatment and disposal? 	Level and % of household waste recycled	Waste Strategy 2000 set national recycling targets To recycle or compost at least 30% of household waste by 2010, and 33% of household waste by 2015.	<p>During 2004/05, 8885.57 tonnes (13.65%) of household waste arising was sent for recycling. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p> <p>During 2005/06, 8,929.48 tonnes (13.66%) of household waste arising was sent for recycling. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2006)</p>
				Total annual amount of municipal waste generated and % recycle or composted.	Ensure 30% of waste is recycled or composted by 2010. (Community Strategy)	<p>Total municipal waste(04/05) – 65,083 tonnes Total municipal waste recovered – 8885 (14%) Total municipal waste composted – 5957 (9%) Total municipal waste landfilled – 50240 (77%) (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p> <p>Total municipal waste (05/06) – 65,377 tonnes Total municipal waste recovered – 8,929 (14%) Total municipal waste composted – 6,318 (10%) Total municipal waste landfilled – 50,132 (77%) (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2006)</p>

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
	16. To improve air quality by reducing the need to travel and improving choice and use of sustainable transport modes and reducing air pollution from other sources	Air, Human Health, Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it minimise the need to travel? Will it reduce car use and encourage the use of integrated and public transport? Will it improve air quality? 	Number and total area of Air Quality Management Areas and population living in AQMAs	To maintain 0 AQMAs	0 AQMAs (2005) 0 AQMAs (2007) (Source: Local Air Quality Management website)
				Travel to work by mode	To reduce the number of people travelling to work by car or van by 10% by 2011 and by 20% by 2021.	Percentage of people in Halton aged 16 - 74 in employment who usually: Work at or from home – 6.16% Travel to work by: Underground, metro, light rail, Tram or Train – 1.31% Bus, mini bus or coach – 7.12% Motorcycle, scooter or moped – 1.07% Driving a car or a van – 62.42% Passenger in a car or van – 9.06% Taxi – 0.65% Bicycle – 2.03% On foot – 9.78% Other – 0.41% (Source: 2001 Census)
Environmental	17. To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the cultural and built environment and	Cultural heritage and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it safeguard sites of archaeological importance? Will it preserve and enhance buildings which contribute to 	Number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas	To maintain the number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas	Halton has 122 Listed Buildings 2 of which are Grade I listed, 17 are Grade II* listed and the remaining are Grade II listed. Halton has 10 Conservation Areas and the total area is 92.78ha. (Source: English Heritage and Halton Borough Council)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
				Number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal	To increase the number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal	Currently there are 0 Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal (Source: Halton Borough Council)
				Number of buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments 'at risk'.	To reduce the number of buildings 'at risk' to 0 by 2016.	There are 2 buildings 'at risk' in Halton these are Daresbury Hall which is Grade II* Listed and the Undercroft of West Range at Norton Priory which is a scheduled monument. (Source: English Heritage, Buildings 'at risk' Register, 2005 and 2007)
	18. To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources	Water and soil, Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it enable development to re-use brownfield land and convert existing buildings? Will it encourage prudent and efficient use of energy? Will it use water efficiently and with care? Will it encourage the development of appropriate types of renewable energy resources? 	Proportion of housing built on previously developed land per year	PPG3 set a target of 60% of dwellings on PDL by 2008.	<p>61% of new and converted dwellings on PDL in 2004/05 42% in 2004 49% in 2003 28% in 2002 (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p> <p>46% of new and converted dwellings on PDL in 2005/06 61% in 2005 42% in 2004 49% in 2003 28% in 2002 (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2006)</p>

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
				Proportion of energy generated from sustainable and renewable sources	Energy White 2003 set a national target that 10% of the UK's electricity supply comes from renewable sources by 2010, 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020.	Halton has capacity for the generation of 6.5MW from renewable sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomass: PDM (2 10MW) • Co-firing of Biomass: Shell Green Generation Plant (4.20MW) • Sewage Gas: Runcorn CHP (0.26MW) (Source: renewables northwest)

Appendix B: Statement of Consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Assessment (SA) process

Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Design of New Residential Development
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - Statement of Consultation

SA Pre-production Scoping Report (incorporating SEA screening statement): 15th February to 22nd March 2007

Date of consideration of representations: 31st August 2007

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Natural England	6 th March 2007 Email and Post	Paragraph 1.9. We note that the Council has concluded that the Draft SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and that a SEA is not required.	Noted
		Paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5: While Planning Policy Statements 1 and 3 are included, we recommend that reference should also be made to PPS 7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' and PPS 9: 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', both of which have points of particular relevance to the SPD.	These documents have now been considered alongside PPS1 and 3.

		<p>Section 3: Sustainability Appraisal Framework and Appendix C. while there is much that we would support amongst the objectives, including objectives 11, 13 and 14, we would also welcome an objective which seeks to conserve and enhance the character and quality of the landscape. Appropriate design of development can help to achieve this.</p>	<p>Objective 17 has now been updated to reflect this comment and to bring the SAF of this SA document in line with other LDF documents.</p>
		<p>Although we understand that objectives have changed as a result of the LDF process, in the earlier draft of the document that Local Environmental Objective 1 aimed to 'bring about environmental improvements in all areas of the Borough'. This is clearly an aim that we would support.</p>	<p>The SAF has been amended to reflect the issues relevant to the Borough and to the LDF, the objectives are well evidenced it is felt that the previous objective was too wide and therefore difficult to determine- instead elements of this objective are now reflected in the new SAF.</p>
		<p>We also note from the recent consultation on the Town Centre Strategies for Runcorn Old Town and Halton Lea that objective 17 is much fuller than the text included in the Sustainability Appraisal for this SPD. The text reads: 'To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the cultural and built environment and archaeological assets, <i>whilst maintaining and strengthening a local distinctiveness through the enhancement of the character and appearance of the local landscape, townscape and coast</i>'. The addition of the text in italics, which appears in the Town Centre Strategies' Sustainability Appraisals, would meet our concern about the lack of a landscape objective.</p>	<p>Objective 17 has now been updated to reflect this comment and to bring the SAF of this SA document in line with other LDF documents.</p>

Appendix C: SA of Design of New Residential Development SPD - Statement of Determination

C1 Requirements of the SEA Regulations

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004 (from now on referred to as 'the regulations'), places an obligation on the Council to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on land use and spatial plans. Part of this process includes a screening exercise to determine the need for a SEA to be undertaken, by assessing if the proposed plan is likely to have any significant environmental effects. This screening process stage is particularly relevant where the plan being proposed can be considered to be small scale. The Design of New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) can be considered to be a small-scale land use plan.

C2 Screening Process Methodology

The regulations provide a set of criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment of land use and spatial plans. These criteria are derived from Annex 2 of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and are set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations and can be summarised as:

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
 - b The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
 - c The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
 - d Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
 - e The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - b The cumulative nature of the effects;
 - c The transboundary nature of the effects;
 - d The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
 - e The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - f The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

- i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
 - iii. Intensive land-use; and
- g The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status.

These criteria will form the framework of the screening process

C3 Screening Process for Supplementary Planning Document (Draft): Design of New Residential Development

The purpose of the Design of New Residential Development SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), to provide additional practical guidance and support for those involved in the planning and design of new development within Halton Borough. Specifically this SPD will help to: -

- a Design new residential and mix use developments that understand their context and embrace the principles of good urban design such as movement, space and form;
- b Seek the use of quality materials that respond to the character and identity of their surroundings and reduce environmental impact such as through energy efficiency;
- c Ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling size and type within new development to create mixed and inclusive communities which meet the Borough's housing needs; and
- d Create better, more sustainable places where people will want to live.

The geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore borough wide.

Using the criteria in Schedule 1 of the regulations as a framework, the requirement for a need to carry out an SEA on the intended Design of New Residential Development SPD can be determined.

C4 Design of New Residential Development SPD - Statement of Determination

(as required by Regulation 11 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)

Halton Borough Council in consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies (English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency) has determined that the Design of New Residential Development SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects and, accordingly, an environmental assessment will not be carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

The SA Scoping Report, (Incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement), for the Design of New Residential Development SPD was available for consultation between 15th February and 22nd March 2007.

Reasons for this Determination

Using the criteria, detailed in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment the following assessments have been made.

1. The characteristics of proposed Design of New Residential Development SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(a) The degree to which the SPD sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD is intended to be supplementary and complementary to the adopted planning policy contained in the UDP.
(b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	It is intended that the scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process.
(c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	By seeking to improve the design and quality of all new residential development this SPD will help promote the image of the Borough, promote the use of more sustainable materials and hopefully improve the well being of residents.
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	The intended SPD is primarily concerned with improving the quality of the design of the built and local environment. However, promoting the use of more sustainable materials and construction methods is likely to improve the environmental quality of the development.
(e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	There are no direct linkages with the implementation of European Community legislation.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed Design of New Residential Development SPD

Criteria	Assessment
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The probable effect of the intended SPD will be to improve the design of the built environment within the Borough.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed Design of New Residential Development SPD

Criteria	Assessment
	<p>Once adopted as part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF), the short to medium term effects of the intended SPD will be incremental. It is intended that in the longer term the guidance will become incorporated into the mainstream design thinking of planning and design professionals operating within the Borough.</p> <p>As part of the LDF the intended SPD will be subject to annual review and its relevance and effectiveness will be monitored. The LDF system allows for the SPD to be amended, replaced or deleted relatively easily if required.</p>
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The likely cumulative nature of the effects from the intended SPD is improving the quality of the built environment within the Borough to create a safe, secure and pleasant environment for people to live within.
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	There are no transboundary effects from the SPD due to the intended scope of its purpose and the geographical coverage it will have.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant or likely risks to human health or the environment from the intended SPD.
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The intended SPD is not site specific or time constrained. Effects from the SPD will therefore be incremental and Borough wide, although the impact of this guidance will be concentrated in existing and new residential areas, and infill developments.
<p>(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or 	<p>The intended SPD is not site specific. It will not impact upon areas of value or vulnerability as identified in i - iii.</p> <p>The SPD will provide guidance to existing planning policies and be seen with the context of part of the LDF and not part of the Development Plan, which contains policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing the built and natural environment.</p>

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed Design of New Residential Development SPD

Criteria	Assessment
iii. Intensive land-use.	
(g) The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status.	The intended SPD is not site specific and would be supplementary to adopted planning policy. The practical guidance it will contain will be considered in the context of planning policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. Therefore the SPD is not likely to have a negative effect on such areas, but will seek to provide additional guidance on enhancing such areas, i.e. through acknowledging local distinctiveness in the design of new development.

In accordance with Part 2(9) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the Council, as the responsible authority consider that the intended Supplementary Planning Document: Design of New Residential Development is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

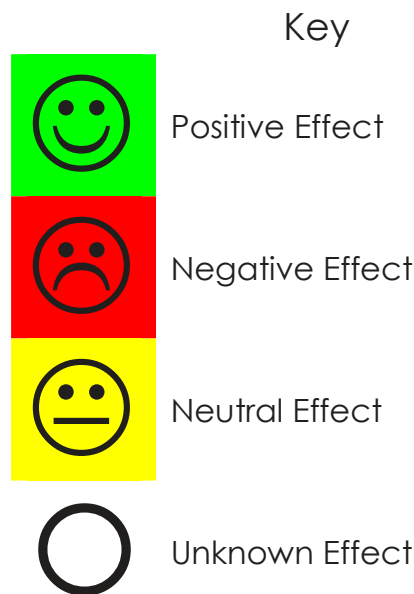
This determination has now been subject to consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies, none of the bodies have disagreed with the Council's determination.

Further Information



A copy of this determination and the accompanying statement of reasons can be viewed or downloaded free of charge from the Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk


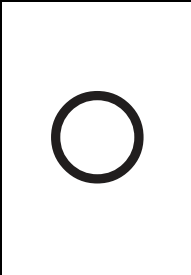




If you require any further help or information, please feel free to contact the Spatial Planning Team on 0151 907 8300 or at forward.planning@halton.gov.uk

Appendix D: Testing the Purpose of the Design of New Residential Development SPD against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework



	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Economic	1. To continue towards reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increasing the economic activity rate		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the unemployment or economic activity rate in Halton.
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning in Halton.
	3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business development		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on sustainable economic growth and business development in Halton.
	4. To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on the competitiveness and productivity of business within Halton.

Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
5. To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)		The improved design and quality of new residential development within the town centres is expected to help enhance their vitality and viability.
6. To improve and promote the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.		The improved design and quality of house extensions should improve the perception of the residential areas of the Borough and should help to improve the overall image of the Borough.
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities	The improved design, layout, and quality of new residential development will improve the perception of residential areas, improve residents living environments and will help to increase feelings of well-being.
	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime	The improved design, surveillance and security of new residential development will help to provide places that will contribute to reassuring communities and reducing the fear of crime.
	9. To provide good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing	The improved quality and design, and the greater consideration of residential amenity will help to provide good quality housing.
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities	The improved layouts and infrastructure promoted by this SPD are expected to increase the access to basic goods, services and amenities.
	11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace	This SPD highlights the need for high quality open space within new residential development and should therefore increase access to open and greenspace.
	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities	Through the provision of a mix of high quality residential development, this SPD may help to contribute to reducing social inequalities.

	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Environmental	13.To protect, improve and where necessary, restore the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters.
	14.To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity		The direct / indirect of this SPD on biodiversity is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that any negative impacts on biodiversity will be mitigated through the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.
	15.To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.		Through the careful design of waste and recycling facilities within new residential development, this SPD may help to minimise waste and increase recycling.
Environmental	16.To improve air quality by reducing the need to travel and improving choice and use of sustainable transport modes and reducing air pollution from other sources		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on air quality or the need to travel.
	17.To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the cultural and built environment and archaeological assets, whilst maintaining and strengthening a local distinctiveness through the enhancement of the character and appearance of the local landscape, townscape and coast		The improved quality, layout and design and the greater consideration of residential amenity and local characteristics will help to improve the built environment and maintain local distinctiveness.
	18.To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources		Many of the principles and policies within the SPD promote the efficient use of resources.

Appendix E: Options Considered

Extract of Pre-Production Scoping Report

As a Local Planning Authority, it is important to consider the options available for meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. The options considered are:

Option 1: Do nothing

This approach relies on existing policy within the UDP and government advice, such as that contained within 'Better Places to Live: A companion guide to PPG3: By Design' or the 'Urban Design Compendium', produced by English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, to help inform planning decisions and applications. Alternatively another agency or function of the Council could produce guidance we can subsequently adopt.

In seeking to achieve sustainable forms of development, it is important that practical guidance is produced that will have sufficient weight to promote better design within Halton. This can only really be achieved if a SPD is adopted. It would be difficult for another agency or function of the Council to lead on the production of what is essentially a planning document. Therefore although this option is rejected, it is necessary to ensure that all relevant agencies and functions of the Council are closely consulted throughout the production of the SPD as their knowledge relating to housing and urban design in particular will assist in creating an effective SPD.

Option 2: Adopt government documents as SPD

Another option is to seek adoption of Government documents as SPD. There are four documents which each (in part) contributes to meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. These are: Planning – A Guide to Householders; Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3; the Urban Design Compendium, and; Places, Streets and Movement: a companion guide to Design Bulletin 32.

It is possible to adopt these documents as SPD for Halton, but firstly it would be difficult to amend them after a consultation exercise; secondly, the combined length of the documents would be difficult to digest by those involved in the planning and design of development, and; thirdly, the documents would not have the flexibility to respond to local circumstances. Therefore, it would not be the most effective means to deliver more sustainable places. It is clearly important that these four documents are used as a basis for developing a specific tailored document for Halton.

Option 3: Produce a Design of New Residential Development SPD

This option is to produce a Design of New Residential Development SPD. This would be produced to meet the specific purpose and objectives of the need for its production.

This is the most likely option to create more sustainable places, although the SPD must take into account national documents that relate to housing provision and housing design.

The intended SPD must be shaped throughout by those who are involved in seeking to meet the same objectives as those set out in the intended purpose of the proposed SPD. It is therefore proposed to progress with option 3.

Appendix F: Further Information

Further information relating to the purpose of the intended SPD:

To access a downloadable copy of the Planning Policy Guidance notes or Planning Policy Statements detailed in Section 2, or for further general planning information visit the Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk or for a hard copy contact the department for Communities and Local Government by phone on 0870 1226 236.

To access a downloadable copy of 'Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3' and 'Safer Places', documents relating to urban renewal, urban design and creating sustainable communities, and general planning information visit the Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk

For information relating to urban design there are several documents available. Design at a Glance: A quick reference to national design policy, Design Review and The Value of Good Design can be downloaded free of charge from the CABE website at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/> and The Urban Design Compendium produced by English Partnership and the Housing Corporation can be ordered online free of charge from English Partnerships at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk Urban Design Guidance: urban design frameworks, development briefs and masterplans, produced by the Urban Design Group, and From Design Policy to Design Quality, produced by the

RTPI, can be purchased from Thomas Telford Ltd.

Further information on the Secured By Design initiative, including details relating to the standards required for a development to receive Secured By Design accreditation may be found at www.securedbydesign.com

For information regarding any development affecting a historic building or conservation area 'Building In Context' will be able to provide advice. It is available from English Heritage and the CABE and can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.cabe.org.uk> or for a hard copy contact English Heritage at: Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2YP, Tel: 0870 333 1181, Fax: 01793 414 926

You can find out about the planning system and how it works at www.planningportal.gov.uk

Further information regarding Sustainability Appraisals and the Strategic Environmental Assessment can be found in the following documents:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities (for land use and spatial plans), October 2003
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, September 2005
- Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, November 2005

Are available via the Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.odpm.gov.uk. This website also contains a general introduction to SEA and SA. The Department of Communities and Local Government can be contacted on 020 7944 4400.

- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Biodiversity:

Guidance for Practitioners, June 2004; and

- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners, May 2004

Are available via the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 08708 506 506