Sustainability Review of the South Hampshire Strategy

SA-lite Summary Report

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LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY, PLANNING AND URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Abbreviations

AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
CLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
GI	Green Infrastructure
HCC	Hampshire County Council
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
PUSH	Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office of National Statistics
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Importance
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems

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Executive Summary

E1   Introduction

E1.1   This Sustainability Appraisal-lite (SA-lite) has been prepared by Lepus Consulting on behalf of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire. It appraises the third draft of the South Hampshire Strategy (SHS, March 2012). This report provides a SA-lite appraisal of the policy options contained within the South Hampshire Strategy.

E1.2   The South Hampshire Strategy is an emerging non-statutory document which provides a framework to guide and direct sustainable development throughout the PUSH sub-region to 2026. The Strategy represents sub-regional strategic thinking and partnership working which will ensure that the needs and aspirations of PUSH local authorities will be positively planned for. The Strategy is a framework to provide a common approach to sustainable development and progress towards shared goals.

E1.3   The SHS includes 21 policies. The policies reflect strategic guidance relating to one or more topics:

- Strategy Policy Summary;
- Employment;
- Skills;
- Retailing and city/town centres;
- Housing;
- Infrastructure;
- Transport;
- Green Infrastructure;
- Gaps;
- Quality Places; and
- Environmental Sustainability.

E2   SA-Lite Approach and Assessment

E2.1   The SHS has been developed in order to facilitate a duty to co-operate. In order to uphold the principles of sustainable development and good practice an SA-lite approach has been utilised. This seeks to ensure that the SHS remains compatible with, and support, sustainable development. The SA-lite approach seeks to convey a commitment by PUSH authorities to promote sustainable development, reflecting the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The approach represents best practice and goodwill rather than fulfilling a legal requirement.

E2.2   The SA-lite approach draws on best practice elements of the SA process to maximise the sustainability performance of the SHS. The SHS has been assessed against a sustainability framework. The sustainability framework has been

developed utilising the sustainability objectives identified through the South East Regional Spatial Strategy and other sustainability objectives identified by individual PUSH local authorities for their core strategies and Local Plans. This approach ensures that the assessment of policies within the SHS reflects the social, economic, and environmental goals and aspirations of the PUSH sub-region.

E2.3   The SA-lite appraisal findings are presented in matrix format. The assessment matrix uses a traffic light colour code system to illustrate the sustainability performance of each policy in terms of likely effect. A commentary to accompany the assessment matrix can be found in the **Technical Report** which accompanies this SA-lite Report. This offers a rationale and transparent interpretation of each Strategy Policy and its likely sustainability performance in relation to the sustainability objectives.

E3   Key Findings of the Assessment

E3.1   The SA-lite assessment has shown that overall the SHS performs well against sustainability objectives. The following policies have been assessed as having a positive and/or neutral effect against SA-lite objectives:

- Policy 4: South Hampshire-wide provision for development;
- Policy 5: Quality places;
- Policy 8:Suitability and safeguarding of employment sites;
- Policy 9: Skills;
- Policy 12: Housing type and tenure;
- Policy 13: Infrastructure;
- Policy 14: Green infrastructure;
- Policy 15: Gaps
- Policy 17: Managing flood risk, water and waste water;
- Policy 19: Building construction; and
- Policy 20: Food production.

E3.2   The following policies were assessed as having uncertain effects against SA-lite objectives:

- Policy 1: Overall development strategy;
- Policy 2: Urban regeneration;
- Policy 6: Provision of net new employment floor space 2011-2026;
- Policy 7: Allocation of employment sites;
- Policy 10: Retailing and town/city centres;
- Policy 11: Provision of net additional homes 2011-2026;
- Policy 16: Culture and tourism; and
- Policy 21: Corporate sustainability.

E3.3   Uncertainty is present as potential impacts of some of the polices are dependent on the location, design and layout of development. Uncertainty is generated by the fact that Strategy policies are dependent on polices detailed within Core Strategies and Allocations Plans associated with each PUSH authority.

E.3.4   The assessment has identified two policies which could potentially lead to significant adverse effects. These are policy 3: North of Fareham SDA, and Policy 18: Energy.   The assessment has identified areas where policies could be strengthened or enhanced to maximise their sustainability impacts.

E3.5   In total nine policies have been identified where recommendations for additional supportive text have been made. These include:

- Policy 2: Urban Regeneration;
- Policy 3: North of Fareham Strategic Development Area;
- Policy 7: Allocation of Employment Sites;
- Policy 10: Retailing and City/Town Centres;
- Policy 11: Provision for Net Additional Homes 2011-2026;
- Policy 14: Green Infrastructure;
- Policy 16: Culture and Tourism;
- Policy 18: Energy; and
- Policy 21: Corporate Sustainability.

E3.6   It has been recommended that three additional policies should be included within the SHS. These include:

- Natural Features - this should include biodiversity and geodiversity considerations;
- Historic Environment - this should reflect heritage features both seen and unseen and their setting; and
- Climate change - this should reflect climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

1.1.1 On behalf of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), Lepus Consulting has prepared a Sustainability Appraisal-lite (SA-lite) of the 3rd Draft of the South Hampshire Strategy. PUSH does not consider that the SHS meets the necessary screening conditions for inclusion under the SEA Directive. Nor do they consider the SHS is appropriate for appraisal under SA procedures. In the spirit of the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF's) commitment to sustainable development, PUSH considers that it is beneficial for the SHS to be assessed from a sustainability perspective. To facilitate this aspiration, SA-lite has been developed.

1.1.2 SA-lite is a streamlined form of SA which illustrates a commitment to sustainable development. The SA-lite process seeks to inform and influence the preparation of the South Hampshire Strategy (SHS) to maximise the sustainability value of the plan. The SHS is a guiding document which seeks to facilitate and represent a duty to co-operate between PUSH authorities.

1.1.3 This document is accompanied by a **Technical Report** which provides baseline information, a commentary on assessment findings and information relating to policies and plans relevant to the SHS. The **Technical Report** should be read in conjunction with this SA-lite Report.

1.2 The SA-lite Process

1.2.1 The SA-lite approach draws on best practice elements of the SA process to maximise the sustainability performance of the SHS. It condenses and streamlines key aspects of formal SA. This SA-lite approach has incorporated the following stages:

Stage one

- Summary baseline and key issues of the PUSH sub-region (see **Technical Report**);
- A review of key plans, policies, and programmes (see **Technical Report**); and
- Review SA Framework objectives used for South East Plan and PUSH Authority Local Plans.

Stage two

- Using information gathered through stage one an SA Framework has been prepared (see **Appendix B** in the **Technical Report**). This reflects sustainability issues and considerations relevant to the PUSH sub-region, and provides the basis for assessment.

Stage three

- Assessment of SHS against the SA-lite Framework;
- Provide recommendations for maximising the sustainability potential of the SHS; and
- Identify monitoring and review suggestions to ensure sustainability considerations remain valid and support plan making in the sub-region (see **Technical Report**).

1.2.2   The SA-lite draws on transferable aspects of current best practice established by SA guidance. Established SA guidance includes:

- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (September 2005): A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive;

- Planning Advisory Service (December 2007): Local Development Frameworks Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal; and

- Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG; September 2009): CLG Plan Making Manual: Sustainability Appraisal.

1.2.3   The CLG Plan Making Manual replaces the previous SA guidance for Local Development Frameworks (Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents). The Manual brings together planning authority experience, advice and guidance in developing sustainability appraisals for local development frameworks.

The Manual is web-based, and can be accessed by following the link below at: http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageId=152450

1.3   Overview of PUSH

1.3.1   The PUSH sub-region comprises nine Local Authorities (LAs) throughout South Hampshire (see **Figure 1.1**). These include six LAs wholly within South Hampshire: Portsmouth and Southampton unitary authorities and the district authorities of Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, and Havant, and three LAs who partially reside within South Hampshire; Winchester, East Hampshire and Test Valley. Hampshire County Council is also a member. PUSH was formed in 2003 as a partnership which collaborates and strives to improve the economic performance and quality of life within the sub-region.

1.3.2   The PUSH region was identified as a key area in the Regional Economic Strategy published by the former South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). The government's closure of the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and the planned revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS's) have resulted in PUSH taking on and continuing to facilitate shared strategic collaboration in future development of South Hampshire.

1.3.3   PUSH is committed to long term, managed and conditional economic growth and regeneration, and to the delivery of the housing, infrastructure, facilities and services necessary to achieve it. In order to conserve and enrich the sub-region's natural and historic environment and enhance the quality of life of anyone who lives, works, or visits the sub-region, the PUSH vision and priorities are:

- to promote economic success by seeking to create a diverse economy where business, enterprise and individuals can flourish, underpinned by modern skills;
- to provide the homes needed in sustainable communities;
- to build more cohesive communities and reduce inequalities, closing the gap between deprived areas and the economic performance of the PUSH sub-region;
- to invest in infrastructure and sustainable solutions;
- to promote a better quality of life by safeguarding our environment and investing in our urban areas.

1.4   How to use this Document

1.4.1   This SA-lite Report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** provides a background summary to the SHS;
- **Chapter 3** outlines the appraisal methodology and SA Framework;
- **Chapter 4** illustrates the SA-lite appraisal and its findings. This utilises a traffic light assessment matrix (see **Technical Report** for full commentary); and
- **Chapter 5** offers a suite of recommendations in order to maximise the sustainability performance of the SHS. Recommendations either involve amending policies or including additional ones.

1.4.2   The third draft (March 2012) of the SHSS was used in producing this document. During the ensuing months, some changes to the policies were made by PUSH in producing the final version of the SHSS, which should be born in mind if reading this document alongside the published SHSS.

Figure 1.1: The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)

2   About the Strategy

2.1   The South Hampshire Strategy

2.1.1   The South Hampshire Strategy (SHS) is an emerging non-statutory policy document which provides a framework that seeks to guide future growth within South Hampshire.   The SHS demonstrates partnership working and agreed thinking between PUSH member authorities. Whilst the SHS is not a statutory framework document, it sets out policies for guiding growth within South Hampshire and will be a material consideration in future planning within the sub-region.   The plan is born out of a commitment to co-operation.

2.1.2   The vision set out in the SHS seeks to ensure that by 2026, South Hampshire will enhance its status as:

- An area offering prosperity and a high quality of life for its residents;

- A location of choice for growing businesses;

- A major centre of excellence in creativity, innovation and technology, enabling smarter and more sustained growth;

- A place where the benefits of growth are shared by all sectors and communities; and

- An internationally known area with a distinct identity based on town world class waterfront cities, a high 'quality of place', and a unique maritime heritage.

2.1.3   To achieve this vision, PUSH has adopted eight key spatial planning principles to guide the SHS and assist in the creation of key themes and policies:

1. Prioritise sustainable development in the cities and major urban areas, and ensure that development elsewhere does not undermine that priority, so as to support urban regeneration, reduce inequalities and minimise greenfield development;

2. Concentrate greenfield development in the Strategic Development Area (SDA) to the north of Fareham and in urban extensions, because large developments maximise sustainability and maximise developer contributions to infrastructure and facilities;

3. Plan for improvements to transport and other infrastructure, and for new infrastructure to accompany new urban development so as to enhance economic performance and quality of life and to ensure that the impacts of new development can be mitigated;

4. Provide for a range of employment sites for all types of business uses especially those, such as marine, aerospace, environmental technologies, and transport

and logistics, in which South Hampshire has existing strengths or growth opportunities, and facilitate a sufficient, suitably skilled workforce in order to foster a successful economy and faster economic growth;

5. Ensure a diverse range of high quality new housing including affordable housing which is focused on meeting the needs of the economy and resident population;

6. Enable a full range of recreational, shopping, entertainment and cultural facilities focused in city/town centres to ensure vitality and maximise their accessibility;

7. Conserve the unique natural features and man-made heritage of South Hampshire's countryside, coast and built environment, as part of the area's attractiveness to residents and entrepreneurs; and

8. Maintain local distinctiveness and sense of place by requiring development to be appropriately located, and to be of a high quality and design so that it creates quality places.

2.1.4   The draft SHS is split into eleven policy areas comprising a total of twenty one policies.

Table 2.1: South Hampshire Strategy Policies

South Hampshire Strategy Policies
Strategy and policy summary
Policy 1: Overall development strategy
Policy 2: Urban regeneration
Policy 3: North of Fareham Strategic Development Area
Policy 4: South Hampshire-wide provision for development
Policy 5: Quality places
Employment
Policy 6: Provision of net new employment floor space 2011-2026
Policy 7: Allocation of employment sites
Policy 8: Suitability and safeguarding of employment sites
Skills
Policy 9: Skills
Retailing and city/town centres
Policy 10: Retailing and city/town centres
Housing
Policy 11: Provision for net additional homes 2011-2026
Policy 12: Housing type and tenure
Infrastructure

Policy 13: Infrastructure
Green infrastructure
Policy 14: Green infrastructure
Gaps
Policy 15: Gaps
Quality places
Policy 16: Culture and tourism
Environmental sustainability
Policy 17: Managing flood risk, water and wastewater
Policy 18: Energy
Policy 19: Building construction
Policy 20: Food production
Policy 21: Corporate sustainability

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3   Appraisal Framework

3.1   Introduction

3.1.1   This chapter sets out the appraisal methodology used to assess the SHS.   This chapter also discusses how the findings of the appraisal have been presented to inform the evolution of the Strategy.

3.2   Methodology

3.2.1   In order to establish an SA-lite Framework which is fit for purpose and reflects the social, economic, and environmental aspirations of South Hampshire, three inputs were used.   These included the summary baseline (See **Technical Report**), Policy, Plan, and Programme (PPP) review (See **Appendix C** in the **Technical Report**) and the review of SA-lite objectives for the South East Plan and South Hampshire LA's local plans. The represents Stage 1 in the SA-lite process identified in **section 1.2.1**.

3.2.2   The SA-lite Framework includes fifteen objectives (see **Table 3.1**).   These objectives are supported by decision making criteria (see **Appendix B** in the **Technical Report**). These are represented as key questions which seek to expand and reflect key sustainability issues relating to each SA-lite objective.   The decision making question help distil key issues relating to the SA-lite objectives and aid in the assessment process.   The SA-lite Framework also is supported by possible indicators with which to help identify the sustainability impact in relation to objectives.   This corresponds with Stage 2 in the SA-lite process.

3.2.3   The assessment of the SHS has engaged a strategic level assessment technique which uses the SA-lite Framework (see **Appendix B** in the **Technical Report**), the SA-lite evidence baseline (see **Technical Report**) and the review of plans, programmes and policies (see **Appendix C** in the **Technical Report**) to assess each policy. Findings of the appraisal are presented in matrix format and are accompanied by a commentary on and summary of identified sustainability issues (see **Technical Report**).   This corresponds with Stage 3 in the SA-lite process.

3.3   Assessment of the South Hampshire Strategy

3.3.1   The SHS includes 21 policies.   These have been assessed against fifteen SA-lite objectives (see **Table 3.1**).

Table 3.1: *SA-lite Framework*

	SA-lite Objective	Relevance to baseline Sustainability Theme
1	Ensure the sub-region reduces its contribution to climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.	Climate change, population and quality of life
2	Develop and maintain dynamic and diverse economies that are strong, competitive, and knowledge based.	Economic factors
3	Promote and support high and stable levels of employment which develop and maintain a highly skilled workforce.	Economic factors, population and quality of life
4	Improve the health and wellbeing of South Hampshire residents whilst reducing poverty and improving social inclusion.	Population and quality of life, health
5	Ensure everybody has the opportunity to live in high quality sustainable and affordable homes which promote and improve accessibility to all services and facilities.	Housing, population and quality of life, accessibility and transport
6	Reduce the risk of flooding from all sources and promote the sustainable management of water.	Water, population and quality of life, climate change
7	Protect and enhance the sub-region's rich and varied historic environment resource and their settings, including buildings, canal, archaeological remains and cultural heritage assets.	Historic environment, population and quality of life
8	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the sub-region's landscapes and townscapes through appropriate high standards of design and layout.	Landscape, historic environment, soil
9	Support and protect wildlife and important biodiversity and geodiversity resources at a range of designation through enhancing ecological and green infrastructure networks.	Biodiversity and geodiversity,
10	Improve the efficiency of transport networks by encouraging sustainable modes of travel and promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.	Accessibility and transport, air quality
11	Reduce air, soil and water pollution.	Water, air quality, soil
12	Ensure the prudent and efficient use of natural resources whilst encouraging the sustainable management of waste through reducing the volume of waste generation and disposal.	Material assets
13	Increase energy efficiency, security and diversity of supply including promoting renewable sources of energy generation.	Material assets, air quality, climate change
14	Support and maintain sustainable, safe and vibrant communities that meet the needs of the local population.	Health, population and quality of life
15	Ensure the sub-region plans for the anticipated levels of climate change.	Climate change, population and quality of life

4   Appraisal Findings

4.1   Strategic Review of the South Hampshire Strategy

4.1.1   **Table 4.1** presents an appraisal matrix summarising the assessment of the South Hampshire Strategy policies put forward by PUSH. A commentary discussing and comparing the sustainability performance of each option in relation to the SA-lite objectives can be found in the accompanying **Technical Report**. This corresponds with Stage 3 in the SA-lite process.

Table 4.1: Summary of the assessment of the SHS policies

Policies	SA-lite Objectives														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Strategy and policy summary															
Policy 1: Overall development strategy	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+/-	+	0	+/-	+
Policy 2: Urban regeneration	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	0	0	+	+
Policy 3: North of Fareham Strategic Development Area	+	+	+	+	++	+/-	0	+/-	-	+	-	0	0	+	+
Policy 4: South Hampshire-wide provision for development	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Policy 5: Quality places	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Employment															
Policy 6: Provision of net new employment floor space 2011-2026	+/-	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
Policy 7: Allocation of employment sites	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+/-	+	0	0	0	+	+
Policy 8: Suitability and safeguarding of employment	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

sites															
Skills															
Policy 9: Skills	0	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retailing and city/town centres															
Policy 10: Retailing and city/town centres	+	+	+	+	+	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+
Housing															
Policy 11: Provision for net additional homes 2011-2026	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
Policy 12: Housing type and tenure	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
Infrastructure															
Policy 13: Infrastructure	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
Green infrastructure															
Policy 14: Green infrastructure	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
Gaps															
Policy 15: Gaps	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0
Quality places															
Policy 16: Culture and tourism	+/-	+	+	+	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+	+
Environmental sustainability															
Policy 17: Managing flood risk, water and wastewater	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+
Policy 18: Energy	+/-	0	0	0	+	0	0	-	-	0	+/-	+	+	0	+
Policy 19: Building construction	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	+
Policy 20: Food production	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+
Policy 21: Corporate sustainability	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-

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

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5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter offers advice and recommended changes to the South Hampshire Strategy in order to maximise the sustainability performance of the Strategy. Recommendations either relate to rewording of the policy, the inclusion of additional supportive text or, the formation of new policies. This section should be read in conjunction with **Chapter 4** in the **Technical Report**.

5.2 Policy Amendments

5.2.1 The appraisal has identified nine policies that should be amended to strengthen their sustainability performance. These include policies:

- Policy 2: Urban regeneration;
- Policy 3: North of Fareham Strategic Development Area;
- Policy 7: Allocations of employment sites;
- Policy 10: Retailing and city/town centres;
- Policy 11: Provision for net additional homes 2011-2026;
- Policy 14: Green infrastructure;
- Policy 16: Culture and Tourism;
- Policy 18: Energy; and
- Policy 21: Corporate sustainability.

Policy 2: Urban Regeneration

5.2.2 The assessment identified an opportunity to strengthen Policy 2 by including supportive text relating to green infrastructure. Urban regeneration provides an opportunity to incorporate a range of small scale green infrastructure features, such as street trees, pocket parks, green roofs, and sustainable urban drainage features. Green infrastructure has the potential to deliver a range on economic, social and environmental benefits.

5.2.3 Incorporating green infrastructure into the policy could be achieved by amending the first sentence of paragraph one by inserting (highlighted bold):

*" The environmental quality of the two cities and other urban areas should be enhanced **through green infrastructure planning** so that they are increasingly areas where people wish to live work and spend their leisure time"*

5.2.4 Policy 2 could go even further by adding a new paragraph acknowledging the opportunities for new and enhanced green infrastructure to support regeneration.

Policy 3: North of Fareham Strategic Development Area

5.2.5   The assessment identified uncertainty surrounding how Policy 3 relates to SA-lite objectives six (flooding) and eight (landscape). In addition, it identified potential adverse effects in relation to SA-lite objectives nine (biodiversity) and eleven (air, water, and soil quality). There are opportunities to expand Policy 3 to maximise its sustainability performance in relation to flooding, landscape, pollution and biodiversity.

5.2.6   Policy 3 could be expanded to make reference to on-site sustainable water management. The North of Fareham SDA is located between the Rivers Meon and Wallington.   The River Wallington flows through the south east of the SDA. Environment Agency flood maps identify flood risk in this location.   There is potential to add supportive text which sets out a requirement for sustainable water management in the SDA. Reference to sustainable urban drainage systems would be beneficial. The commitment to sustainable water management in Policy 17 will help reduce possible on site flood risk and the potential for flood risk further downstream. A commitment to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) will also help. In addition, sustainable water management has the potential to support helping to reduce water pollution. Groundwater protection zones are known to be in the area.

5.2.7   The SDA represents greenfield development.   This will lead to landscape transformations. The SDA will form its own distinctive landscape setting. There is opportunity for Policy 3 to be strengthened through expanding reference to green infrastructure.   Policy 3 currently recognises the need for strategic green infrastructure. However, this could be expanded to incorporate a commitment to ensuring green infrastructure planning and provision is woven into future development planning at this location. Green infrastructure features could be used to soften the appearance of the SDA and ensure it reflects a high quality landscape setting. Green infrastructure features can provide a range of environmental, social, and economic benefits.   The SDA has the opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure features and capitalise on various multifunctional benefits. Policy 3 should reflect this.

5.2.8   Policy 3 has the potential to lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity. Nature on the Map (Natural England, 2012) show areas of ancient semi-natural woodland is located to the north of the SDA. In addition, the North of Fareham SDA Strategic Masterplan Report (URS Scott Wilson, 2010), suggest there are three non-statutory sites designated for their local nature conservation value. Policy 3 should be strengthened to ensure ancient and semi-natural woodland, BAP priority habitat and important nature conservation areas are protected where possible. The Policy should encourage the incorporation of these areas into the development whilst ensuring their protection. The policy could also seek to ensure ecological gains equal or greater to those which are lost are secured. Green infrastructure commitments and benefits could aid in this respect.

5.2.9   Finally, there is opportunity for Policy 3 to be strengthened by including additional supportive text at the end of the policy which supports public transport links via a range of modes of transport including walking and cycling.   Policy 3 should encourage a choice in transport modes and ensure new development is service by a broad range where possible.   This will help support reductions in air quality pollution through encouraging sustainable modes of travel.   There is potential for Policy 3 to draw on the Transport Strategy for South Hampshire (2011).   The Transport Strategy includes policies which seek to reduce car use through promoting public transport alternatives and improve air quality through reducing congestion.

5.2.10 It is anticipated that any adverse effects or uncertainty relating to this policy will be addressed through the SA process for the North of Fareham SDA Area Action Plan.

Policy 7: Allocation of Employment Sites.

5.2.11 Policy 7 could be strengthened from an ecological perspective.   The policy seeks to prioritise the allocation of employment sites within city and town centres before consideration of edge of centres and other locations.   This approach will help protect greenfield biodiversity but may lead to adverse impacts relating to brownfield biodiversity.

5.2.12 Policy 7 should acknowledge the importance of brownfield sites for biodiversity. The policy should include supportive text which reflects biodiversity considerations when selecting employment sites.   A town centres first approach will help protect greenfield biodiversity but does not consider the importance of brownfield sites. Policy 7 should encourage PUSH local authorities to ensure their core strategies and local plans allocation of employment sites assess the relative ecological importance of potential allocation locations on a site by site basis.   This will strengthen the environmental aspect of the policy.

Policy 10: Retailing and City/Town Centres

5.2.13 The assessment of Policy 10 revealed uncertainty regarding the sustainability performance against SA-lite objectives six (flooding), seven (historic environment) and fifteen (climate change adaptation).   Uncertainty exists in regard to flooding events in response to climate change and potential impacts on heritage and historic environment assets.

5.2.14 In order to strengthen the performance of Policy 10, supportive text could be added which seeks to ensure town/and city centres incorporate green infrastructure. The PUSH SFRA (2007) identified areas at risk of surface water flooding in addition to coastal flooding. A number of locations, including Portsmouth and Southampton, have areas vulnerable to flooding. It is expected that climate change will lead to hotter dryer summers and warmer wetter winters. A list of potential impacts identified by the UKCP (2009) is outlined in baseline information within the **Technical Report.** Extremes of weather can lead to a number of issues such as increased storm events, extreme heat and cases of heat stroke.

5.2.15 It is acknowledged that issues relating to flooding will be addressed through evidence, such as the PUSH Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (2009), for emerging lower level plans and core strategies.

5.2.16 Policy 10 could be enhanced by including supportive text which encourages green infrastructure enhancements through high quality design to support growth in retailing within town/city centres. Green infrastructure features can help reduce adverse impacts relating to flooding and climate change such as supporting urban cooling and rain water interception and storage. Green infrastructure enhancements can support and compliment improved retail offer and help provide economic, social and environmental benefits. It is acknowledge that there is no need for additional green infrastructure per se but this policy should encourage strong green infrastructure through high quality design.

5.2.17 Policy 10 can be strengthened by including supportive text to promote and support the setting of historic environment assets. Many of South Hampshire's towns and city centres retain significant and important heritage features. These features add to, and give, centres their individual quality and character. Inserting additional text which seeks to ensure retail, employment, and leisure growth within centres reflect and support heritage assets would improve the sustainability performance of this policy in relation to SA objective seven (historic environment). This could be achieved through amending/expanding paragraph one of the policy which outlines the overall strategy.

Policy 11: Provision of Net Homes 2011-2026

5.2.18 Policy 11 will set out the housing requirements for each of the PUSH authorities from 2011-2016; the numbers were not yet finalised or included in the 3rd Draft of the SHS. Such information is scheduled for the final version of the SHS. There is no policy wording, only supporting text. Neither is there additional text relating to key characteristics and design requirement for housing. The assessment revealed uncertainty relating to all SA-lite objectives. It is difficult to determine the implications of the incomplete policy since it is strategic and details are necessarily high-level.

5.2.19 Policy 11 could be strengthened through the inclusion of supportive text which outlines aspirations and key design and layout possibilities. For example, Policy 11 could include text encouraging high quality design which includes water and energy efficiency measures. It should be supported by green infrastructure networks and promote sustainable modes of transport. Information relating to design qualities would enhance the sustainability performance of this policy.

5.2.20 It is recognised that other policies within this Strategy support or set out some aspects of housing requirements and information relating to design. Policy 5, 12, and 19 are among the key policies.

Policy 14: Green Infrastructure

5.2.21 The assessment shows Policy 14 to perform well against the SA-lite objectives. The benefits of green infrastructure are well documented. Strong links with ecosystem services ensure green infrastructure planning is a vital tool in supporting and maintaining a high quality of life. Policy 14 is an important which will facilitate sustainable development. Core strategies and lower level plans should bring green infrastructure to the fore.

5.2.22 Policy 14 is relatively brief and could be expanded. Policy 14 could encourage PUSH authorities to ensure their core strategies and local plans have strong green infrastructure policies which include guidance and information on:

- What sorts of green infrastructure assets are within the sub-region;
- Why enhance the green infrastructure network e.g. support economic prosperity, support historic environment and its setting, provide areas for wildlife to survive and thrive, support local distinctiveness and landscape quality, reduce the impacts of climate change and flooding, and support and promote health active communities; and
- How green infrastructure can be enhanced and delivered e.g. through developer contributions.

5.2.23 The interconnectedness and multifunctional role of different green infrastructure assets enable green infrastructure to address a range of environmental, social and economic issues.

Policy 16: Culture and Tourism

5.2.24 The high level assessment identified uncertainty relating to SA-lite objectives one (climate change mitigation), seven (historic environment), eight (landscape), nine (biodiversity), ten (transport) and fifteen (climate change adaptation). Uncertainty with regard to SA-lite objectives one and ten related to a potential for the policy to support an increase in car use.

5.2.25   Uncertainty in relation to objective seven and eight related to visitor pressure impacting on heritage features and landscape impacts from congestion and traffic flows. Uncertainty in relation to objective nine and fifteen related to climate change impacts and its associated implications. Policy 16 can be strengthened to improve the sustainability performance of this policy in relation to these SA-lite objectives.

5.2.26   Policy 16 should make reference to ensuring future tourism and cultural facilities and supporting services, such as hotels, are accessible via a range of transport modes. The policy should also advocate that ,where possible, cycling and walking links are maximised between key services and tourism and cultural assets.   Through promoting sustainable transport modes and choices in modes of travel, this will improve the sustainability performance of this option in relation to SA-lite objectives one (climate change mitigation) and ten (transport).

5.2.27   Policy 16 should acknowledge climate change and the need to plan for anticipated increased levels of tourism to the south coast. The policy should include reference to different types of tourism destinations and their potential, such as nature reserves, coastal areas, castles, forts, and leisure and retail centres. Policy 16 should encourage South Hampshire authorities to recognise and support the tourism potential and diversity of attractions in the sub-region. The policy should also seek to ensure that growth within the tourism and cultural industry does not lead to adverse effects on wildlife sites and the setting of heritage features. To achieve this, the policy could include text which ensures future development reflects the sensitivities of key nature conservation areas and heritage features. Careful design and incorporation of green infrastructure into new developments would support this.

5.2.28   Finally, Policy 16 could be further enhanced by including general principles and guidance directed to all South Hampshire authorities in addition to the focus on Portsmouth and Southampton.

Policy 18: Energy

5.2.29   The high level assessment identified potential adverse effects of Policy 18 in relation SA-lite objectives eight (landscape) and nine (biodiversity), with uncertainty surrounding SA-lite objectives one (climate change mitigation) and eleven (air, water, and soil pollution). The potential adverse effects and uncertainty relate to the type, design and location of renewable energy facilities.

5.2.30   Policy 18 is brief and could be expanded. In order to improve its sustainability performance in relation to SA-lite objectives one, eight, nine and eleven a number of additions are recommended.   Firstly, Policy 18 could include information detailing the types of renewable sources that are available to South Hampshire and those that would be encouraged or are less favourable.

5.2.31 In addition, the policy should include text which outlines conditions for which different types of renewable energy proposals would not be deemed appropriate. For example, the Policy could include text which seeks to ensure areas important for nature conservation or high landscape quality will be protected from large scale wind farm development. The policy should ensure South Hampshire authorities plan for renewable energy generation where it is appropriate to do so, whilst ensuring sensitive locations are avoided. Developing criteria for which renewable energy types will be assessed against would help strengthen this policy.

5.2.32 Policy 18 should encourage PUSH authorities to ensure their core strategies and local plans support objectives and policies within the Draft Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (February, 2012). Specifically, the Draft Minerals and Waste Plan has a policy relating to energy from waste recovery (see Policy 27: Energy recovery development in the Draft Minerals and Waste Plan, 2012).

5.2.33 Links could also be encouraged between local plans and the PUSH Feasibility of an Energy and Climate Change Strategy (Arup, 2008). This paper analysed the technical feasibility of pursuing different renewable and low carbon energy alternatives. This would offer additional guidance on implementing this policy.

Policy 21: Corporate Sustainability

5.2.34 The high level assessment shows uncertainty relating to Policy 21 in relation to the SA-lite objectives. This is due to the policy's strategic nature. In order to address this uncertainty and maximise the sustainability performance of the policy, additional text which sets out what sustainability considerations could or should be taken into account should be included. For example the policy could encourage all South Hampshire authorities to develop travel to work plans or identify a suit of sustainability topics which should be considered by PUSH authorities and other businesses. It is expected that Corporate Sustainability will be encouraged through lower level plans.

5.3   Additional Policy Proposals

5.3.1   The SHS has a strong focus on economic and social sustainability. In addition, many of the policies also include or support environmental sustainability. To ensure the SHS is robust and covers a full range of sustainability issues this report recommends three additional policy be incorporated into the Strategy. These policies relate to natural features (biodiversity and nature conservation), the historic environment, and climate change. Incorporating policies on these three topics will ensure the SHS incorporates and addresses a full range of sustainability issues.

Natural Features

5.3.2   South Hampshire has a large proportion of important local, national and international designated conservations sites. These sites include a diverse mix of habitats which support a range of important and protected species.

5.3.3   There is a need to include a policy which seeks to protect and maintain these areas for biodiversity and the quality of life of residents. A policy on natural features, including geodiversity, would enhance the environment, social, and economic sustainability of the SHS. A policy on natural features should ensure that biodiversity is supported and important and sensitive areas are protected. The SHS should encourage PUSH authorities and their partners to safeguard important habitats and seek to maintain and enhance important areas for nature conservation.

Historic Environment

5.3.4   South Hampshire has a rich and varied heritage resource including listed buildings, ancient monuments and archaeological remains. These assets contribute to the character and distinctiveness of different settlements across the sub-region.   In addition, many features support the tourist industry and contribute to quality of life.

5.3.5   The SHS should include a policy which recognises the importance of the historic environment in the sub-region. The policy should seek to preserve and enhance seen and unseen assets and their setting, and ensure they are appropriately managed.   The policy should promote future development which is integrated with the historic environment and supports its setting and landscape character.   The policy should also exploit links with Policy 16: Culture and tourism.

Climate Change

5.3.6   As identified within the summary baseline (see **Section 2.5** in the **Technical Report**), climate change presents a number of threats and implications for the south east. There is health, economic, social and environmental implications of climate change.

5.3.7   The SHS should include a policy on climate change. The policy should address climate change mitigation and adaptation. It should encourage PUSH authorities to positively plan for anticipated levels of climate change whilst continuing reduce their contribution to greenhouse gases.

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