

Chelmsford City Council

# Chelmsford City Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal

Non-Technical Summary to the Scoping Report



July 2015

Amec Foster Wheeler Environment  
& Infrastructure UK Limited



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**Report for**

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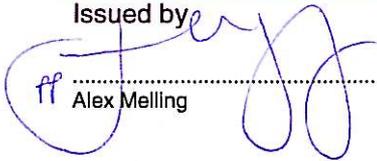
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**Document revisions**

No.	Details	Date
1	Draft Scoping Report NTS	13/07/15
2	Final Scoping Report NTS	21/07/15



# Non-Technical Summary

## Introduction

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides an overview of the Scoping Report produced as part of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the new Chelmsford City Local Plan that is currently being prepared by Chelmsford City Council (the Council). The SA is being carried out on behalf of the Council by Amec Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure UK Ltd (Amec Foster Wheeler) and will appraise the environmental, social and economic performance of the Local Plan and any reasonable alternatives, helping to ensure its contribution towards sustainability.

The Scoping Report sets out the proposed approach to undertaking the SA of the emerging Local Plan. It provides an opportunity for statutory consultees (Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England) as well as other bodies and the public to comment on the scope of the SA and the level of detail that should be included within the appraisal and subsequent SA Reports.

The following sections of this NTS:

- ▶ provide an overview of the Chelmsford City Local Plan;
- ▶ describe the SA process together with how it is to be applied to the emerging Local Plan;
- ▶ summarise the key economic, social and environmental issues relevant to the appraisal of the Local Plan;
- ▶ outline the proposed approach to undertaking the appraisal of the Local Plan; and
- ▶ set out the next steps in the SA process including how to respond to consultation on the Scoping Report.

## What is the Chelmsford City Local Plan?

The Chelmsford City Local Plan will be a single planning policy document that will, once adopted, replace the suite of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that together currently provide the Development Plan for Chelmsford City Council's Administrative Area (the Chelmsford City Area) for the period up to 2021.

The Local Plan will set out the vision and objectives for the Chelmsford City Area out to 2036 as well as the spatial strategy in terms of how much new development will be accommodated in the area over the plan period and where this growth will be located. The vision, objectives and spatial strategy will be delivered through the Local Plan's strategic and development management planning policies and land allocations.

Development of the Local Plan will be informed by ongoing consultation, evidence gathering and assessment (including SA) before it is submitted for Examination in Public. The Council expects to adopt the Local Plan in May 2018.

The Council's timetable for preparation of the Local Plan is contained in **Table NTS.1**.

Table NTS.1 Local Plan Preparation Milestones

Stage	Date
Evidence gathering and public participation – Scoping Consultation (Regulation 18) (Issues and Options)	October-December 2015
Preferred Options Consultation (Regulation 18)	July-September 2016
Consultation on Draft Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19)	March-April 2017
Submission (Regulation 22)	August 2017
Examination in Public (Regulation 24)	August 2017-March 2018
Adoption (Regulation 26)	May 2018

Further information in respect of the preparation of the Local Plan is set out in Section 1.3 of the Scoping Report and is available via the Council’s website: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicy).

## What is Sustainability Appraisal?

National planning policy<sup>1</sup> states that local plans are key to delivering sustainable development and that they must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development is that which seeks to strike a balance between economic, environmental and social factors to enable people to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It is therefore very important that the Chelmsford City Local Plan contributes to a sustainable future for the plan area. To support this objective, the Council is required to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Local Plan<sup>2</sup>. SA is a means of ensuring that the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan are identified, described and appraised and also incorporates a process set out under a European Directive<sup>3</sup> and related UK regulations<sup>4</sup> called Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Where negative effects are identified, measures will be proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate such effects. Where any positive effects are identified, measures will be considered that could enhance such effects. SA will also help to inform the selection of plan options by appraising reasonable alternatives in respect of, in particular, different levels of growth that could be accommodated in the Chelmsford City Area over the plan period, the distribution of growth between settlements and site allocations. SA will therefore be an integral part of the preparation of the Local Plan.

There are five key stages in the SA process which are shown in **Figure NTS.1**. The preparation of, and consultation on, the Scoping Report is the first stage of the SA process (**Stage A**). The scoping stage itself comprises five tasks that are listed below:

1. Review of other relevant policies, plans, programmes and strategies (hereafter referred to as ‘plans and programmes’).

<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 150-151 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> The requirement for SA of local plans is set out under section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

<sup>4</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (statutory instrument 2004 No. 1633).

2. Collation and analysis of baseline information.
3. Identification of key sustainability issues.
4. Development of the SA Framework.
5. Consultation on the scope of the appraisal (this Scoping Report).

Based on the review of other plans and programmes, baseline analysis and identification of key sustainability issues, the Scoping Report sets out the proposed SA Framework to be used to appraise the effects of the Local Plan (and any reasonable alternatives). Following the conclusion of scoping consultation, the SA Framework will be amended to take into account consultation responses as appropriate.

The revised SA Framework will be used to appraise the effects of the emerging Local Plan (**Stage B**). This stage is iterative and will involve the development and refinement of the Local Plan by testing the sustainability strengths and weaknesses of the emerging Plan options. In this respect, SA will be undertaken throughout the preparation of the Local Plan with the findings presented in a series of interim SA Reports to accompany the publication and consultation of the various iterations of the draft Local Plan.

At **Stage C**, a final SA Report will be prepared to accompany the submission draft Local Plan. This will be available for consultation alongside the draft Local Plan itself prior to consideration by an independent planning inspector at Examination in Public (**Stage D**).

Following Examination in Public, and subject to any significant changes to the draft Local Plan that may require appraisal, the Council will issue a Post

Adoption Statement as soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of the Local Plan. This will set out the results of the consultation and SA processes and the extent to which the findings of the SA have been accommodated in the adopted Local Plan. During the period of the Local Plan, the Council will monitor its implementation and any significant social, economic and environmental effects (**Stage E**).

**Section 1.4 of the Scoping Report describes in further detail the requirement for SA of local plans and the SA process including its relationship with the preparation of the Chelmsford City Local Plan.**

## What are the Key Sustainability Issues for the Chelmsford City Local Plan?

Based on a review of other plans and programmes relevant to the Chelmsford City Local Plan and an analysis of the characteristics of the plan area, a number of key sustainability issues relevant to the Local Plan have been identified. These issues are summarised in **Table NTS.2** below.

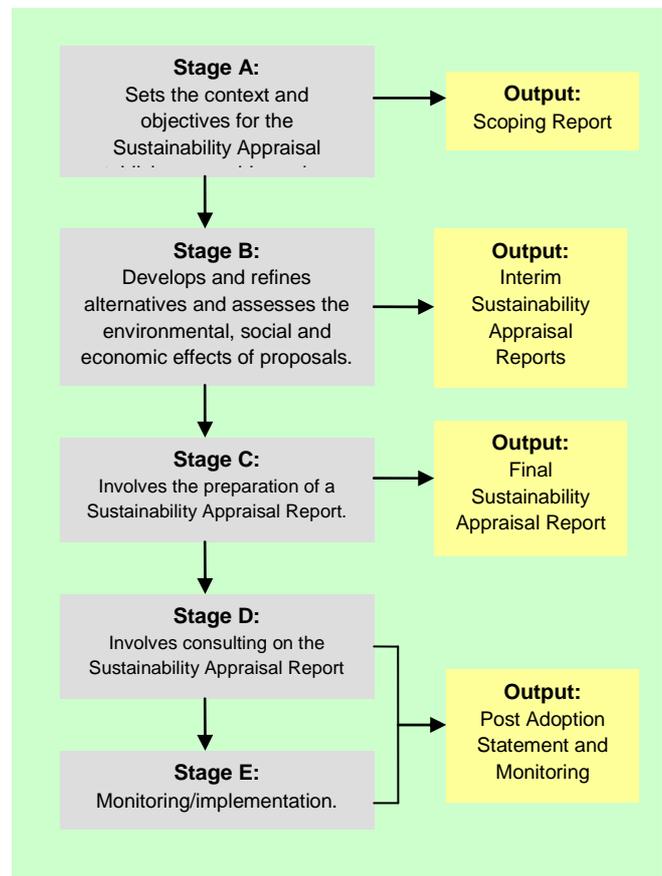


Figure NTS.1 The SA Process

Table NTS.2 Key Sustainability Issues Relevant to the Local Plan

Topic	Key Sustainability Issues
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to conserve and enhance biodiversity including sites designated for their nature conservation value.</li> <li>The need to maintain, restore and expand BAP habitats.</li> <li>The need to safeguard existing green infrastructure assets.</li> <li>The need to enhance the green infrastructure network, addressing deficiencies and gaps, improving accessibility and encouraging multiple uses where appropriate.</li> </ul>
Population and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to enable housing growth and plan for a mix of accommodation to suit all household types.</li> <li>The need to make best use and improve the quality of the existing housing stock.</li> <li>The need to deliver employment sites to support economic growth.</li> <li>The need to address the surplus of unsuitable office space in the City Centre.</li> <li>The need to support economic development in the rural areas of Chelmsford.</li> <li>The need to raise incomes.</li> <li>The need to reduce out-commuting to London for work by encouraging businesses to invest and set up within Chelmsford.</li> <li>The need to tackle pockets of deprivation that exist in the area.</li> <li>The need to maintain and raise educational attainment and skills in the local labour force.</li> <li>The need to maintain and enhance the vitality of the City Centre and South Woodham Ferrers as well as the area's larger villages.</li> <li>The need to address forecast deficits in, in particular, school places.</li> <li>The need to safeguard existing community facilities and services and ensure the timely delivery of new facilities to meet needs arising from new development.</li> </ul>
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to protect the health and wellbeing of Chelmsford's population.</li> <li>The need to promote healthy lifestyles and in particular address obesity and levels of physical activity.</li> <li>The need to plan for an ageing population.</li> <li>The need to address health inequalities.</li> <li>The need to protect and enhance open space provision across the Chelmsford City Area.</li> <li>The need to support high quality design that creates safe and secure communities.</li> <li>The need to safeguard existing health care facilities and services and ensure the timely delivery of new facilities and services to meet needs arising from new development.</li> </ul>
Transport and Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to ensure timely investment in transport infrastructure and services.</li> <li>The need to address congestion, particularly on and around the main A12, A130 and A414 transport corridors.</li> <li>The need to address existing junction capacity issues.</li> <li>The need to enhance the connectivity of more remote settlements, particularly to the north of the Council's administrative area.</li> <li>The need to encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car.</li> <li>The need to ensure that new development is accessible to community facilities and services and jobs so as to reduce the need to travel.</li> <li>The need to reduce out-commuting by creating a stronger employment market within the Chelmsford City Area.</li> <li>The need to encourage walking and cycling.</li> </ul>
Land Use, Geology and Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to encourage development on previously developed (brownfield) land.</li> <li>The need to make best use of existing buildings and infrastructure.</li> <li>The need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land.</li> <li>The need to protect and enhance sites designated for their geological interest.</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to protect and enhance the quality of water sources in the Chelmsford City Area.</li> <li>The need to promote the efficient use of water resources.</li> <li>The need to ensure the timely provision of new water services infrastructure to meet demand arising from new development.</li> <li>The need to locate new development away from areas of flood risk, taking into account the effects of climate change.</li> <li>The need to ensure the timely provision of flood defence/management infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to minimise the emissions of pollutants to air.</li> <li>The need to improve air quality, particularly in the Army &amp; Navy AQMA.</li> </ul>
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to ensure that new development is adaptable to the effects of climate change.</li> </ul>

Topic	Key Sustainability Issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to increase woodland and tree cover to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.</li> <li>The need to mitigate climate change including through increased renewable energy provision.</li> </ul>
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to minimise waste arisings and encourage reuse and recycling.</li> <li>The need to promote the efficient use of mineral resources.</li> <li>The need to ensure the protection of Chelmsford's mineral resources from inappropriate development, in accordance with the adopted Mineral's Local Plan.</li> </ul>
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to protect and enhance Chelmsford City Area's cultural heritage assets and their settings.</li> <li>The need to avoid harm to designated heritage assets.</li> <li>The need to recognise the value of non-designated heritage assets and protect these where possible.</li> <li>The need to tackle heritage at risk.</li> <li>The need to recognise the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of landscapes and townscapes.</li> </ul>
Landscape and Townscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to conserve and enhance Chelmsford City Area's landscape character.</li> <li>The need to preserve and appropriately manage development within the Green Belt, Green Wedges and Coastal Protection Zone.</li> <li>The need to promote high quality design that respects local character.</li> <li>The need to maximise opportunities associated with new development to enhance townscape character and the quality of urban environments.</li> </ul>

The key sustainability issues listed in **Table NTS.2** above have informed the framework that will be used to appraise the effects of the Chelmsford City Local Plan.

**Section 2 of the Scoping Report summarises the review of plans and programmes relevant to the Local Plan that is contained at Appendix B. Section 3 and Appendix C present the socio-economic and environmental baseline conditions for the Chelmsford City Area and its key settlements, along with how these conditions are likely to change in the future without the Local Plan.**

## What is the Proposed SA Framework?

The main purpose of the scoping stage of the SA is to identify the framework for the appraisal of the Chelmsford City Local Plan. The framework contains a series of objectives and guide questions developed to reflect both the current socio-economic and environmental issues which may affect (or be affected by) the Local Plan and the objectives contained within other plans and programmes. **Table NTS.3** presents the proposed SA Framework for the Local Plan.

Table NTS.3 Proposed SA Framework

SA Objective	Guide Questions	SEA Directive Topic(s)
<p><b>1. Biodiversity and Geodiversity:</b> To conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and promote improvements to the green infrastructure network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it conserve and enhance international and national designated nature conservation sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsars and Sites of Special Scientific Interest)?</li> <li>• Will it conserve and enhance Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland?</li> <li>• Will it avoid damage to, and protect, geologically important sites?</li> <li>• Will it conserve and enhance priority species and habitats?</li> <li>• Will it provide opportunities for new habitat creation or restoration and link existing habitats as part of the development process?</li> <li>• Will it enhance ecological connectivity and maintain and improve the green infrastructure network?</li> <li>• Will it provide opportunities for people to access the natural environment?</li> </ul>	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora Human Health
<p><b>2. Housing:</b> To meet the housing needs of the Chelmsford City Area and deliver decent homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it provide a range of housing types to meet current and emerging need for market and affordable housing?</li> <li>• Will it reduce the level of homelessness?</li> <li>• Will it help to ensure the provision of good quality, well designed homes?</li> <li>• Will it deliver pitches required for Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople?</li> </ul>	Population
<p><b>3. Economy, Skills and Employment:</b> To achieve a strong and stable economy which offers rewarding and well located employment opportunities to everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it provide a supply of high quality employment land to meet the needs of existing businesses and attract inward investment?</li> <li>• Will it maintain and enhance economic competitiveness?</li> <li>• Will it help to diversify the local economy?</li> <li>• Will it provide good quality, well paid employment opportunities that meet the needs of local people?</li> <li>• Will it improve the physical accessibility of jobs?</li> <li>• Will it support rural diversification and economic development?</li> <li>• Will it promote a low carbon economy?</li> <li>• Will it reduce out-commuting?</li> <li>• Will it improve access to training to raise employment potential?</li> <li>• Will it promote investment in educational establishments?</li> </ul>	Population
<p><b>4. Sustainable Living and Revitalisation:</b> To promote urban renaissance and support the vitality of rural centres, tackle deprivation and promote sustainable living.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it support and enhance the City of Chelmsford by attracting new commercial investment and reinforcing the City's attractiveness?</li> <li>• Will it encourage more people to live in urban areas?</li> <li>• Will it enhance the public realm?</li> <li>• Will it enhance the viability and vitality of South Woodham Ferrers town centre and secondary local centres?</li> <li>• Will it tackle deprivation in the most deprived areas and reduce inequalities in access to education, employment and services?</li> <li>• Will it maintain and enhance community facilities and services?</li> <li>• Will it increase access to schools and colleges?</li> <li>• Will it enhance accessibility to key community facilities and services?</li> <li>• Will it align investment in services, facilities and infrastructure with growth?</li> <li>• Will it contribution to regeneration initiatives?</li> <li>• Will it foster social cohesion?</li> </ul>	Population Human Health
<p><b>5. Health and Wellbeing:</b> To improve the health and welling being of those living and working in the Chelmsford City Area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it avoid locating development where environmental circumstances could negatively impact on people's health?</li> <li>• Will it maintain and improve access to open space, leisure and recreational facilities?</li> <li>• Will it promote healthier lifestyles?</li> </ul>	Population Human Health

SA Objective	Guide Questions	SEA Directive Topic(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it meet the needs of an ageing population?</li> <li>Will it support those with disabilities?</li> <li>Will it maintain and enhance healthcare facilities and services?</li> <li>Will it align investment in healthcare facilities and services with growth?</li> <li>Will it improve access to healthcare facilities and services?</li> <li>Will it promote community safety?</li> <li>Will it reduce actual levels of crime and anti-social behaviour?</li> <li>Will it reduce the fear of crime?</li> <li>Will it promote design that discourages crime?</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Transport:</b> To reduce the need to travel, promote more sustainable modes of transport and align investment in infrastructure with growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it reduce travel demand and the distance people travel for jobs, employment, leisure and services and facilities?</li> <li>Will it reduce out-commuting?</li> <li>Will it encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport?</li> <li>Will it encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport?</li> <li>Will it help to reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety?</li> <li>Will it deliver investment in transportation infrastructure that supports growth in the Chelmsford City Area?</li> <li>Will it enhance Chelmsford's role as a key transport node?</li> <li>Will it reduce the level of freight movement by road?</li> </ul>	Population Human Health Air Climatic Factors
<b>7. Land Use and Soils:</b> To encourage the efficient use of land and conserve and enhance soils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it promote the use of previously developed (brownfield) land and minimise the loss of greenfield land?</li> <li>Will it avoid the loss of agricultural land including best and most versatile land?</li> <li>Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land?</li> <li>Will it encourage the reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure?</li> <li>Will it prevent land contamination and facilitate remediation of contaminated sites?</li> </ul>	Material Assets Soil
<b>8. Water:</b> To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it reduce water pollution and improve ground and surface water quality?</li> <li>Will it reduce water consumption and encourage water efficiency?</li> <li>Will it ensure that new water/wastewater management infrastructure is delivered in a timely manner to support new development?</li> </ul>	Water
<b>9. Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion:</b> To reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion to people and property, taking into account the effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it help to minimise the risk of flooding to existing and new developments/infrastructure?</li> <li>Will it manage effectively, and reduce the likelihood of, flash flooding, taking into account the capacity of sewerage systems?</li> <li>Will it discourage inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding?</li> <li>Will it ensure that new development does not give rise to flood risk elsewhere?</li> <li>Will it deliver sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) and promote investment in flood defences that reduce vulnerability to flooding?</li> <li>Will it help to discourage inappropriate development in areas at risk from coastal erosion?</li> <li>Will it help to manage and reduce the risks associated with coastal erosion?</li> </ul>	Climatic Factors Water
<b>10. Air:</b> To improve air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it maintain and improve air quality?</li> <li>Will it address air quality issues in the Army and Navy Air Quality Management Area and prevent new designations of Air Quality Management Areas?</li> <li>Will it avoid locating development in areas of existing poor air quality?</li> </ul>	Air Human Health

SA Objective	Guide Questions	SEA Directive Topic(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it minimise emissions to air from new development?</li> </ul>	
<b>11. Climate Change:</b> To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it minimise energy use and reduce or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions?</li> <li>Will it plan or implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?</li> <li>Will it support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and reduce dependency on non-renewable sources?</li> <li>Will it promote sustainable design that minimises greenhouse emissions and is adaptable to the effects of climate change?</li> </ul>	Climatic Factors
<b>12. Waste and Natural Resources:</b> To promote the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover) and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it minimise the demand for raw materials?</li> <li>Will it promote the use of local resources?</li> <li>Will it reduce minerals extracted and imported?</li> <li>Will it increase efficiency in the use of raw materials and promote recycling?</li> <li>Will it avoid sterilising minerals extraction sites identified by the Essex Minerals Local Plan?</li> <li>Will it reduce waste arisings?</li> <li>Will it increase the reuse and recycling of waste?</li> <li>Will it support investment in waste management facilities to meet local needs?</li> </ul>	Material Assets
<b>13. Cultural Heritage:</b> To conserve and enhance the historic environment, cultural heritage, character and setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it help to conserve and enhance existing features of the historic built environment and their settings, including archaeological assets?</li> <li>Will it tackle heritage assets identified as being 'at risk'?</li> <li>Will it promote sustainable repair and reuse of heritage assets?</li> <li>Will it protect or enhance the significance of designated heritage assets?</li> <li>Will it protect or enhance the significance of non-designated heritage assets?</li> <li>Will it promote local cultural distinctiveness?</li> <li>Will it help to conserve historic buildings, places and spaces that enhance local distinctiveness, character and appearance through sensitive adaptation and re-use?</li> <li>Will it improve and promote access to buildings and landscapes of historic/cultural value?</li> </ul>	Cultural Heritage Landscape
<b>14. Landscape and Townscape:</b> To conserve and enhance landscape character and townscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it conserve and enhance landscape character and townscapes?</li> <li>Will it promote high quality design in context with its urban and rural landscape?</li> <li>Will it avoid inappropriate development in the Green Belt and ensure the Green Belt endures?</li> <li>Will it help to conserve and enhance the Coastal Protection Belt?</li> <li>Will it avoid inappropriate erosion to the Green Wedges?</li> </ul>	Landscape Cultural Heritage

**Section 4.2 of the Scoping Report provides further information in relation to the development of the SA Framework.**

## How will the SA be Undertaken?

The Council expects that the SA will appraise the following key parts of the Local Plan (and reasonable alternatives where these exist):

- ▶ Vision and Objectives;
- ▶ Spatial Strategy (in respect of the amount and distribution of development);
- ▶ Policies (including strategic policies and detailed development management policies); and

- ▶ Site Allocations (including strategic sites and smaller scale allocations).

It is proposed that each part of the Local Plan will be appraised using the SA Framework set out in **Table NTS.3**. The **vision and objectives** of the Local Plan will be tested for their compatibility with the objectives that are contained in the SA Framework using a compatibility matrix. The **spatial strategy** (including reasonable alternatives) and **plan policies** (by plan chapter) will be appraised using an appraisal matrix. This matrix will include:

- ▶ the SA objectives;
- ▶ a score indicating the nature of the effect for each spatial strategy option/policy;
- ▶ a commentary on likely significant effects (including consideration of the cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects as well as the geography, duration, temporary/permanence and likelihood of any effects) and on any assumptions or uncertainties; and
- ▶ recommendations, including any mitigation or enhancements measures.

Definitions of significance will be used to guide the appraisal and to determine the type and scale of effects of Local Plan proposals on the SA objectives. The findings of the appraisals will be presented in a matrix.

Following an initial screening exercise, **site allocations** (including reasonable alternatives) will be appraised using tailored appraisal criteria with associated thresholds of significance to determine the type and magnitude of effect against each SA objective. Reflecting their importance to the delivery of the Local Plan and capacity to generate significant effects, **strategic sites** will be subject to more detailed appraisal using a matrix similar to that used in the appraisal of the spatial strategy and plan policies.

**Section 4.3 of the Scoping Report presents in detail the proposed approach to the SA of the key components of the Local Plan including the matrices and scoring system that will be used. Appendix D contains the proposed definitions of significance whilst Appendix E sets out the proposed criteria that will be used to appraise potential site allocations.**

## What are the Next Steps in the SA Process?

This NTS and the accompanying Scoping Report are being issued for consultation from **24 July to 11 September 2015**. Details of how to respond to the consultation are provided overleaf. Comments and responses received on this NTS and Scoping Report will be considered by the Council and used to finalise the approach to the SA of the Chelmsford City Local Plan.

The appraisal will be an iterative process and will involve the development and refinement of the Local Plan by testing the sustainability strengths and weaknesses of the emerging Plan options with the findings presented in a series of SA Reports. The SA Reports will consist of:

- ▶ A Non-Technical Summary;
- ▶ A chapter setting out the scope and purpose of the appraisal and including an overview of the emerging Chelmsford City Local Plan;
- ▶ A chapter detailing the evolution of the Local Plan to-date;
- ▶ A chapter summarising the key objectives of other plans and programmes and socio-economic and environmental issues relevant to the Local Plan;
- ▶ A chapter setting out the approach to appraisal and any difficulties encountered;
- ▶ A chapter outlining the likely effects of the implementation of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives, including cumulative effects, mitigating measures, uncertainties and risks. The reasons for selecting the preferred Local Plan options and rejection of alternatives will be explained;
- ▶ A chapter presenting views on implementation and monitoring.

The Council is currently working towards consultation on Issues and Options which is due to take place in October/December 2015. An interim SA Report will be published for consultation alongside the Issues and Options consultation document and will consider the sustainability performance of key plan options and proposals.

## **This Consultation: How to Give Us Your Views**

**We would welcome your views on any aspect of the Scoping Report. However, we would particularly welcome responses to the following questions:**

- 1. Do you think that the Scoping Report sets out sufficient information to establish the context for the SA of the Local Plan in terms of the review of plans and programmes and baseline evidence and analysis? If not, which areas do you think have been missed and where is information on these topics available from?**
- 2. Do you agree that the main economic, social and environmental issues identified in the Scoping Report are relevant to the SA of the Local Plan? If not, which issues do you think need to be included or excluded?**
- 3. Do you agree with the proposed approach to the SA of the Local Plan? Do the SA objectives and guide questions that comprise the SA Framework cover a sufficient range of environmental, social and economic topics? If not, which objectives should be amended and which other objectives do you believe should be included?**

**Please provide your comments by 5pm on 11 September 2015. The Council encourages people to submit comments via its consultation portal at: <http://consult.chelmsford.gov.uk/portal>.**

**Alternatively, comments can be sent to:**

- By email – [planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk), or**
- By post - Planning Policy, Chelmsford City Council, PO Box 7544, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1XP**

