

## Appendix II: Summary of Consultation Responses

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Comments received in response to the SA Framework Letter sent 15 Nov 2010

SA Framework Letter	Consultee Comments/ Responses	Comments
<b>Environment Agency (09/12/10)</b>		
<b>General</b>	We have reviewed the SA objectives and decision-aiding questions and we are generally supportive of the objectives and questions proposed in sections 6, 9, 10, 11, and 13.	Noted.

**Comments received in response to the SA Scoping Report (July 2012)**

<b>SA Scoping Report</b>	<b>Consultee Comments/ Responses</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Natural England (21/08/12)</b>		
<b>General</b>	We are satisfied that the scoping report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive, as transposed through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. We believe the report provides full consideration of relevant aspects of the environment including protection of the natural environment and the need to address climate change.	Noted.
<b>SA Framework</b>	Natural England particularly welcomes the objectives and decision making criteria in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity, including the protection, maintenance and enhancement of designated sites and species. The AAP will need to include suitable wording to ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on sites of local biodiversity importance. We would recommend that the AAP specifies the requirement for detailed ecological assessment and identification of mitigation where development is likely to have an adverse effect on designated sites, habitats or species.	Noted.
<b>SA Framework</b>	<p>Natural England considers that in general the SA Objectives could be improved by considering the importance of Green Infrastructure (GI) and its multifunctional benefits, which would assist in the delivery of a range of SA topic areas, e.g. biodiversity, landscape, health and wellbeing and climate change. This would assist in ensuring that GI is an integral, cross-cutting theme. Good quality local accessible green space, ecosystems and actions to manage them sustainably offer a range of benefits, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to local greenspace can reduce health inequalities</li> <li>• Increased and improved accessibility to greenspace can help increase</li> </ul>	<p>Noted, however the SA Framework already contains decision aiding questions relating to Green Infrastructure in SA Objective 2 (Healthy &amp; Safe Communities) and SA Objective 5 (Accessibility), these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will green infrastructure (non-vehicular infrastructure routes and links) and networks be promoted and/or enhanced?</li> <li>• Does it enable access to green</li> </ul>

	<p>physical activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact with greenspace can help improve health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Green space contributes to functioning ecosystem services that can have a positive influence on health. Ecosystem services can assist in adapting to the extremes of climate change, e.g. green areas have less heat-island effect than built up areas.</li> <li>• Greenspace can also help improve air quality and respiratory irritants. Function ecosystem services can also mitigate the risks associated with flooding from extreme rainfall events</li> </ul> <p>The NPPF defines GI as “a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”.</p>	<p>infrastructure and the wider natural environment to all sections of the community?</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and Indicators</b></p>	<p>Given the abolishment of Local Area Agreements and national indicators, it is vital to look for alternatives indicators to monitor the success of the SA objectives. Below are some suggested indicators which may be of use as the SA progresses:</p> <p><b>Biodiversity/geodiversity/landscape</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protected species – Quantified data might include numbers of applications where protected species are considered, numbers with conditions imposed to ensure working practices and works to protect/enhance protected species, and numbers of planning applications which result in need for protected species licence in order to be carried out . This will indicate that protected species are being given appropriate consideration within the planning system and begin to build up information.on their occurrence within the plan area. Updated information following the publication of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 is available from our website.</li> <li>- BAP habitat - created/ managed as result of granting planning permission (monitored via planning obligations) and which meet Biodiversity Action Plan targets.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. Rochford District Council prepares an Annual Monitoring report each year, and in preparing the report, considers any recommendations made through the SA process, which have also been subject to consultation. The indicators and targets suggested for the SA monitoring of the Core Strategy are considered appropriate for the monitoring of the Hockley AAP, with additional specific suggestions made by the SA where necessary. For further information on monitoring and indicator s please refer to Section 7 of the SA/SEA Report (Nov 2012).</p>

	<p><b>Green infrastructure/recreation/access</b> Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) provides a set of benchmarks for ensuring access to places near to where people live. ANGSt can be used as an indicator to monitor the quality of green space and is accessibility. There are also other national standards such as Green Flag for parks and open spaces and the County Park accreditation schemes. ANGSt outlines the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace of at least 2ha in size;</li> <li>• provision of at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population;</li> <li>• that there should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home;</li> <li>• that there should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km;</li> <li>• that there should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km.</li> </ul> <p><b>Landscape Character and Quality</b> Indicators/targets could be established from assessing changes in landscape character for National Character Areas (as measured by Countryside Quality Counts data). The Local Authority should also consider the Sustainable Community Strategy and whether any indicators outlined in this report can be used in relation to the SA.</p> <p>Should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment then, in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Natural England should be consulted again.</p>	
<b>Environment Agency (30/07/12)</b>		
<b>General</b>	We are generally supportive of the SA Framework detailed in figure 5.3 which covers a range of environmental issues including green infrastructure;	Noted.

	<p>conserving and enhancing biodiversity; improving water quality; promoting water conservation and supply regime; promoting the provision of SUDS; providing effective wastewater treatment; integrating sustainable flood management; reduce the risk of flooding; and promoting the remediation of contaminated land.</p> <p>We are also pleased that various additional plans have been added to appendix 1 including the Essex and South Suffolk SMP; Flood and Water Management Act 2101; River Basin Management Plan; Water Resource Management Plan; Outline Water Cycle Study; Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; the National Planning Policy Framework; and the Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>We therefore consider that this will provide a good basis to assess the environmental impact of the AAP on the environment.</p>	
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