



Rochford District Council Local Development Plan

Hockley Area Action Plan

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL/ STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF PRE- SUBMISSION AAP

November 2012

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework

Hockley Area Action Plan

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for and on behalf of Enfusion Ltd:

<i>date:</i>	November 2012	
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Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Hockley Area Action Plan

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL/STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRE-SUBMISSION REPORT

CONTENTS

	NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	I
1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
	Purpose of The SA and the SA Report	1
	Area Action Plan: DPD Contents and Objectives	1
	Summary Of Compliance with the SEA Directive/Regulations	3
2.0	APPRAISAL METHODS	4
	Scoping the Key Sustainability Issues	4
	Appraising the AAP Options	4
	Summary of SA Method	4
	Uncertainties and Data Gaps	4
	Consultation on the SA	5
3.0	SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES	6
	Review of Relevant Plans and Programmes	6
	Description of the Baseline Conditions	7
	Key Sustainability Issues, Problems and Opportunities	9
	The SA Framework	10
4.0	SA OF AAP OPTIONS (ALTERNATIVES)	14
	SA of AAP Options	14
	Reasons for progressing/rejecting options	15
5.0	SA OF AREA ACTION PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION POLICIES	17
	SA of AAP Vision and Objectives	17
	Summary of SA of Pre-Submission Policies	17
6.0	SUMMARY AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ANALYSIS	21
	Cumulative Effect of Plan Policies (Intra-plan Effects)	21
	Significant Positive Cumulative Effects of Plan Policies	23
	Significant Negative or Uncertain Cumulative Effects of Plan Policies	23
	Interactions with Other Relevant Plans & Projects (Inter-plan Effects)	24
7.0	IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING	26
	Introduction	26
	SA Monitoring Proposals for the AAP	26
8.0	CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Economic Baseline information	7
Table 3.2: Environmental Baseline information	8
Table 3.3: Social Baseline information	8
Table 3.4: Key Sustainability Issues for Hockley AAP	9
Table 3.5: SA Framework	10
Table 4.1: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection	16
Intra-plan effects: Cumulative summary of Pre-Submission Policies	
Table 6.2: Significant positive effects of the emerging Hockley AAP	23
Table 6.3: Potentially significant negative effects of the emerging Hockley AAP	24
Table 6.4: Inter-Plan Cumulative Effects	24
Table 7.1: Potential Indicators	26

APPENDICES**(Available separately)**

I	Statement on Compliance with the SEA Directive and Regulations
II	Summary of Responses to Consultation
III	New/ Updated Plans and Programmes
IV	SA of AAP Options
V	SA of AAP Vision and Objectives
VI	SA of Pre-Submission Policies

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- 0.1 This is the summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report for Rochford District Council's Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) Development Planning Document (DPD): Pre-submission Document. It describes how the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was used to assist in the preparation of the Area Action Plan, as required by planning legislation and Government guidance.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL & STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 0.2 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs). This requirement is set out in Section 39 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Sustainability Appraisal incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment¹² (SEA), a requirement of European and UK Legislation. Government guidance advises a number of stages of SA work that need to be carried out as a Local Development Document is being prepared:

- Stage A: Setting Context & Scope
- Stage B: Developing Options & Assessing Effects
- Stage C: Preparing the SA Report
- Stage D: Consulting on the Plan & the SA
- Stage E: Monitoring Implementation of the Plan

- 0.3 The SA/SEA of the Hockley Area Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with these requirements for SA/SEA.

THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND HOCKLEY AAP

- 0.4 The Council is in the process of preparing its Local Development Plan (LDP) (previously known as the Local Development Framework), which will set out how the District will develop in the future. The LDP will gradually replace the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan which was adopted in 2006. The Rochford Local Development Plan comprises the following Local Development Documents:

- Core Strategy DPD (also known as the Local Plan)
- Development Management DPD
- Site Allocations DPD
- Area Action Plans (DPDs) for Rochford Town Centre, Hockley Town Centre, Rayleigh Town Centre and London Southend Airport (with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).

¹ EU Directive 2001/42/EC

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- 0.5 The Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) creates the framework for development sites and planning policies in Hockley. It will act as the focal point for the coordination of other public policies and programmes and will guide public and private investment in the area. The AAP sets out a vision for how growth and change can be managed within Hockley and how regeneration of the area might be stimulated through this development.

THE CHARACTER OF HOCKLEY

- 0.6 Hockley is a small town located in Rochford District; approximately 5 miles north-west of Southend-on-Sea, between the larger centres of Rochford, to the south-east and Rayleigh to the south west. The town does not have the same level of retail and services facilities as Rayleigh or Rochford and has been classified as a 'minor local centre'.
- 0.7 Hockley has a centrally-located train station, which is on the Liverpool Street line-providing easy access to London. The linear town centre stretches from the railway station to the junction of Spa Road and Southend / Main Roads. Community facilities, including the library, surgery and old fire station are located in the southern part of the AAP area. The town centre is relatively compact and well-connected to surrounding residential areas.

SA SCOPING & ISSUES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- 0.8 A SA scoping process was undertaken to help ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to Hockley. This included the development of an SA Framework of objectives to comprise the basis for appraisal. An SA Scoping Report was prepared to summarise the findings of the scoping process and was sent to statutory consultees for consultation in July 2012. As part of the scoping process plans and programmes were reviewed and information was collated relating to the current and predicted social, environmental and economic characteristics of Hockley.
- 0.9 From these studies, the key sustainability issues and opportunities for the AAP and the SA were identified, as follows:

Key Sustainability Issues for Hockley AAP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provision of quality and affordable housing to meet housing needs in Hockley.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving connectivity between the town centre and train station.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking account of environmental and physical constraints when accommodating new development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity to improve the public realm by providing a more defined centre as well as through enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities and green landscaping.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The protection of Hockley's biodiversity (Hockley Woods SSSI & LNR), heritage, landscape and character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High levels of car ownership and travelling to work using a private vehicle.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High levels of out-commuting and difficulties in competing with economies in surrounding areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity to improve retail and stimulate the local economy,

whilst recognising difficulties in competing with the retail pull of Southend, Basildon and Chelmsford.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change is a significant issue facing all communities and the AAP will need to consider issues around energy efficiency, renewables and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

SA FRAMEWORK

- 0.10 An SA Framework was compiled and included SA Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified; these are used to test the draft plan as it is being prepared. The SA Framework for Hockley AAP is based on that developed for the Rochford Core Strategy. A list of the SA objective headings follows:

SA Objective headings	
1. Balanced Communities	8. Landscape & Townscape
2. Healthy & Safe Communities	9. Climate Change & Energy
3. Housing	10. Water
4. Economy & Employment	11. Land & Soil
5. Accessibility	12. Air Quality
6. Biodiversity	13. Sustainable Design & Construction
7. Cultural Heritage	

SA OF THE HOCKLEY AAP

- 0.11 Each stage of the preparation of the AAP was appraised using the SA Objectives. Where significant negative effects, including environmental effects, were predicted, the SA sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made. The appraisal recognised 6 categories of predicted effects, as illustrated in the following key.

Categories of sustainability effects	
Colour	Impact
++	Major Positive
+	Positive
0	No Impact
?	Uncertain
-	Negative
--	Major Negative

CONSIDERATION AND APPRAISAL OF ALTERNATIVES

- 0.12 The SA of the options (alternatives) was undertaken in July 2012. The purpose and key objectives of the AAP have been set at a higher level; therefore it was considered that the alternatives available to the plan-maker in preparing the AAP were limited to the level and type of intervention/development that should be accommodated in the Town Centre. Three spatial options were considered:
- Spatial Option 1: A low level of intervention
 - Spatial Option 2: A medium level of intervention, with increased housing, retail and office provision
 - Spatial Options 3: A high level of intervention, similar to Option 2, but with a higher level again of housing and office provision.
- 0.13 A further 3 options were considered around more detailed transport interventions; looking at Spa roundabout, on-street parking provision and drop-off provision at Hockley Railway station.
- 0.14 For social and economic reasons, the SA found that spatial options 2 and 3 would have the most sustainability benefits, but it also recognised that these 2 options were more likely to cause increased disruption (noise and congestion) and air pollution during the construction phase of development. The SA includes recommendations to mitigate any adverse impacts and also considered the various transport options in more detail. Alongside consultation responses, the Council considered the SA findings in its decision making and subsequently chose an amalgamation of spatial options 2 and 3.

APPRAISAL OF THE AAP VISION AND POLICIES

- 0.15 A compatibility analysis of the Pre-Submission AAP Vision and Objectives was carried out using the SA framework in October 2012. Overall the vision and objectives were found to be compatible with the majority of SA objectives.
- 0.16 The Pre-Submission policies were subject to detailed SA in October 2012. On the whole, the findings of the SA suggest that the emerging AAP policies will make significant contributions to the progression of SA objectives. Throughout the development of the AAP and the Sustainability Appraisal process, data gaps and uncertainties were uncovered and these have been acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.

SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS IDENTIFIED

- 0.17 The majority of policies were found to have significant positive sustainability benefits. The following table summarises the key positive effects identified:

Significant positive effects of the emerging Hockley AAP	
Key relevant SA Objective:	Positive effects identified:
1.Balanced communities & 2.Healthy and Safe Communities	The AAP will have positive effects on communities through providing a mix of uses in the town centre, including housing, retail, leisure facilities and new public spaces. New areas for recreation and encouraging walking and cycling through enhanced networks and public realm will have positive benefits for health.
3.Housing	Positive effects for housing, including new affordable housing, through provision of housing as part of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site redevelopment.
4.Economy & Employment	A significant positive effect on the local economy is likely through enhanced opportunities for retail, leisure and offices. Increase housing will have positive indirect effects through increasing the use of local service and shops. New employment will be created in the short-term (construction) and longer term.
5. Accessibility	Significant cumulative effects for accessibility are likely through a range of improvements to the public realm, bus services, access to the train station and increased accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
6.Landscape and Townscape	The overall effect on the local townscape will be positive due to increased public realm works and landscaping proposed in the plan.
9. Climate Change and Energy	The focus on improving local accessibility and access to public transport throughout the plan, combined with a focus on mixed-use development is likely to help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions caused by car travel.

- 0.18 Alongside the many positive effects of the plan, potential negative sustainability effects were also identified, although the effect is uncertain at this stage of the assessment and it is considered likely that these effects can be mitigated at a more detailed planning stage. These are summarised below:

Potentially significant effects of the emerging Hockley AAP	
Key relevant SA Objective:	Negative Effects identified:
7. Cultural Heritage	Some potential for negative effects on cultural heritage was identified, with potential for historic buildings along Spa Road to be affected by development at the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. Adverse effects can be mitigated through

	sensitive design and development.
12. Air quality	Potential localised air quality pollution is possible during the construction stage of development, however this can be mitigated through development controls. The plan has sought to minimise congestion and air and noise pollution through having a strong focus on public transport, walking and cycling, however there remains some uncertainty about future air quality, and ongoing monitoring should be undertaken.

MITIGATION, ENHANCEMENT AND MONITORING

- 0.19 An important role of the SA process is to provide recommendations for the mitigation of negative effects and enhancement of the positive effects identified in the appraisal process. In preparing the AAP, Rochford District Council has already sought to address many of the sustainability problems in Hockley, and consequently the majority of the SA findings were positive. A small number of recommendations have been made and these will be considered by the Council in finalising the plan.
- 0.20 Local planning authorities are required to produce Annual Monitoring Reports to monitor the progress of the Local Development Plan. There is also a requirement to monitor the predictions made in the SA. Rochford District Council prepares an Annual Monitoring report each year, and in preparing the report, considers any recommendations made through the SA process. 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 during the preparation of the Hockley AAP. This SA has also made further suggestions, which are detailed in the main SA report.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 0.21 The SA of the Hockley Area Action Plan has appraised the effects of individual policies, as well as the overall effect of the plan, including cumulative and incremental effects. It has also considered and appraised reasonable alternatives to the plan itself; and this information has been made available to the Council to help in the selection of the preferred plan. Overall the SA has found that the AAP will help to resolve a number of key sustainability issues in Hockley Town Centre and will also play a role in improving sustainability in the wider Rochford District. Significant positive effects were identified for communities, the economy and employment, meeting housing needs, accessibility, landscape/townscape, and climate change. Possible adverse effects were identified for cultural heritage, water resources and air and noise pollution but these can be mitigated and managed through further detailed planning, development management policies and monitoring.
- 0.22 The Council has considered the recommendations made throughout the Sustainability Appraisal process, and amended the plan where appropriate.

This has contributed to further enhancing the positive sustainability effects of the AAP.

- 0.23 This SA Report will accompany the AAP on pre-submission consultation for 6 weeks, during which time interested parties are invited to make representations on the AAP or the SA. The SA will form part of the evidence base during the Examination of the AAP and if any further significant changes are made to the plan the SA Report will be updated accordingly. A finalised report will accompany the adopted DPD when it is published.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE SA AND THE SA REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs). This requirement is set out in Section 39 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Local Development Documents must also be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment³⁴ (SEA) and Government advises⁵ that an integrated approach is adopted so that the SA process incorporates the SEA requirements.
- 1.2 This SA Report documents the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment processes for Rochford District Council's Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) Development Planning Document (DPD): Pre-submission Document. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework discussed in Section 3 of this SA Report indicates the relationship between the SA and the SEA; compliance with the SEA Regulations is signposted below in this section and detailed in Appendix I. This SA Report is being published for consultation with the Hockley AAP Pre-submission Document in accordance with SEA Regulations and SA Guidance.

AREA ACTION PLAN: DPD CONTENTS & OBJECTIVES

Local Development Plan

- 1.3 The Council is in the process of preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP) (previously known as the Local Development Framework), which will set out how the District will develop in the future. The LDP will gradually replace the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan which was adopted in 2006. The Rochford LDP comprises the following Local Development Documents:
- Core Strategy DPD (also known as the Local Plan)
 - Development Management DPD
 - Site Allocations DPD
 - Area Action Plans (DPDs) for Rochford Town Centre, Hockley Town Centre, Rayleigh Town Centre and London Southend Airport (with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).

Core Strategy

- 1.4 The Core Strategy is the overarching strategic document of the Rochford District Council Local Development Plan, and sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the District; it is the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2011 and contains a policy relating to the development of Hockley Town Centre, which is reproduced below:

³ EU Directive 2001/42/EC

⁴ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

⁵ Planning Advisory Service (2009) CLG Planning Manual: Sustainability Appraisal

Policy RTC6 - Hockley Town Centre

The Council will produce an Area Action Plan for Hockley town centre which delivers the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents
- Enhanced retail offer for Hockley
- Redevelopment of Eldon Way/Foundry for a variety of uses more appropriate for a town centre location, including residential, commercial, employment and leisure
- A public space within a defined centre
- Improved connectivity between retail focus and train station
- Redevelopment of industrial uses for retail, leisure and residential development
- Green landscaping along Main Road, Spa road and Southend Road to enhance the visual amenity

The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

Hockley Area Action Plan

- 1.5 The Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) creates the framework for development sites and planning policies in Hockley. It will act as the focal point for the coordination of other public policies and programmes and will guide public and private investment in the area. The AAP sets out a vision for how growth and change can be managed within Hockley and how regeneration of the area might be stimulated through this development.
- 1.6 The AAP sets a vision for the settlement's future based on an understanding of the unique context that drives change and development in Hockley. It translates this vision into implementation objectives, policies and guidance that will act as a robust framework for delivery.

Vision

By 2026, Hockley will have a centre that is defined by the high quality of its public realm and the opportunities on offer for local people to access homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services without having to travel far afield. These changes will be delivered in a manner that makes the most of land that has been previously developed, and all new development will respect and enhance the existing suburban, low-density character of the settlement.

- 1.7 The four key objectives that support this vision are set out below:
- 1) Provide greater shopping choice for local people.
 - 2) Identify and deliver environmental improvements.
 - 3) Recycle previously developed land for housing.
 - 4) Protect local employment.

SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE SEA DIRECTIVE & REGULATIONS

- 1.8 The SEA Regulations set out certain requirements for reporting the SEA process, and specify that if an integrated appraisal is undertaken (i.e. SEA is subsumed within the SA process, as for the SA of the Hockley AAP), then the sections of the SA Report that meet the requirements set out for reporting the SEA process must be clearly signposted. The requirements for reporting the SEA process are set out in Appendix I.

2.0 APPRAISAL METHODS

SCOPING THE KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

- 2.1 Enfusion Ltd was commissioned in July 2012 by Rochford District Council to progress the SA work. A SA scoping process was undertaken in July 2012 to help ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to Hockley. This included the development of an SA Framework of objectives (presented at the end of Section 3 of this SA Report) to comprise the basis for appraisal. An SA Scoping Report was prepared to summarise the findings of the Scoping process. This was sent to statutory consultees for consultation in July 2012. Responses to this scoping consultation, and how they were taken into account, are reported in this SA Report.

APPRAISING THE AREA ACTION PLAN OPTIONS

- 2.2 A number of options for future change in Hockley were initially identified through an Issues and Options Document published for consultation in Jan 2009. As a result of responses to the consultation an additional Options Report was produced for Hockley AAP in 2010, which built on the existing evidence base but essentially started the development of AAP Options from the beginning. The options identified in this Report (Hockley AAP Options Report Nov 2010) were assessed against the full SA Framework of objectives with regard to the short, medium and long term effects of the options on the SA objectives. The findings helped to inform the development of the Pre-Submission AAP and were presented in an SA Options Report in August 2012. The detailed SA of options is provided at Appendix IV with a summary of findings provided in Section 4.

SUMMARY OF SA METHOD

- 2.3 The method used for this Sustainability Appraisal of the Hockley AAP Pre-Submission DPD comprises the following elements:
- Identifying relevant baseline information and other plans or programmes that influence the AAP policies.
 - Using the Sustainability Appraisal Framework with professional expertise and drawing upon selected information in the Review of Plans and Programmes, and the Baseline Information.
 - Commenting on the areas where each element or policy of the AAP has specific potential impacts - highlighting where possible, positive/negative effects, short/long term effects, indirect/direct effects, cumulative effects, and the reversibility, scale and likelihood of effects with recommendations for proposed mitigation or enhancement where identified.

UNCERTAINTIES AND DATA GAPS

- 2.4 Throughout the development of the AAP and the Sustainability Appraisal process, data gaps and uncertainties were uncovered. It is not always possible to accurately predict sustainability effects when considering plans at

this scale. Impacts on cultural heritage, for example, will depend on more detailed information and studies at a site-level. It is also difficult to predict air quality effects and future traffic levels based on interventions. These uncertainties have been acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.

CONSULTATION ON THE SA

- 2.5 The key sustainability issues were identified through the SA scoping process and described in the SA Scoping Report that was placed on consultation with statutory consultees in July 2012. The responses were used to inform the development of the SA Framework.
- 2.6 The findings of the SA Options Report (August 2012) were presented as part of a further consultation exercise for the AAP. This took the form of a public exhibition held between the 14th and the 28th August 2012.
- 2.7 This SA Report is being published alongside the Hockley AAP Pre-Submission DPD. It will be published on the Council's website <http://www.rochford.gov.uk/> and sent to statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders for consideration and comment.

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

REVIEW OF RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

- 3.1 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA of the AAP it is necessary (and a requirement of SEA) to review and develop an understanding of the wider range of “policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives”⁶ that are relevant to the Plan. This includes International, European, National, Regional and local level policies, plans and strategies. Summarising the aspirations of other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives (hereafter referred to as ‘relevant plans’) promotes systematic identification of the ways in which the Plan could help fulfill them.
- 3.2 A detailed plans and programmes review was undertaken for the SA Report (September 2009) of the Rochford District Core Strategy Submission Document. The full information is available to view on the Council's website⁷. To account for changes since the SA Report in September 2009, a list of new or updated key plans and programmes was provided in Appendix 1 of the SA Scoping Report (July 2012). This list of new or updated key plans and programmes is available in Appendix III to this Report.
- 3.3 Of most relevance is the adopted Rochford District Core Strategy DPD, which sets out the vision, new development and infrastructure requirements for Hockley. It includes Policy RTC 6 (Hockley Town Centre) which sets out the requirement for an Area Action Plan for Hockley.
- 3.4 The list of new or updated plans and programmes also includes any local plans that may be of relevance to Hockley. This includes the Hockley Parish Plan, which was developed in 2007. The Plan emphasises the importance of the countryside in and around Hockley, especially the woods with a desire for more trees, seats and cycle trails. It also promotes the greening of Hockley's centre, with more planting of flowers, trees and shrubs and enhancement of the public realm, with shop front improvements and additional seating and lighting and less litter and graffiti.
- 3.5 The Parish Plan also emphasises the importance of remaining a distinct community with clear boundaries, avoiding the coalescence of Hockley with neighbouring urban areas by focussing development on existing occupied residential or industrial property. The Plan considers youth centres, shops and restaurants to be the most appropriate types of development for Hockley. The Plan identifies traffic as an issue and supports enforcement of rules on parking and deliveries as well the development of roundabouts and changes to the types and locations of crossings.

⁶ *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents* ODPM, November 2005

⁷http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local_development_framework/core_strategy_submitted

DESCRIPTION OF THE BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 3.6 The SEA Directive requires the collation of baseline information to provide an evidence base for environmental problems, the prediction of effects, and monitoring; to help in the development of SEA objectives. This task was undertaken for the original LDF Core Strategy Draft SA Scoping report (2005), and is updated on an annual basis for RDC by Essex County Council. The latest version of the baseline (2010) will be available on the Council website in due course. The information in the baseline encompasses the environmental and socio-economic characteristics of Rochford District, providing a general context for the SA of the AAPs.
- 3.7 The characteristics and key baseline information for Hockley were set out in the SA Scoping Report published in July 2012. Further studies relating to the AAP area may be undertaken to support the plan-making processes. If further studies become available, they will be used to inform the SA.
- 3.8 The key relevant features of the AAP area have been summarised below:
- Hockley is a small town located in Rochford District; approximately 5 miles north-west of Southend-on-Sea, between the larger centres of Rochford, to the south-east and Rayleigh to the south west. The town does not have the same level of retail and services facilities as Rayleigh or Rochford and has been classified as a 'minor local centre'.
 - Hockley has a centrally-located train station, which is on the Liverpool Street line-providing easy access to London. The linear town centre stretches from the railway station to the junction of Spa Road and Southend / Main Roads. Community facilities, including the library, surgery and old fire station are located in the southern part of the AAP area. The town centre is relatively compact and well-connected to surrounding residential areas.

Table 3.1: Economic Baseline information (SEA Topics Material Assets, Population and Human Health)

- Hockley is classified as a 'Minor Local' centre with a total shopping frontage area length of 459.5m.
- Hockley is the smallest town centre in the District and there is less retention of spending within the Hockley area than Rayleigh or Rochford.
- Hockley has a slightly higher percentage of people who are retired (18.3%) compared to the County (14.6%).
- 63.7% of people in Hockley between the ages of 16 to 74 are classed as employed, with 32% economically inactive and 1.9% unemployed.
- Approximately 50% of people in Hockley between the ages of 16

and 74 work in the service industry with 15% working in the extractive and manufacturing industry.

- The core retail area in Hockley is along Spa Road and the junction with Main Road and Southend Road, which includes a number of commercial activities and community uses.
- There is an employment/ industrial area to the north of Spa Road, where the largest retail units are found and mainly comprise of convenience goods.
- Development in the town centre is a mix of scales, with many single storey units along Spa Road and an ill-defined building line, which undermines the quality of public space.

Table 3.2: Environmental Baseline information (SEA topics: Biodiversity, Soil, Water, Air, Climatic Factors, Cultural Heritage, Landscape)

- Hockley Woods is designated as a SSSI and Local Nature Reserve. The site is of national importance as an ancient woodland and predominantly owned by the District Council. The site is assessed as being in an unfavourable recovering condition.
- Hockley town centre is linear, running along Spa Road to the junction with Southend / Main Roads. These are primary traffic routes and have relatively high volumes of traffic along them.
- Available information indicates that there are no air quality issues; however, the Hockley Parish Plan identifies traffic as an issue within the area.
- There are five listed buildings within the boundary of the AAP, which includes the Grade II listed Hockley Spa Rooms on Spa Road.

Table 3.3: Social Baseline information (SEA topics: Population & Human Health).

- The population of Hockley (Parish) was estimated to be 8909 in 2001.
- The majority of the population (> 50%) are between the ages of 20-44 and 45-64 with the average age (41.9) slightly higher than the national average.
- There is less ethnic diversity in Hockley compared to England as a whole, with 98.6% of the population classed as 'White'.
- 71% of the population in Hockley is considered to be in 'good health' with 15.2% of the population having a limiting long-term illness.

- The majority of housing in Hockley (approx 90%) is owner occupied, which is higher than the County (75%) and National (68%) average.
- Just over 16% of the people in Hockley travel to work using public transport compared to 38% who travel by private vehicle.
- For people in employment between the ages 16 to 74, the average distance travelled to a fixed place of work is 22.76 km.
- There is a mass of street furniture and other clutter which has effects on the quality of the public realm. This is a particular problem at the junction of Spa Road and Main Road, but also continues along Spa Road having an impact on the enjoyment of the town centre.
- Walking around the town centre isn't an issue given its size; however, better definition of the public realm and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities may assist local movement.
- The employment area to the north of Spa Road is accessed via one main route which is used by both pedestrians and vehicles. Improving the quality of this and providing additional routes might encourage greater movement and enhanced connectivity.
- There is a train station located in the north of the Plan area providing connection between Southend and London Liverpool Street, which supports commuting from the centre into London.

KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.9 It is important to distil the key sustainability issues, problems and objectives relevant to the District from the collated information and consideration of the particular character of the area. These issues are considered to be priorities for consideration through the Sustainability Appraisal, and the SA Framework of sustainability objectives (detailed in Section 3) seeks to attend to them.
- 3.10 The following key sustainability issues are considered to be priorities for sustainability, arising from the particular characteristics, pressures and opportunities currently affecting Hockley.

Table 3.4: Key Sustainability Issues for Hockley AAP	
▪	The provision of quality and affordable housing to meet housing needs in Hockley.
▪	Improving connectivity between the town centre and train station.
▪	Taking account of environmental and physical constraints when accommodating new development.
▪	Opportunity to improve the public realm by providing a more defined centre as well as through enhanced pedestrian

crossing facilities and green landscaping.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The protection of Hockley's biodiversity (Hockley Woods SSSI & LNR), heritage, landscape and character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High levels of car ownership and travelling to work using a private vehicle.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High levels of out-commuting and difficulties in competing with economies in surrounding areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity to improve retail and stimulate the local economy, whilst recognising difficulties in competing with the retail pull of Southend, Basildon and Chelmsford.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate change is a significant issue facing all communities and the AAP will need to consider issues around energy efficiency, renewables and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

THE SA FRAMEWORK

3.11 The proposed SA Framework provides the basis by which the sustainability effects of emerging AAP will be described, analysed and compared. It includes a number of sustainability objectives, elaborated by 'decision-aiding questions'. The SA Framework developed for the Rochford Core Strategy is considered to be suitable for the appraisal of the Hockley AAP, however a number of amendments have been made to ensure the 'decision-aiding questions' address the specific concerns facing Hockley. The final SA Framework is provided in Table 3.25 below and has been informed by statutory consultee responses to the SA Scoping Report.

Table 3.5: SA Framework	
SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)...?
Balanced Communities (SEA Topics: Population & Human Health)	
1. To ensure the delivery of high quality sustainable communities where people want to live and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it ensure the phasing of infrastructure, including community facilities to meet ongoing and future needs? ▪ Will it ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural and urban communities? ▪ Will it ensure equal opportunities and that all sections of the community are catered for? ▪ Will it meet the needs of an ageing population in Hockley? ▪ Will the policies and options proposed seek to enhance the qualifications and skills of the local community? ▪ Will income and quality-of-life disparities be reduced?
Healthy & Safe Communities (SEA Topics: Population & Human Health)	
2. Create healthy and safe environments where crime and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design? ▪ Will it improve health and reduce health inequalities

Table 3.5: SA Framework	
SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)...?
disorder or fear of crime does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion	<p>in Hockley?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it promote informal recreation and encourage healthy, active lifestyles? ▪ Will green infrastructure (non-vehicular infrastructure routes and links) and networks be promoted and/or enhanced? ▪ Will it minimise noise pollution? ▪ Will it minimise light pollution?
Housing (SEA Topics: Population & Human Health)	
3. To provide everybody with the opportunity to live in a decent home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups in Hockley? ▪ Will a mix of housing types and tenures be promoted? ▪ Will it reduce the number of unfit homes? ▪ Does it promote high quality design? ▪ Is there sustainable access to key services in Hockley? ▪ Does it meet the resident's needs in terms of sheltered and lifetime homes or those that can be easily adapted so?
Economy & Employment (SEA Topics: Population & Human Health, material assets)	
4. To achieve sustainable levels of economic growth/prosperity and promote town centre vitality/viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does it promote and enhance existing centres by focusing development in such centres? ▪ Will it improve business development in Hockley? ▪ Does it enhance consumer choice through the provision of a range of shopping, leisure, and local services to meet the needs of the entire community? ▪ Does it promote mixed use and high density development in urban centres? ▪ Does it promote a wide variety of jobs across all sectors? ▪ Does it secure more opportunities for residents to work in the District? ▪ Will it aid the realisation of London Southend Airport's economic potential?
Accessibility (SEA Topics: Material Assets, Population & Human Health)	
5. To promote more sustainable transport choices both for people and moving freight ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it increase the availability of sustainable transport modes in Hockley? ▪ Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than the private car, including walking and cycling? ▪ Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services? ▪ Will it reduce the need to travel? ▪ Does it seek to encourage development where large volumes of people and/or transport movements are located in sustainable accessible locations? ▪ Does it enable access for all sections of the community, including the young, the socially deprived, those with disabilities and the elderly?

Table 3.5: SA Framework	
SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)...?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does it secure more opportunities for residents to work in the District, and for out-commuting to be reduced? ▪ Does it enable access to green infrastructure and the wider natural environment to all sections of the community?
Biodiversity (SEA Topics: Biodiversity)	
6. To conserve and enhance the biological and geological diversity of the environment as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats, including the District's distinctive estuaries and salt marshes? ▪ Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to protected species and priority species? ▪ Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their nature conservation interest? ▪ Will it conserve and enhance sites of geological significance? ▪ Does land use allocation reflect the scope of using brownfield land for significant wildlife interest where viable and realistic? ▪ Does new development integrate within it opportunities for new habitat creation, particularly where they could facilitate species movement and colonisation in relation to climate change pressures on biodiversity and its distribution?
Cultural Heritage (SEA Topics: Cultural heritage)	
7. To maintain and enhance the cultural heritage and assets of the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas? ▪ Will it support locally-based cultural resources and activities?
Landscape & Townscape (SEA Topics: Landscape)	
8. To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces? ▪ Will it contribute to the delivery of the enhancement, effective management and appropriate use of land in the urban fringe? ▪ Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land? ▪ Will it conserve (as preservation is neither realistic or desirable) the landscape character areas of the plan area? ▪ Will it preserve and/or enhance townscape character and value?
Climate Change & Energy (SEA Topics: Climatic Factors)	
9. To reduce contributions to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption? ▪ Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources in Hockley? ▪ Does it adapt to and provide for the consequences

Table 3.5: SA Framework	
SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)...?
	of climate change in a largely low-lying area?
Water (SEA Topics: <i>Water</i>)	
10. To improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it improve the quality of inland water? ▪ Will it improve the quality of coastal waters? ▪ Will it provide for an efficient water conservation and supply regime in Hockley? ▪ Will it provide for effective wastewater treatment? ▪ Will it require the provision of sustainable drainage systems in new development? ▪ Will it reduce the risk of flooding? ▪ Will it integrate sustainable flood management which works with natural processes, presents habitat enhancement opportunities and is landscape character sensitive?
Land & Soil (SEA Topics: <i>Biodiversity</i>)	
11. To maintain and improve the quality of the District's land and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does it ensure the re-use of previously-developed land and urban areas in preference to Greenfield sites, as far as is practicable given the characteristics of the District? ▪ Will higher-density development be promoted where appropriate? ▪ Will soil quality be preserved? ▪ Will it promote the remediation of contaminated land in Hockley? ▪ Will the best and most versatile agricultural land be protected?
Air Quality (SEA Topics: <i>Air</i>)	
12. To improve air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will air quality be improved through reduced emissions (eg. through reducing car travel)? ▪ Will it direct transport movements away from AQMAS and/or potentially significant junctions?
Sustainable Design & Construction (SEA Topics: <i>Climatic factors, Population & Human Health</i>)	
13. To promote sustainable design and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will it ensure the use of sustainable design principles, e.g. encouraging a mix of uses? ▪ Will climate proofing design measures be incorporated? ▪ Will the local character/vernacular be preserved and enhanced through development? ▪ Will it require the re-use and recycling of construction materials? ▪ Will it encourage locally-sourced materials? ▪ Will it require best-practice sustainable construction methods, for example in energy and water efficiency?

4.0 SA OF AREA ACTION PLAN OPTIONS (ALTERNATIVES)

SA OF AREA ACTION PLAN OPTIONS

- 4.1 The SA of the options (alternatives) was undertaken in July 2012 using the SA Framework, with the predicted effects recorded in a matrix (Appendix IV) and detailed commentary and justification provided where necessary. The purpose and key objectives of the AAP have been set at a higher level; therefore it is considered that the alternatives available to the plan-maker in preparing the AAP were limited to the level and type of intervention/development that should be accommodated in the Town Centre. A do-nothing approach is not considered appropriate in this instance as it would not be in accordance with Policy RTC6 - Hockley Town Centre from the Adopted Core Strategy, which requires a certain level of intervention in Hockley to achieve regeneration objectives.
- 4.2 As such, three spatial options were considered:
- Spatial Option 1: A low level of intervention
 - Spatial Option 2: A medium level of intervention, with increased housing, retail and office provision
 - Spatial Options 3: A high level of intervention, similar to Option 2, but with a higher level again of housing and office provision.
- 4.3 A further 3 options were considered around more detailed transport interventions:
- Options to address congestion at Spa roundabout
 - Improving on-street parking provision
 - Improving Drop-off provision at the station
- 4.4 The detailed Sustainability Appraisal undertaken of the AAP options is provided at Appendix IV. Each of the spatial and transport options was considered against the SA Framework. The three spatial options (low, medium or high intervention) are compared against each other. With the transport options, the 2 options to address congestion at Spa roundabout are also compared. The remaining 2 transport options are considered against the SA baseline.

Spatial Options

- 4.5 The SA found that both the medium intervention option, (Option 2 including Option 2a) and the high intervention option, (Option 3 including Option 3a) will have the strongest positive effects for communities and the economy through providing for a higher level of intervention and therefore regeneration of the Town Centre. Both Options 2 and 3 will also provide for a more significant volume of new housing (and in particular Option 3) therefore choosing either of these options would help to meet housing need in Hockley.

- 4.6 All options are likely to have positive benefits for health, accessibility and landscape and health, due to the strong focus on movement and public realm, traffic and parking. The improvements to streetscapes, access to the station and new walkways will all help to improve accessibility and provide alternatives to car travel.
- 4.7 Whilst Options 2 and 3 are preferred from a regeneration and economic perspective, both (and particularly Option 3) are more likely to have an adverse effect through increased disruption (noise and congestion) and air pollution during the construction phase of development. If either of these 2 options are selected, then it is recommended that the AAP include consideration of phasing and other mitigation issues (traffic and construction management plans) and consultation with the local community and business owners to minimise the effects of new development.

Transport Options

- 4.8 **Options to address congestion at Spa roundabout:** Option 2 (Provide a shared surface at the roundabout) performs better in the SA than Option 1 (Increase capacity at the roundabout), as it will calm the traffic travelling through the centre, creating an environment more conducive to pedestrian activity and better access to businesses. Shared surfaces can also contribute more to positive effects on quality design and enhanced townscapes. Option 2 is likely to deliver more benefits to Hockley itself, however Option 1 may have more positive benefits for non-local traffic. Further traffic modeling will be required to accurately predict the effects of both options on local and non-local traffic in terms of traffic flows and congestion.
- 4.9 **Improving on-street parking provision:** The provision of new on-street parking does not support the majority of SA objectives; however it is particularly positive for the economy and employment and for balanced communities. The effects on the other SA objectives can be minimised by ensuring good design, appropriate landscaping and concurrent investment in pedestrian and cycling facilities.
- 4.10 **Improving Drop-off provision at the station:** The proposed improvements at the station are likely to have positive effect on accessibility and climate change through encouraging more people to travel by train. The aesthetic improvements are also likely to be positive for the SA objectives relating to landscape and townscape and sustainable design.

REASONS FOR PROGRESSING/ REJECTING OPTIONS

- 4.11 Table 4.1 below summarises the options/alternatives considered for the AAP, with an outline of the reasons for rejection where relevant. It should be noted that whilst the SA findings are considered by the Council in its selection of options and form part of the evidence supporting the Hockley AAP, the SA findings are not the sole basis for a decision; planning and feasibility factors play a key role in the decision-making process.

- 4.12 It should also be noted that the AAP Framework set out in the Pre-Submission Document has been influenced by a number of important changes since the Options Report was published in Nov 2010. These changes include a more challenging economy; a need for a greater focus on food retail; the balance of housing provision with other uses and upgrades to the Foundry Business Park including the development of new modern accommodation.

Table 4.1 Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised	Reasons for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
Spatial Options	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Option 1: A low level of intervention ▪ Option 2: A medium level of intervention, with increased housing, retail and office provision ▪ Option 3: A high level of intervention, similar to Option 2, but with a higher level again of housing and office provision. 	<p>Option 1 was rejected as it did not conform to the adopted Rochford Core Strategy and performed less well against sustainability objectives.</p> <p>Options 2 and 3 meet the objectives of the Core Strategy and performed well against sustainability objectives, being particularly positive in relation to regeneration and economy.</p> <p>Accordingly, the proposed policy is an amalgamation of Options 2 and 3 which seeks to take into account the results of community involvement.</p>
Options to address congestion at Spa roundabout	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Option 1: Increase capacity at the roundabout ▪ Option 2: Provide a shared surface at the roundabout 	<p>Option 1 does not perform as well in relation to sustainability objectives as Option 2. Nevertheless, increased capacity at the Spa Road roundabout is considered important from a strategic highway and highway efficiency perspective. Accordingly, the proposed approach seeks to balance both issues.</p>
Improving on-street parking provision	
<p>The Spatial options include increased provision of on-street parking along Spa Road in order to ease pressure on existing car parks and improve the physical environment. In Option 2, this included as parallel parking and in Option 3, this is included as echelon parking.</p>	<p>The option has evolved into proposals which entail the provision of additional off-street parking in Hockley centre, rather than on-street parking along Spa Road.</p>
Improving Drop-off provision at the station	
<p>The spatial options considered methods of improving the provision for drop-off and pick-up at the train station, whilst also improving the public realm at the station.</p>	<p>The option has evolved into proposals which entail the provision of additional off-street parking in Hockley centre well-related to the train station, and improved accessibility to the train station by alternative methods of transport to the private car.</p>

5.0 SA OF AREA ACTION PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION POLICIES

SA OF AREA ACTION PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 A compatibility analysis of the Pre-Submission AAP Vision and Objectives was carried out using the SA framework in October 2012. Overall the vision and objectives are compatible with the majority of SA objectives. The vision performs strongly against SA objectives relating to sustainable communities, providing homes and the promotion of town centre vitality/viability. The vision was also found to be compatible with SA objectives relating to climate change and air quality, as providing opportunities for people to access homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services within Hockley will reduce the need to travel and therefore levels of traffic. A number of uncertainties were identified relating to the overarching nature of the vision, which cannot be expected to cover all aspects of sustainability in detail. The objectives seek to support the vision by providing opportunities for people to shop, live and work within Hockley as well as improve the public realm and pedestrian areas, which is compatible with the majority of SA objectives.

SUMMARY OF SA OF PRE-SUBMISSION POLICIES

- 5.2 The Pre-Submission policies were subject to detailed SA in October 2012. A summary of the results of this appraisal is provided below, with the detailed working matrices provided in Appendix VI. On the whole, the findings of the SA suggest that the emerging AAP policies will make significant contributions to the progression of SA objectives.

Policy 1 - Hockley Area Action Plan Framework

- 5.3 This policy proposes an enhanced public realm and improved access in Hockley; it also makes provision for mixed use development at Eldon Way Opportunity Site, utilising previously developed land. It requires development to be in accordance with the spatial development framework, which aims to improve accessibility, enhance the character of the area and improve the public realm. All of these aims are consistent with the SA Framework objectives developed for the Hockley AAP, and the predicted overall result is one that is very positive for sustainability. The policy will have particularly positive and long term effects for communities, housing, economy, accessibility and landscape/townscape. Uncertain effects were identified for biodiversity and cultural heritage, with effects dependent on detailed implementation. Uncertain effects were also identified for water and air quality, as new development can lead to increased water use and localised air pollution, however this can be mitigated through other policies in this AAP and other documents, including those in the Core Strategy. The SA has made a number of recommendations to improve the policy wording for communities, biodiversity, cultural heritage, landscape, climate change, air quality and sustainable design.

SA Recommendations:

There is the potential to strengthen the policy by:

- referring specifically to improving walking and cycling routes within criterion b.
- promoting green public/ open spaces.
- including a reference to heritage in the first paragraph. It is recognised that other policies proposed through the Local Plan (e.g. Core Strategy and Development Management DPDs) ensure that development will not have adverse effects on important heritage and its setting, but it would be useful to reinforce this message in the AAP.
- include a reference to townscape within the first paragraph.

It is recommended that:

- air quality in the town centre is monitored, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.
- the Policy promotes good, high quality sustainable design. It is recognised that this is addressed through policies contained in the Core Strategy and Development Management DPDs, but it would be useful to reinforce this message in the AAP.

Policy 2 - Delivering environmental improvements

- 5.4 The policy aims to ensure that all new development in Hockley incorporates or contributes to improvements to the public realm, including improvements for pedestrian access. The policy is likely to encourage walking and cycling through improvements to the public realm as well as the provision of new public space. Slowing traffic at the busy Spa Road mini-roundabout and prioritising pedestrian movement could also help to improve the safety of pedestrians. Implementation of the policy will have significant long-term effects on public health and safety, the local economy, and the landscape and townscape of Hockley.

SA Recommendations:

- There is an opportunity to strengthen the policy through the promotion of green public/ open spaces.

Policy 3 - Promoting better movement

- 5.5 The policy aims to deliver significant improvements to transport and movement through Hockley and outlines key schemes which will help to deliver these improvements. It requires new developments to contribute to those schemes and applications for development to consider transport impacts through the preparation of Transport Assessment and Travel Plans. This approach to transport is likely to have major positive effects for the SA objectives relating to accessibility, and further positive effects for SA objectives relating to communities, economy, cultural heritage and landscape. Positive effects are also identified for climate change, air quality

and sustainable design and construction as the promotion of more sustainable transport choices will also help to reduce the levels of vehicular travel and therefore greenhouse gas and other vehicle emissions.

Policy 4 - Increasing the availability of housing

- 5.6 The redevelopment of the Eldon Way Industrial Estate, as proposed in this policy, will have a positive effect on a range of SA objectives. In particular it will have positive effects for housing through creating new market and affordable housing. Other positive effects were identified for communities, economy and accessibility, as the area is in close proximity to existing services, reducing the need to travel outside the AAP area. This will also have positive effects for climate change, and the use of previously developed land is positive for the SA objective relating to land and soil. There is some uncertainty relating to water, air quality and cultural heritage; the effect on these objectives will be dependent on further development detail.

SA Recommendations:

- It is recommended that air quality in the town centre is monitored, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.

Policy 5 - Protecting jobs

- 5.7 This policy supports the mixed use development of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, allowing for the development of office (B1a) uses, provided that this is part of a wider mixed-use development. This will have major positive effects for economy and employment, through the provision of new jobs. Positive effects are also likely for communities, accessibility and climate change, as increased opportunities for employment will reduce the need for people to travel outside the AAP area for work. There is the potential for historic buildings along Spa Road to be affected by development at the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, with possible adverse effects on heritage; particularly during construction. Similarly effects on air quality are uncertain and appropriate development management controls will help mitigate this.

SA Recommendations:

- It is recommended that air quality in the town centre is monitored, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.

Policy 6 - Improving retail choice for local people

- 5.8 This policy aims to increase the retail offer in Hockley, which will have a long-term positive effect on the local economy and employment through encouraging new and supporting existing businesses. It will also have positive effects for accessibility, climate change and communities, as an enhanced retail offer will reduce the need for people to travel outside the AAP area to shop. As identified in Policy 5, there is some potential for historic buildings along Spa Road to be affected by development at the Eldon Way

Opportunity Site; however there is also the potential for improvements to the public realm and frontages that will arise as a result of contributions.

SA Recommendations:

- It is recommended that air quality in the town centre is monitored, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.

Policy 7 - Ensuring a healthy centre

- 5.9 This policy allows for a change of uses from retail to non-retail uses, where that change would not be detrimental to other retail. The effect of the policy is to diversify the town centre offer, providing opportunities for uses such as pubs and restaurants. This may have major positive effects on the economy and employment, and positive effects for community and safety through encouraging a night-time economy. Increasing the diversity of land uses may also have positive effects for accessibility and climate change, through reducing the need to travel to other centres.

SA Recommendations:

- It is recommended a change of use to a pub or club will only be permitted where it would not have a negative effect on the health and well-being of local residents through increased noise and disturbance.

Policy 8 - Encouraging leisure opportunities

- 5.10 As for policy 7, this policy will help to diversify the existing offer in the town centre and help to reduce the need for journeys to other town centres. Encouraging new leisure facilities will have positive effects for communities through providing new spaces for people to interact and help to support community health through providing new opportunities to recreate. The local economy will also be supported through the creation of new jobs. As for other policies, some uncertainties are identified for cultural heritage.

SA Recommendations:

- It is recommended that air quality in the town centre is monitored, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ANALYSIS

- 6.1 In addition to the appraisal of individual policies undertaken in SA/SEA, the SEA Directive requires consideration of the overall effects of the plan, including the secondary, synergistic and cumulative effects of plan policies. This may include incremental effects that can have a small effect individually, but can accrue to have significant environmental effects.
- 6.2 In good practice SA/SEA, the analysis of cumulative effects should also consider the significant effects of the plan in combination with the effects of other plans, policies and proposals.
- 6.3 This section summarises the key effects, including the cumulative effects of the plan policies (known as the intra-plan effects) and the combined effects with other relevant plans and projects (known as the inter-plan effects).

CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF PLAN POLICIES (INTRA-PLAN EFFECTS)

- 6.4 To assist in considering the overall effects of policies within the plan when assessed against the different SA Framework objectives, a summary has been prepared, illustrating how each policy has performed against each SA Objective. This is provided in the following table:

Table 6.1: Intra-plan effects: Cumulative summary of Pre-Submission Policies

Appraisal key

Categories of sustainability effects	
Colour	Impact
++	Major Positive
+	Positive
0	No Impact
?	Uncertain
-	Negative
--	Major Negative

Policy	SA Objectives												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Hockley Area Action Plan Framework	++	+	++	++	++	?	?	++	+	?	+	?	+
2. Delivering environmental improvements	+	++	0	+	+	?	?	++	+	0	0	+	+
3. Promoting better movement	+	+	0	+	++	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
4. Increasing the availability of housing	+	+	++	+	+	0	?	+	+	?	+	?	+
5. Protecting jobs	+	+	0	++	+	0	?	+	+	?	+	?	+
6. Improving retail choice for local people	+	+	0	++	+	0	?	+	+	?	+	?	+
7. Ensuring a healthy centre	+	+	?	0	++	+	0	?	+	+	0	+	+
8. Encouraging leisure opportunities	+	+	0	+	+	0	?	+	0	0	+	0	+

SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF PLAN POLICIES (INTRA-PLAN EFFECTS)

- 6.5 The SA found that the majority of policies could have significant positive sustainability benefits for Hockley Town Centre and the wider Hockley area. The following table summarises the significant positive effects identified.

Table 6.2: Significant positive effects of the emerging Hockley AAP

Key relevant SA Objective:	Positive effects identified:
1.Balanced communities & 2.Healthy and Safe Communities	The AAP will have positive effects on communities through providing a mix of uses in the town centre, including housing, retail, leisure facilities and new public spaces. New areas for recreation and encouraging walking and cycling through enhanced networks and public realm will have positive benefits for health.
3.Housing	Positive effects for housing, including new affordable housing, through provision of housing as part of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site redevelopment.
4.Economy & Employment	A significant positive effect on the local economy is likely through enhanced opportunities for retail, leisure and offices. Increase housing will have positive indirect effects through increasing the use of local service and shops. New employment will be created in the short-term (construction) and longer term.
5. Accessibility	Significant cumulative effects for accessibility are likely through a range of improvements to the public realm, bus services, access to the train station and increased accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
6.Landscape and Townscape	The overall effect on the local townscape will be positive due to increased public realm works and landscaping proposed in the plan.
9. Climate Change and Energy	The focus on improving local accessibility and access to public transport throughout the plan, combined with a focus on mixed-use development is likely to help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions caused by car travel.

SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE OR UNCERTAIN CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF PLAN POLICIES (INTRA-PLAN EFFECTS)

- 6.6 Alongside the many positive effects of the plan, potential negative sustainability effects were also identified, although their effect is uncertain at this stage of the assessment and it is considered likely that these effects can be mitigated at a more detailed planning stage. These are summarised in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: Potentially significant negative effects of the emerging Hockley AAP

Key relevant SA Objective:	Negative Effects identified:
7. Cultural Heritage	Some potential for negative effects on cultural heritage was identified, with potential for historic buildings along Spa Road to be affected by development at the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. Adverse effects can be mitigated through sensitive design and development.
12. Air quality	Potential localised air quality pollution is possible during the construction stage of development, however this can be mitigated through development controls. The plan has sought to minimise congestion and air and noise pollution through having a strong focus on public transport, walking and cycling, however there remains some uncertainty about future air quality, and ongoing monitoring should be undertaken.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER RELEVANT PLANS AND PROJECTS (INTER-PLAN EFFECTS)

- 6.7 In considering the effects of AAP with other plans and projects, priority has been given to key documents that affect planning and development in Rochford District, in particular the Rochford Core Strategy and the Area Action Plans for Rayleigh and Rochford (also in preparation). The aim of the analysis of inter-plan effects was to identify how other plans and key projects may affect the sustainability of Hockley.

Table 6.4: Inter-Plan Cumulative Effects

SA Objective	Significant combined effects of Hockley AAP with other plans, projects or policies
1. Balanced communities & 2. Healthy and Safe Communities	Increased facilities and services and improved access to recreation opportunities will combine with effects from the Core Strategy overall, including improvements in the Upper Roach Valley, to create a better and healthier environment for local residents across the District.
3. Housing	The AAP helps to deliver the objectives for affordable housing outlined in the Core Strategy.
4. Economy & Employment	An increase in mixed-use development and new shops, services and housing in Hockley will, when combined with the development outlined in the Rochford Core Strategy, contribute to an improved local economy and employment opportunities.
5. Accessibility	Enhancements to accessibility proposed in the AAP will add to similar improvements in the other 2 AAPs for Rochford and Rayleigh and help to improve overall use of public transport in the District. This should help the District to achieve a higher level of containment,

	reducing out-commuting to other areas.
6. Biodiversity	The combined effect of development at Hockley Town Centre with development elsewhere in the District (outlined in Rochford Core Strategy DPD, adopted Dec 2011) has the potential for adverse effects on local biodiversity, including Hockley Woods SSSI.
7. Cultural heritage & 8. Landscape and townscape	The AAP may contribute to wider negative impacts on the cultural heritage and identity of the area, in particular through increased development proposed in the Core Strategy. However, in the case of Hockley, these effects can be mitigated through sensitive design.
10. Water	New development at Hockley may add to the pressures on water resources and water quality identified in the Rochford Core Strategy.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

INTRODUCTION

- 7.1 This section discusses indicators and targets to help monitor the sustainability effects of the AAP. Monitoring arrangements should be designed to:
- highlight significant effects;
 - highlight effects which differ from those that were predicted; and
 - provide a useful source of baseline information for the future.
- 7.2 Local planning authorities are required to produce Annual Monitoring Reports including indicators and targets against which the progress of the Local Development Plan can be measured. There is also a requirement to monitor the predictions made in the SA and Government advises Councils to prepare a Monitoring Strategy that incorporates the needs of the Local Development Plan and the SA. 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 in Table 7.1 are considered appropriate for the monitoring of the Hockley AAP, with additional specific suggestions underlined and in red text.

SA MONITORING PROPOSALS FOR THE HOCKLEY AAP

Table 7.1: Potential Indicators

Potential Indicators
<p>1. Balanced Communities To ensure the delivery of high quality sustainable communities where people want to live and work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Changing educational attainment at GCSE Level ■ Proportion of persons in the local population with a degree level qualification. ■ Parishes with a GP, post office, play area, pub, village hall ■ Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centre ■ Mix of housing tenure within settlements ■ Provision of new community facilities secured through new developments, <u>including a break-down by settlement</u>
<p>2. Healthy & Safe Communities Create healthy and safe environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitor the number of domestic burglaries, violent offences, vehicle crimes, vandalism and all crime per 1,000 population. ■ Percentage of residents surveyed who feel 'fairly safe' or 'very safe' during the day whilst outside in their Local Authority, <u>including in key settlements</u> ■ Indexes of Multiple Deprivation throughout the District.

Potential Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitor the type and number of applications permitted in the greenbelt. ■ Life expectancy ■ Hectares of new greenspace created, including location of greenspace ■ Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard ■ Death rates from circulatory disease, cancer, accidents and suicide ■ Residents description of Health ■ Obesity levels
<p>3. Housing To provide everybody with the opportunity to live in a decent home</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of unfit homes per 1,000 dwellings. ■ Indices of Multiple Deprivation – Housing and Services Domain ■ Percentage of households rented from the Council or in Housing Association/Registered Social Landlords properties ■ Percentage of new housing which is affordable, including in key settlements ■ Average house price compared with average earnings ■ Number of housing Completions
<p>4. Economy & Employment To achieve sustainable levels of economic growth/prosperity and promote town centre vitality/viability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The changing diversity of main town centre uses (by number, type and amount of floorspace), including a breakdown for the 3 town centres. ■ The changing density of development ■ Percentage change in the total number of VAT registered businesses in the area ■ Percentage of employees commuting out of the District to work ■ Amount of land developed for employment (by type) ■ Retail health checks/economic prosperity of smaller towns and villages and key settlements
<p>5. Accessibility To promote more sustainable transport choices both for people and moving freight ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Changes in the travel to work mode of transport ■ Indices of Multiple Deprivation most notably the Housing and Services Domain ■ Car ownership ■ Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre ■ Kilometres of cycle routes and facilities for cyclists ■ Kilometres of new walking routes provided ■ Number of houses within a specified radius of services/facilities ■ Pedestrian and cycle counts in the 3 town centres of Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh
<p>6. Biodiversity To conserve and enhance the biological and geological diversity of the</p>

Potential Indicators
environment as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Net change in natural/ semi natural habitats ■ Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance ■ Condition of designated sites ■ Change in area of woodland ■ Proportion of new developments delivering habitat creation or restoration
7. Cultural Heritage To maintain and enhance the cultural heritage and assets of the District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Buildings of Grade I and II at risk of decay ■ Condition of Conservation Areas ■ Number of historic parks and gardens
8. Landscape & Townscape To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To monitor the number of parks awarded Green Flag Status ■ To monitor the number of landscape or built environment designations ■ Hectares of new development outside settlement boundaries ■ Hedgerow and/or veteran tree loss ■ Area of /change in landscape designations ■ % of development on previously developed land
9. Climate Change & Energy To reduce contributions to climate change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Changes in the travel to work mode of transport ■ Greenhouse gas emissions ■ Renewable energy capacity installed by type ■ Percentage of new development including renewable energy generation ■ Energy consumption
10. Water To improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Changing water quality ■ Groundwater levels ■ Percentage of new development incorporating water efficiency measures ■ Water consumption per household ■ Number of homes built against Environment Agency advice on flooding
11. Land & Soil To maintain and improve the quality of the District's land and soil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use of previously developed land ■ Density of new residential development ■ Number of sites/hectares decontaminated as a result of new development
12. Air Quality To improve air quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AQMA designations or threshold designations ■ Growth in cars per household ■ Growth in car trip generation ■ Type of travel mode to work ■ % change in public transport patronage

Potential Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Number of days in the year when air quality is recorded as moderate or high for NO₂, SO₂, PM₁₀, CO and Ozone on average per site.■ Monitoring of air quality in Hockley Town Centre, particularly at the SPA Road mini-roundabout.
13. Sustainable Design & Construction To promote sustainable design and construction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Percentage of new development incorporating energy and water efficiency measures, and sustainable drainage systems■ Percentage of new development meeting BREEAM very good/excellent standards■ Percentage use of aggregates from secondary and recycled sources

8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 The SA of the Hockley Area Action Plan has appraised the effects of individual policies, as well as the overall effect of the plan, including cumulative and incremental effects. It has also considered and appraised reasonable alternatives to the plan itself; information which has been made available to the Council to help in the selection of the preferred plan. Overall the SA has found that the AAP will help to resolve a number of key sustainability issues in Hockley Town Centre and will also play a role in improving sustainability in the wider Rochford District.
- 8.2 The plan will have a significant positive effect on sustainability through helping to meet housing (including affordable housing) need in Hockley and Rochford District more generally. Approximately 100 new homes are proposed to be created through the conversion of existing light industrial land adjacent to the town centre. This will help to meet affordability needs, although it is noted that a higher level of housing (as proposed in one of the plan options) would have a more positive effect.
- 8.3 Other significant positive effects identified include long-term positive effects on the local economy and employment due to the development of new housing, retail, leisure and employment uses in the town centre and improvements to existing shopfronts. New jobs will be created during the short-term for construction, and in the longer term. Less direct, but still significant positive effects will occur due to improvements to the public realm and accessibility. This will encourage the local community to frequent the town centre, and a new population will help improve patronage of local shops and services. These benefits will be felt in Hockley, and when considered cumulatively with improvements elsewhere, particularly in Rochford and Rayleigh, will also have a wider effect on the District's economy. Similarly, there will be substantial positive effects for community through the creation of a more attractive and hospitable town centre that encourages people to meet and recreate, with indirect positive effects for community safety.
- 8.4 One of the most obvious positive effects from the plan will be realised through a substantial programme of improvements to the public realm and pedestrian and cycle accessibility. This will help to offset any increased traffic resulting from the new development and will contribute towards a healthier population, who will be encouraged to walk and cycle. Improvements to reduce congestion and improved public transport accessibility will also have wider positive effects on traffic flow and transport services in the District. A more vibrant town centre, with employment opportunities will also reduce the need for commuting and travelling to other centres.
- 8.5 Improvements to the public realm and the requirements for high quality new development will also have positive benefits for landscape and townscapes, improving the aesthetic of the town centre with quality design and landscaping.

- 8.5 The sustainability appraisal did not identify any significant likely negative effects from the plan alone; however there remains some uncertainty regarding the effects on cultural heritage. There is also the potential for new development to contribute to the wider development pressures on water resources and quality identified in the SA of the Core Strategy.
- 8.6 Effects on air quality are difficult to predict at this stage of the assessment. Increased traffic generated by new development (during the construction and operational stages) could worsen air quality at a local level, however the range of measures introduced to improve traffic flow and encourage sustainable transport should offset any increase. The SA recommends that ongoing monitoring take place, particularly at the Spa Road mini roundabout to ascertain the ongoing nature of any effects and take appropriate mitigative action if necessary.
- 8.7 In preparing the AAP and deciding on its preferred option for Hockley Town Centre the Council has considered the recommendations made throughout the Sustainability Appraisal process, and amended the plan accordingly. This has contributed to further enhancing the positive sustainability effects of the plan.
- 8.8 This SA Report will accompany the AAP on pre-submission consultation for 6 weeks, during which time interested parties are invited to make representations on the AAP or the SA. The SA will form part of the evidence base during the Examination of the AAP and if any further significant changes are made to the plan the SA Report will be updated accordingly. A finalised report will accompany the adopted DPD when it is published.