



Borough Council of  
**Wellingborough**

# **Sustainability Adoption Statement**

## Wellingborough Town Centre Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

August 2009



## **1. Purpose of this Document**

- 1.1 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 sets out the post adoption procedures for plans or programmes that have been subject to an environmental assessment. This report is to satisfy those requirements in respect of the adoption of the Wellingborough Town Centre Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.2 In particular, the Regulations require a statement to be produced on adoption of the document indicating:
- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the document;
  - how the environmental report has been taken into account;
  - how opinions expressed in response to public consultation have been taken into account;
  - the reasons for choosing the document as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
  - the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the document.

## **2. Adoption Details**

- 2.1 The Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by the Borough Council of Wellingborough on 21 July 2009.
- 2.2 Public realm relates to all publicly accessible open space including streets, parks and squares. The Strategy identifies strengths and weaknesses in the public realm; provides guidance to deliver improvements; and identifies opportunities for enhancing the town centre. The SPD has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which has assessed the Public Realm Strategy against social, environmental and economic objectives.
- 2.3 The SPD, Consultation Statement and Sustainability Appraisal are available for inspection from the Council's website at [www.wellingborough.gov.uk](http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk) and at the following locations during normal office hours:

### **Council Offices**

Croyland Abbey, Tithe Barn Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 1BJ.

### **Opening Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 8.30am - 5pm  
Thursday: 9.30am - 5pm  
Friday: 8.30am - 4.30pm

**Also available from Public Libraries**  
Throughout the Borough of Wellingborough

**3. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the document**

3.1 As part of the SPD preparation process, the Borough Council has conducted an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC on the 'assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (known as the 'strategic environmental assessment' or SEA Directive). In addition, under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it was a requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of documents such as the SPD. Provisions contained in the Planning Act 2008, brought into force on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 removed this requirement for the Sustainability Appraisal of SPDs. As preparation of the SPD was commenced prior to this date a Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken.

3.2 Whereas the SEA concentrates on environmental issues, the SA also encompasses social and economic issues. Whilst the requirement to carry out a SA and a SEA are distinct, Government guidance indicates that it is possible to satisfy both through a single appraisal process. This adoption statement is not therefore confined to environmental issues but has been broadened to include other information on the SA of the SPD. Throughout the remainder of this statement reference to SA should therefore be taken to include the requirements of the SEA Directive

3.3 Sustainability considerations have been built in to the process of preparing the SPD having regard to guidance on the 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents' (ODPM 2005) and 'Local Development Frameworks: Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal' (PAS 2007). SA is an iterative process and it has therefore been updated and published for consultation at various stages during the course of preparing the SPD. All documents are available from the Council website:

[http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?downloadID=1389](http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1389)

**4. How the environmental report has been taken into account**

4.1 The SA process made the following differences to the development of the Public Realm Strategy:

- identified how the specified objectives could be further improved;

- identified environmental indicators that would need to be priorities with more detailed investigation at the planning application stage;
- highlighted the need for partnership working to improve town centre infrastructure, particularly in relation to the need to work closely with the County Council in preparing transport-related proposals; and
- provided a consistent and comprehensive approach to investigating the effects of the guide at each stage of its evolution and implementation.

## **5. How opinions expressed in response to public consultation have been taken into account**

5.1 A list of the bodies consulted and sent a copy of the SA Scoping Report and SA of the Draft Public Realm Strategy is included in Appendix B of the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report. Other consultees were informed of the existence of the report and were able to request a copy. Copies of the reports were also made available for inspection at the Croyland Abbey Council offices and in the libraries in the borough. Throughout the period both reports were also available on the Council's website [www.wellingborough.gov.uk](http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk).

5.2 A summary of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and the draft Sustainability Appraisal is included in Appendix C of the Sustainability Appraisal. These tables also include the Council's responses to each of the comments. Several changes were made in response to these comments including amendments to the baseline report.

## **6. The reasons for choosing the document as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with**

6.1 As part of the preparation of the Public Realm Strategy, the option of preparing the Guide was compared with the 'do-nothing' option of not preparing the Guide. The results of the appraisal of the 'do nothing' option showed that this option has negative and neutral effects. To reduce the neutral effects, special consideration would have to be given to improve the standard of public realm improvement works undertaken in the town centre. The most effective means of doing this is through a specific Public Realm Strategy.

6.2 The results of the appraisal (set out in Appendix I of the Sustainability Appraisal) showed that preparation of the Guide would only have positive effects. There would be no negative effects. It is concluded therefore that the Guide will enhance sustainability.

In terms of **social sustainability**, the strategy will:

- significantly improve accessibility by sustainable modes, with potential follow-on health benefits of enhanced walking and cycling conditions;

- enhance Wellingborough's liveability – helping to establish the town as a more welcoming and attractive place;
- improve connections within and between communities;
- promote craftsmanship, with benefits for skills development.

In terms of **environmental sustainability**, the strategy will:

- promote a range of measures to enhance biodiversity;
- further enhance the town centre's landscape qualities, both in terms of open spaces and townscape;
- enhance cultural heritage, complementing other conservation-related initiatives that are planned and improving the overall standard of environmental quality;
- have an undetermined impact on climate change, air and water quality considerations, though the incorporation of sustainable drainage will assist water conservation and management objectives.

In terms of **economic sustainability**, the strategy will:

- provide job opportunities for those involved in implementation works;
- enhance the attractiveness of Wellingborough as a destination for businesses and tourists;
- make a major positive contribution towards making town centre more regionally competitive and so enhance its overall vitality and viability.

## **7. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the document**

7.1 Monitoring of the SA and implementation of the Public Realm Strategy will take place as part of the Borough Council's Annual Monitoring Report – available at:

[http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=568&pageNumber=14](http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=568&pageNumber=14)

7.2 There are two aspects to monitoring:

### *A) Monitoring using SA indicators*

Monitoring will cover the baseline information and SA indicators listed in the Appendix F Sustainability Appraisal Framework. Indicators that are considered to be of most relevance to the Public Realm Strategy are highlighted and shown below. It will be important to verify that the positive effects predicted actually do occur. Cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects should also be considered.

- Modal split for all journeys
- % of people surveyed who consider the town centre to be safe, friendly, attractive and well maintained

- Recorded crime per 100 population
- % of residents who think that for their area, over the past three years, community activities have got better or stayed the same
- Engagement in the arts
- Overall general satisfaction with local area
- Area of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 population
- % of people surveyed who believe that the conservation area and the appearance of listed buildings or their setting has been enhanced
- Carbon dioxide emissions by sector and per capita
- % of river length assessed as a) good biological quality; and b) good chemical quality
- Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality
- Renewable energy capacity installed by type
- The total number of VAT registered businesses in the area at the end of year
- The percentage change in the number of VAT registered businesses
- Experien ranking
- Percentage of vacant units within the town centre

*B) Monitoring of AAP implementation*

Appendix F of the AAP sets out the Monitoring Framework relating to implementation of AAP policies. The following extract relates to the Public Realm Strategy:

AAP Objective	Related Policies	Associated Targets	Indicators
To encourage the best in architecture, urban design and public spaces with energy efficient buildings that minimise carbon dioxide emissions	WTC15 –Public realm quality	Prepare a Public Realm Strategy by the end of 2009	Public Realm Strategy adopted
		Implement the rolling programme in accordance with the Public Realm Strategy.	Identified provision completed/outstanding
	Proposal Sites PS1 to PS10 inclusive	Completion of sites in accordance with the timetable in the Development Programme.	Identified provision completed/outstanding

7.3 Where monitoring identifies unforeseen adverse effects it will be appropriate to consider in the Annual Monitoring Report whether remedial action is needed. This could include reviewing the Public

Realm Strategy or making recommendations on the implementation of specific policies contained within the Town Centre Area Action Plan.