

# **Rushmoor Plan**

***PLANNING FOR RUSHMOOR'S FUTURE***

**Sustainability Appraisal**

**Adoption Report**

**Farnborough Town Centre**

**Supplementary Planning Document**

**July 2007**

**RUSHMOOR**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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**Glossary**

- SA     **Sustainability appraisal:** tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to be undertaken for all local development documents.
- SEA    **Strategic environmental assessment:** a generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European ‘SEA Directive’ (2001/42/EC) requires a formal ‘environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use’.
- SPD    **Supplementary Planning Document:** provide supplementary information to guide development.

## 1. Introduction

Rushmoor Borough Council adopted the Farnborough Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 17 July 2007.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4) and Planning Policy Statement 12, which require a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

- How sustainability issues have been integrated into the SPD;
- How the sustainability appraisal has been taken into account;
- How consultation has been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the document as adopted;
- The measures that will be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the SPD.

## 2. How sustainability issues have been integrated into the SPD

The SPD provides detailed guidance for new development in Farnborough town centre. It reflects the guidance in Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres. The key Government objectives for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by:

- Planning for the growth and development of existing centres; and
- Promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

The vision and objectives closely reflect Government guidance and those of the Town Centre Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance, adopted in 2000. The vision is; "To create a vibrant shopping, leisure, service and employment centre which provides for the needs of the local community, local employees and local business." This vision is articulated by eight objectives:

1. To encourage and facilitate the revitalisation of Farnborough town centre by developing a robust retail core with a broad range of shops and services
2. To create a high quality network of streets and spaces to provide a

more attractive town centre environment

3. To encourage the development of the evening economy
4. To enhance accessibility into and within the town centre by all means of transport
5. To create a unified and coherent civic quarter
6. To ensure that the town centre meets the needs of all sectors of its community
7. To support partnership working
8. To promote the town centre as a shopping and leisure destination.

The SPD vision, objectives and policies have at their heart the objectives of improving the town centre and protecting sustainable development.

### **3. How the sustainability appraisal has been taken into account**

The Sustainability Appraisal has contributed to the development of the SPD by providing an assessment of the sustainability of the document as it was developed. It demonstrates that sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development of the SPD and provides a formal statement and audit trail of the assessment.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report is a key output of the SPD preparation process. It supported the draft SPD on which formal public consultation was carried out.

The SEA/SA Scoping Report formed a useful part of the evidence base for the early stages of SPD preparation. It provided information on other relevant plans and strategies, from European to local level, and analysed which objectives and requirements were relevant to the preparation of the Rushmoor Local Development Framework.

The information gathered was used to create a set of sustainability objectives, which could be used to test emerging policies. The key sustainability issues identified in the Scoping Report therefore influenced the development of SPD policies.

The SPD policies were analysed against the sustainability objectives, which provided information on their economic, social and environmental

impact. The analysis included the nature of the impact and an assessment of the cumulative impacts. This information was set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report also identified opportunities to improve the sustainability of the SPD and set out mitigation measures. A number of changes were made to the SPD to reflect the outcome of the Sustainability Appraisal.

The proposed mitigation incorporated into the SPD is summarised below:

- Add specific reference to the affordability of housing in the SPD.
- Add reference to the protection of ground water in the SPD.
- Add specific reference to new development conforming to “Secured by Design” status.
- Add an additional reference to the efficient use of land.
- Add additional sustainability criteria.

#### **4. How the consultation has been taken into account**

An initial consultation on the draft SEA/SA Scoping Report occurred during 2004. Responses were invited from a range of relevant bodies and stakeholders. Their comments are listed in Appendix G of the draft SEA/SA Report. (This can be found on [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/sea](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/sea)). The three statutory environmental bodies were also consulted on the updates and the addendum.

Stakeholder and community involvement in the preparation of the SPD has included:

- An Action Planning Day on 13 July which over 60 local stakeholders attended
- A Council Members’ workshop on 31 July 2006
- Interviews with key stakeholders during August 2006
- A presentation to the Farnborough Business and Community Panel
- A Test and Review workshop on the emerging proposals with over 30 participants on 11 September 2006.
- The formal six week period of consultation on the draft SPD ran from 18 January to 28 February 2007.
- Consultation letters sent out in January 2007 to stakeholders and the statutory environmental bodies.
- Exhibition boards setting out the main proposals of the draft SPD were placed in the Council Offices and in the town centre.
- A dedicated project website was established for the duration of the document’s production.

The full details of consultation are set out in the consultation statement. Copies of this can be found on [www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk)

There were 36 duly made responses. The main issues raised are set out in the consultation statement (appendix 4.1). Appendix 5.1 of the consultation statement lists the comments made and the action taken.

## **5. Reasons for the chosen options**

In summary the SPD promotes development with substantial positive impacts. There are very good scores for increasing the vitality and viability of the town centres and promoting and encouraging high quality design of new development and landscaping. The SPD also promotes accessibility improvements particularly through improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes. Cumulatively the impacts on the air quality and air pollution objective are likely to be negative but this is mitigated by the high accessibility of the town centre location of the sites. On an individual policy basis the scores are overwhelmingly positive for all sustainability appraisal objectives.

The alternative option of not producing the SPD is assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal. This demonstrates the significant positive sustainability improvements resulting from the SPD would be lost if it was not produced. If no SPD is produced it will lead to the loss of policies and promotion of development with substantial positive impacts. In particular the positive sustainability appraisal impacts for increasing the vitality and viability of the town centres and promoting and encouraging high quality design of new development and landscaping will be lost.

In addition the positive promotion the SPD provides for accessibility improvements particularly through improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes will also be lost. Therefore if no SPD is produced the significant positive sustainability appraisal impacts will not occur.

## **6. The measures that will be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the SPD**

We publish an Annual Monitoring Report each December and biennial town centre health checks. These documents include town centre health indicators. This information will help to measure the key impacts of the SPD and help to assess areas of uncertainty.

**The list of indicators for the SA Monitoring Framework are set out below:**

- Retailer rents for Farnborough – taken from the UK prime in town retail rents published annually by Colliers CRE
- Percentage of vacant retail units within the shopping core – based on annual site surveys undertaken by Rushmoor Borough Council

This information will be published annually in the Annual Monitoring Report.

We will respond to any unforeseen effects apparent from the monitoring by reviewing the SPD and revising it as appropriate.

If you would like more information on the Sustainability Appraisal please contact the Jane Reeves in the Rushmoor Planning Policy Team:

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**KEY:** ✓✓ Clear, strong positive impacts ✓ Overall impact likely to be positive Overall impact neutral, mixed or unclear  
x Overall impact likely to be negative xx Clear, strong negative impacts ~ No effect<sup>?</sup>