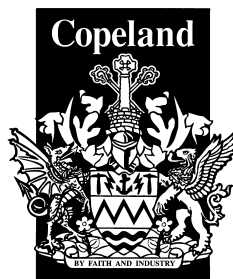


COPELAND LOCAL PLAN
2001-2016

Sustainability Appraisal

April 2005



COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Sustainability Appraisal of the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit Version. It also appraises the proposed changes to policies as contained within the 2nd Deposit Version of the Plan.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Appraisal is to ensure that policies and proposals within the Plan are sustainable. It also requires that sustainable aims and objectives are in place to form the foundations of the Plan.
- 1.4 The document presents the Sustainability Appraisal as follows. Sections 2 and 3 provide background information on the Local Plan and Sustainability respectively. Section 4 considers in further detail the need and purpose of Sustainability Appraisals. Section 5 presents the background work to the Copeland Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal including its integration into the Local Plan process. Section 6 describes the formulation of the required Sustainability Aims and Objectives. Section 7 discusses the identification of appropriate sustainability indicators and Section 8 explains the methodology of the Appraisal.

2.0 COPELAND LOCAL PLAN

- 2.1 The Copeland Local Plan 2001 is now out of date and a replacement plan to cover the period 2001-2016 is being prepared.
- 2.2 Preparation of the new plan began with consultation on an Issues Report during December 2001 – February 2002. The Copeland Local Plan 2001 – 2016 1st Deposit Version was published in February 2004. During the six week public consultation period approximately 1200 written representations were received.
- 2.3 The UK planning system has recently undergone major changes through the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (commencement September 2004). In accordance with the transitional arrangements set out by this Act the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 will proceed to adoption under existing legislation as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Aspects of the new system will be incorporated where possible to ensure the longevity and soundness of the plan. Incorporating a sustainability appraisal into the process is one such example of this.
- 2.4 The Sustainability Appraisal is published alongside the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016: 2nd Deposit Version. During the 6 week consultation period, any interested parties may make representations on the proposed changes to the Plan. A Public Inquiry has been scheduled for 27th September 2005.

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 Sustainability is concerned with ensuring that current environmental, social and economic needs are met without adversely affecting the needs of future generations. It is not just concerned with the needs of humans.
- 3.2 The concept of sustainability is not new but is becoming increasingly enshrined into all aspects of European and UK national policy, not least the 'UK Strategy for Sustainable Development, A Better Quality of Life (DETR, which sets out four objectives of sustainable development. These are:
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
 - Effective protection of the environment
 - Prudent use of natural resource
 - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth]
- 3.3 Planning is intrinsically linked to delivering sustainability. Key policy messages as included in Planning Policy Statement 1: 'Creating Sustainable Communities' include the need for planning authorities to take an approach based on integrating the above four aims of sustainable development and the need for positive planning to achieve sustainable development objectives and proactive management of development rather than simply regulation and control.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISALS

- 4.1 Although not a statutory requirement under existing regulations, Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans (DETR, 2000) states that local authorities are expected to undertake environmental appraisals of their development plans. Local authorities are further encouraged to incorporate social and economic issues into such appraisals.
- 4.2 Although as stated above, the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 will continue to adoption under existing regulations, there are two major implications of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act which are relevant to this area of work:
1. Clause 39 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that the development plan must be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. The Local Development Framework, which will replace the Local Plan, will require a sustainability appraisal
 2. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (EU Directive 2001/42/EC) came into force 21 July 2004 and

requires that all LDF's (and other plans already being prepared if adopted after 2006) are subject to an SEA.

- 4.3 Under the transitional arrangements, once the Local Plan 2001-2016 is adopted it will be 'saved' for a period of three years, over which time it will be progressively replaced by a series of Local Development Documents (LDD's), forming the Local Development Framework (LDF), under the new system. Therefore although the Local Plan is not subject to the above requirements, best practice would see that as much work as possible is undertaken to ensure the content of the plan is sustainable which will assist in assuring the longevity of the Plan, and its transference into relevant LDD's.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COPELAND LOCAL PLAN SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 5.1 In order to carry out a meaningful Sustainability Appraisal consideration needs to be given to how and when the appraisal should be carried out. The criteria against which policies are to be assessed require careful formulation. Thought must also be given to sustainability indicators that can be used to monitor policy / plan performance as the Sustainability Appraisal is an opportunity to inform future policy and decision making. Each of these factors are considered in turn below:

5.2 Best practice in sustainability appraisals

- 5.2.1 There are several published documents during the preparation of the Copeland Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal. These are listed below:

Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards better practice
(DETR, 1998) *A good practice guide*

'Action for Sustainability' (NWRA,2003) *applies a regional emphasis to national government aims*

'Implementing Action for Sustainability – An Integrated Appraisal for the North West 2003 (NWRA,2003) *a toolkit to assist in the implementation of sustainability appraisals*

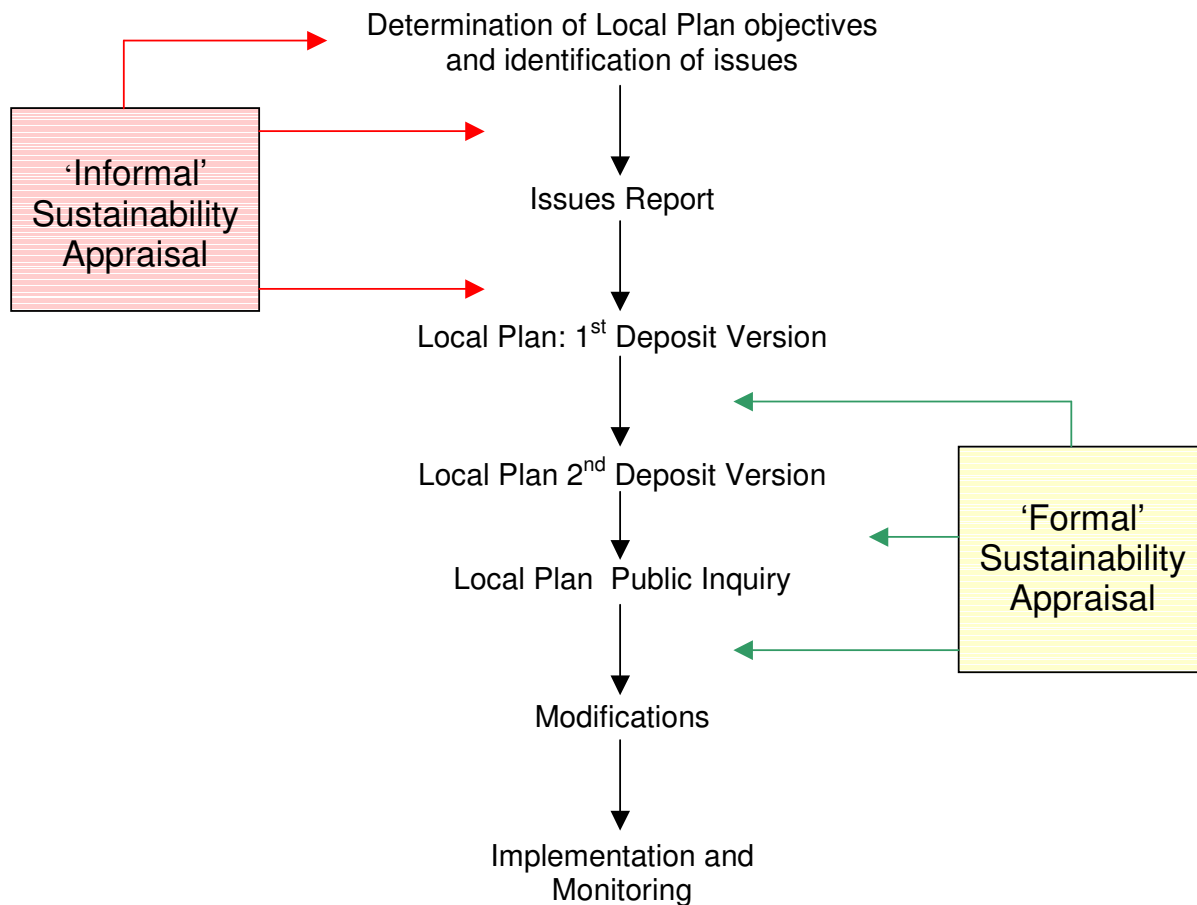
'Proposals for a good practice guide on sustainability appraisal' ()
in relation to North West RPG

'Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016:
Technical Paper 8 – Sustainability Appraisal, *appraisal undertaken as part of the Structure Plan replacement process*

5.3 Integration of Sustainability Appraisal into Local Plan process

- 5.3.1 Sustainability Appraisals should be used proactively as an integrated part of the plan making process. It is a tool that improves the content and quality of the plan and should not be seen as simply a one off requirement but a continuous process to inform future policy making and implementation.
- 5.3.2 The first formal stage of the Sustainability Appraisal process has been applied to the 1st Deposit Version of the plan. It should be recognised that informal consideration of sustainability has been given throughout the formulation of the Issues Report and the 1st Deposit Version policies, as have all aims and objectives underlying the plan.
- 5.3.3 The most appropriate stage to introduce the formal Sustainability Appraisal to the plan making process is at the 1st Deposit stage. It is intentionally separate from the initial policy formulation. This not only allows for the objective assessment of the Council's 'sustainable' aims and priorities against wider global sustainability issues, but also adds a relevant informed standpoint for the consideration of objections made to the 1st Deposit Version of the Plan as well as the proposed changes to be published in the 2nd Deposit Version.
- 5.3.4 For this reason, all proposed changes to the 2nd Deposit Version on the plan will also be subject to sustainability appraisal. This will also apply to any pre inquiry changes to the plan and any modifications post inquiry.
- 5.3.5 Figure 1 represents how the Sustainability Appraisal fits into the overall Local Plan production process.

Figure 1: Sustainability Appraisal within the plan process



6.0 DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

6.1 The Sustainability Aims set the broad underlying themes of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Objectives determine how these Aims will be delivered and should be satisfied by the Local Plan policies. Every policy will be assessed against the objectives. Defining the right Aims and Objectives, which are globally sustainable but which also reflect local priorities and circumstances, is therefore an important task. In order to define the Copeland Local Plan Sustainability Aims and Objectives, national, regional, countywide and local influences and processes were taken into account.

6.2 Sustainability Aims

6.2.1 As discussed above national government has identified four key themes in its aims of achieving sustainable development. At the regional level the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) has produced a regional sustainable development framework 'Action For Sustainability'

- 6.2.2 Table 1 sets out the national government and NWRA's aims in terms of sustainability. It also provides a relevant interpretation of these aims significant to the Copeland Local Plan area with emphasis to local trends and characteristics including:
- the continued decline in population
 - the quality of the local environment
 - the availability of brownfield land
 - the need for economic regeneration and diversity.
- 6.2.3 These aims should therefore form the basis of all policies within the Copeland Local Plan.

Table 1: Aims of Sustainability

National Government 'Quality of Life Counts'	NWRA 'Action for Sustainability'	Copeland Borough Council 'Sustainability Aims'
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone	A healthy, safe and socially responsible region where all people have access to basic necessities and are enabled to improve their quality of life	Secure a stable and balanced population whilst improving public health, safety and quality of life
Effective protection of the environment	A distinctive, clean and tree rich region which safeguards its wildlife, habitats and landscapes and acts to limit the local impacts of climate change	Protect and enhance landscapes, habitats and the built and natural environments
Prudent use of natural resources	A region which uses its resources wisely, makes full use of renewable alternatives, produces minimal waste and conserves its historic environment	Make the most effective use of existing buildings and infrastructure, previously developed land and natural resources
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment	A thriving, prosperous and attractive region of high unemployment with the necessary infrastructure to support it and which uses land efficiently	Promote and facilitate economic regeneration to achieve stable, diverse and self sustaining employment

6.3 Sustainability Objectives

6.3.1 The Sustainability Objectives fall under the four defined Sustainability Aims as listed in Table 1. As with the Sustainability Aims, they have been refined and applied at local level through the interpretation of national and regional objectives, as well as those established through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan.

6.3.2 Extensive use was also made at this stage of the NWRA's 'Integrated Appraisal Toolkit for the Northwest'

Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016: 1st Deposit Version:

6.3.3 The Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit Version contained a set of 'Sustainable Development Principles' (page 14, CBC, 2004) around which all policies were based. A copy of the Principles have been reproduced in Appendix 3.

6.3.4 The Sustainability Appraisal provides the opportunity to objectively review these Principles in light of the newly defined Sustainability Aims of the plan. This process was used as the basis for the formulation of the Sustainability Objectives.

6.3.5 Appendix 4 summarises the sustainability objectives as taken from the NWRA, RPG good practice guidance and the sustainability appraisal of the Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan. Also identified are where the 'Sustainable Development Principles' as contained in the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit version, have direct relevance to those objectives sought at County and regional level (indicators with indirect associations have not been listed).

6.3.6 This process highlighted areas where the Local Plan Sustainable Development Principles were weak in seeking to achieve sustainability. Most notably this was shown to be concerned with the following issues:

- No direct reference to renewable energy
- No direct reference of waste minimisation or recycling
- No direct reference to health issues
- No direct reference to education issues
- No direct reference to the involvement of communities / stakeholders and the improvement of equity and equality
- No direct reference to tourism issues

6.3.7 To address these issues and in order to make the foundations of the Plan more comprehensive, the 'Sustainable Development Principles' were revised and expanded to produce the 'Sustainability Objectives' as listed in Box 1.

- 6.3.8 These objectives will be included in the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 2nd Deposit Version in place of the existing Sustainability Principles and will form the overall objectives of the Plan.
- 6.3.9 Working papers providing commentary on the formulation and refinement of the Objectives are provided in Appendix 5. It shows the process of the refinement of CBC's suggested objectives to overcome the weaknesses of the original Sustainable Development Principles.

Box 1: Sustainability Objectives

- Stabilise and maintain population levels within communities in the plan area
- Ensure that local facilities and services are available to everyone
- Ensure that local needs of the community are met locally and that decent, good quality affordable homes are available to all
- Increase community participation in decisions regarding the future of development in the planning area
- Protect and enhance landscapes and townscapes
- Protect and enhance biodiversity
- Protect and enhance features of historical and archaeological importance
- Ensure that development is not at risk from flooding and does not cause flooding elsewhere
- Reuse existing buildings and previously developed land before greenfield sites
- Protect and improve ground, surface and marine water quality
- Ensure that air quality is not adversely affected by development
- Promote recycling, waste minimisation and renewable energy
- Reduce number of journeys made by car
- Encourage economic growth and development
- Encourage diversification of urban and rural economies
- Improve opportunities and access to jobs
- Promote leisure and tourism and increase visitor numbers

7.0 Development of sustainability indicators

- 7.1 A Sustainability Appraisal also provides the opportunity to implement effective plan monitoring procedures. Monitoring is essential in order to understand how successful plan policies have been in delivering the plan Aims and Objectives, providing information which can be used in future decision making and policy formulation processes.
- 7.2 Table 2 shows the selected indicators. Appendix 6 highlights the process used to arrive at these indicators. Where possible indicators which are already available have been used.

- 7.3 It is proposed that the monitoring reports will be produced annually in December. It should also be noted that the indicators may be subject to amendment depending on the availability of data.

Table 2: Sustainability Indicators

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
Stabilise and maintain population levels within communities in the plan area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough population (with age / sex breakdown) • Key service centre population
Ensure that local facilities and services are available to everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access / geographical barriers from IMD • Number of new dwellings (>5's) within 500m of a public transport route / cycleway • Provision of cycleways
Ensure that housing needs of the community are met locally and that decent, good quality affordable homes are available to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of new housing development on PDL • Proportion new homes/existing housing that is affordable • Unfit dwellings (made fit/demolished) • IMD Housing Domain
Increase community participation in decisions regarding the future of development in the planning area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects/initiatives involving community groups and the LPA • Responses to Local Plan revisions • Attendance at Planning Panel
Protect and enhance landscapes and townscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of TPO's • Number of TPO trees felled • Number of planning applications granted against the advice of the Countryside Agency or English Heritage • Area of land designated for its landscape quality or amenity value • Area covered by Conservation Areas • Area covered by Ancient Woodlands • Area covered by urban greenspace / landscape importance
Protect and enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of/area of land within designated sites of Nature Conservation Value (International, National, Regional, Local) • Number of/area of land within Local Nature Reserves • Condition of nationally important wildlife sites • Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets • Population of Wild Birds (farm and woodland) • Biodiversity in coastal/estuarine areas

OBJECTIVES (cont.)	INDICATORS (cont.)
Protect and enhance features of historical and archaeological importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of Listed Buildings and archaeological sites lost to development • Number of buildings at risk • Public sector investment in listed buildings/ conservation areas
Ensure that development is not at risk from flooding and does not cause flooding elsewhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of planning applications permitted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency where the objection was made on flood defence grounds • Development in the floodplain'
Reuse existing buildings and previously developed land before greenfield sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of derelict and contaminated land within settlement boundaries • Development on brownfield/greenfield sites • Densities of residential developments
Protect and improve ground, surface and marine water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Water Bathing Directive • Freshwater River assessment • Number of SUDS implemented
Ensure that air quality is not adversely affected by development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations
Promote recycling, waste minimisation and renewable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste generated per person • % domestic recycled waste • Number of renewable energy schemes approved • Amount of waste composted
Reduce number of journeys made by private car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance travelled to work
Encourage economic growth and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Economic development by type on PDL • Area of land within business parks/clusters • % New office/business floor space within town centres • IMD Employment Domain
Encourage diversification of urban and rural economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of businesses • New businesses (VAT registered) per 10000 adult pop
Improve opportunities and access to jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment levels • Total new jobs created • Number of jobs in borough • IMD Income Domain • total output of the local economy (GDP per Capita)'
Promote leisure and tourism and increase visitor numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor numbers • Number of attractions / facilities

8.0 THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PROCESS

- 8.1 As part of the Appraisal process all Local Plan policies have been assessed against the Sustainability Objectives. Every policy has been given a score as to how it impacts on sustainability in terms of each objective based on the following criteria:

Scoring criteria:

++	Policy moves significantly towards sustainability
+	Policy moves marginally towards sustainability
-	Policy moves marginally away from sustainability
--	Policy moves significantly away from sustainability
?	Unknown impact
< >	No interaction between the policy and this objective

- 8.2 The assessment of each policy is set out in Appendices 1 and 2. Appendix 1 provides an assessment of all policies as featured in the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit Version. Appendix 2 provides an assessment of policies included in the 2nd Deposit Version which have been changed or are in addition to those in the 1st Deposit Version.
- 8.3 Where appropriate, justification for the score awarded is provided. The assessment identifies policies which could be amended in order to offer a greater contribution towards delivering sustainability. Commentary on such suggestions is provided along with any proposed changes or justification for inclusion of perceived unsustainable policies e.g. the protection of environmental assets may have a negative impact on the promotion of renewable energy sources.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CBC (2004) Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit Version, CBC

DETR (1998) Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice, HMSO, London

DETR (2000) Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans, HMSO, London

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1: Sustainability Appraisal of Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit Version Policies
- Appendix 2: Sustainability of Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 2nd Deposit Version Policies (amended and new policies only)
- Appendix 3: Sustainable Development Principles
- Appendix 4: Assessment of Local Plan 1st Deposit Version Principles of Sustainable Development
- Appendix 5: Formulation of Sustainability Objectives
- Appendix 6: Formulation of Sustainability Indicators

Appendix 1:
Sustainability Appraisal of Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 1st Deposit
Version Policies