

Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan Development Plan Document

Sustainability Appraisal

Regulation 27 Pre-Submission Publication

Non-Technical Summary

**• Heritage • Biodiversity • Economy
Education • Culture • Resources • Safety
Community • Environment • Health • Social
inclusiveness • Accessibility • Heritage
Biodiversity • Economy • Education •
Culture • Resources • Safety • Community
Environment • Health • Social inclusiveness
Accessibility • Heritage • Biodiversity**

This document is the Sustainability Appraisal Non-Technical Summary of the Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan DPD (Regulation 27 Pre-Submission Publication). The SA report aims to identify the potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the DPD.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report has been compiled for consultation purposes and your comments are welcomed (please see details below to comment).

We Want Your Views

The Strategic Planning Group welcomes feedback on this report and particularly in regard to your views on the following:

- Are there any impacts (environmental, social or economic) that have not been identified?
- Are there any further mitigation measures that have not been identified?

If you wish to comment on this report please use the contact details below.

The consultation period extends in parallel to that of the THAAP Regulation 27 Pre-Submission Publication which runs from 8th November to 17th December 2010.

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For further information regarding this Sustainability Appraisal or to request an alternative format or language please contact the Strategic Planning Group Tel: 01803208804 or e-mail sa@torbay.gov.uk

Reference copies of the SA report and related documents and leaflets are available at the Council's Libraries, Connections Offices and at Roebuck House, Torquay.

This Non-Technical Summary and the relevant Sustainability Appraisal Report can also be accessed via the Internet on <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/ldf> or http://www.torbay.gov.uk/sustainability_appraisal

This report constitutes the non-technical summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan Regulation 27 Pre-Submission Publication. It provides a brief overview of the key issues and conclusions. Detailed findings are included in the full Sustainability Appraisal Report.

1. What is the Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan DPD?

The Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan (THAAP) will form one of the key documents in the Local Development Framework (LDF). The THAAP seeks to provide a planning framework to facilitate the regeneration of the area, which comprises Torquay Harbour and its immediate surroundings. This area has already been the subject of numerous strategies prepared by various Council departments and the Torbay Development Agency (TDA). However, as yet, no unified approach to their delivery has existed to draw these strategies together. The purpose of the THAAP is to provide a co-ordinated approach to regeneration, complementing the regeneration initiatives promoted by the TDA. It will also provide a framework for the detailed conservation area enhancement and public realm work being implemented by the Council's Spatial Planning Business Unit.

2. What is a Sustainability Appraisal?

Under the current planning system Local Authorities must produce a Sustainability Appraisal alongside any Development Plan Document within the Torbay Local Development Framework. European and UK legislation require that the LDF is also subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a process that considers the effects of development planning on the environment. Government guidance advises that these two processes should be carried out together and requires the LDF to be subject to a SA incorporating SEA.

The aim of the SA/ SEA appraisal process is to ensure that full consideration is given to the social, environmental and economic impacts of the plan being proposed. This document summarises the key findings of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Torquay Harbour Area Action Plan DPD.

The sustainability appraisal process feeds into various stages in the plan's development, ensuring continual consideration of sustainability issues throughout plan production. This non-technical summary relates to the findings of Stages A - D of the process as outlined below. The consultation on this Non-Technical Summary and related SA report will form Stage D of the appraisal process.

Stage A: Setting context and scope

Stage B: Developing options and assessing effects

Stage C: Preparing the SA Report

Stage D: Consulting on the plan and the SA Report

Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Plan

3. Key Findings

A number of issues were raised by consultees in response to the consultation on the THAAP Draft Regulation 25 and the accompanying SA. This has persuaded the Strategic Planning Group to consider further changes to the THAAP, and it felt that a further consultation on the modifications therefore considered to be necessary.

The key changes to the THAAP consultation document deal with:

- Policy TH 4: North Quay, the Pavilion and Princess Gardens
- Policy TH15: Strand (various buildings)

There is no material change between Draft Regulation 25 and Regulation 27 for the rest of the THAAP policies; therefore they do not require any further assessment.

3.1 Policy TH 4: North Quay, the Pavilion and Princess Gardens

The proposal for Princess Gardens in the Regulation 27 is significantly different from the proposal set out in the Regulation 25 document. From the sustainability perspective the new proposal scores well on economic objectives but also performs poorly against environmental objectives. There are no significant changes made to North Quay and the Pavilion, therefore the assessment mainly covers Princess Gardens.

The policy raises conflict between providing housing, a hotel, retail and leisure facilities for the community on one hand, whilst decreasing public space and intruding on a listed park and garden on the other hand. Any loss of registered garden would therefore need to be justified in terms of maximising community benefits.

Despite this conflict the policy performs well against the SA objectives relating to economic and communities. The policy will contribute positively to the tourism industry in Torquay Harbour by introducing leisure, retail and hotel investment. Promoting mixed use development will have positive impacts by increasing diversity, reducing seasonality of employment in Torbay. The policy will also have positive impacts on cultural activities in the harbour by providing exhibition space and entertainment areas.

The policy supports mixed use development and improvement of public realm; this is likely to reduce the desire to travel by car. In contrast provision of off street parking will have the potential to encourage use of private car. The regeneration of the Harbour area will nevertheless create an attractive holiday destination and reduce the need to travel further afield.

Provision of a hotel, retail and leisure facilities is likely to support training and education in the hospitality and retail industries. These facilities are likely to facilitate passive surveillance which will have positive impacts on reducing anti-social behaviour in the harbour area.

Provision of residential apartments could have minor positive impacts on meeting housing needs. Nevertheless, it is unlikely to provide affordable housing on the site.

The policy promotes development that may take up some of the garden land. This will have a permanent negative effect by causing loss of habitat and species and will also cause habitat fragmentation. Development in this area should therefore incorporate features that enhance biodiversity.

Allowing development in a registered garden may compromise its historic value. This will have permanent negative impact. Development should therefore seek to ensure that the fundamental integrity of the listed park and garden is maintained.

The policy ensures that a flood risk assessment is carried out for any development proposals in the gardens. Contributions will also be sought from developers to fund structural improvement works and enhanced sea defences in an area that is at risk from tidal flooding. Torbay Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 2 will provide more information on flood risk in the area.

The proposed mixed use development in Princess Gardens may have a negative impact on health by reducing public open space. However, improving the quality of the open space will have positive impact on health and recreational exercise.

Short-term negative impacts might take place during the construction phase in form of noise and generic pollution. To offset this impact working hours should be restricted to avoid sensitive periods.

Surface run-off water pollution (oil spills, chemicals etc.) during construction and operation phases is likely to have cumulative negative impacts. This will affect both water quality and living organisms in the water. Production of a Pollution Prevention Plan to include method statements for management of all potentially polluting activities on the site will be necessary.

The policy itself does not identify specific measures to minimise consumption of natural resource. Nevertheless, Policy TH1 requires new development at Torquay Harbour area to follow sustainable construction and design.

3.2 Policy TH 15: Strand (various buildings)

TH15 is a new policy and a detailed assessment was therefore carried out to determine its relevance to sustainability. The sustainability appraisal found that the policy would overall have a positive effect for sustainability in the harbour area. Where minor negative impacts were detected, measures to offset adverse effects were considered.

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The policy performs well against the objectives related to the economy, having positive effects on the retail and tourism industries. It also provides non-seasonal job opportunities and supports training and education in the retail sector. However, it is unlikely to provide affordable housing.

The policy takes account of historic assets which supports sustainability objectives but it could have minor negative effects by increasing noise during the construction phase. To offset this impact working hours should be restricted to avoid sensitive periods.

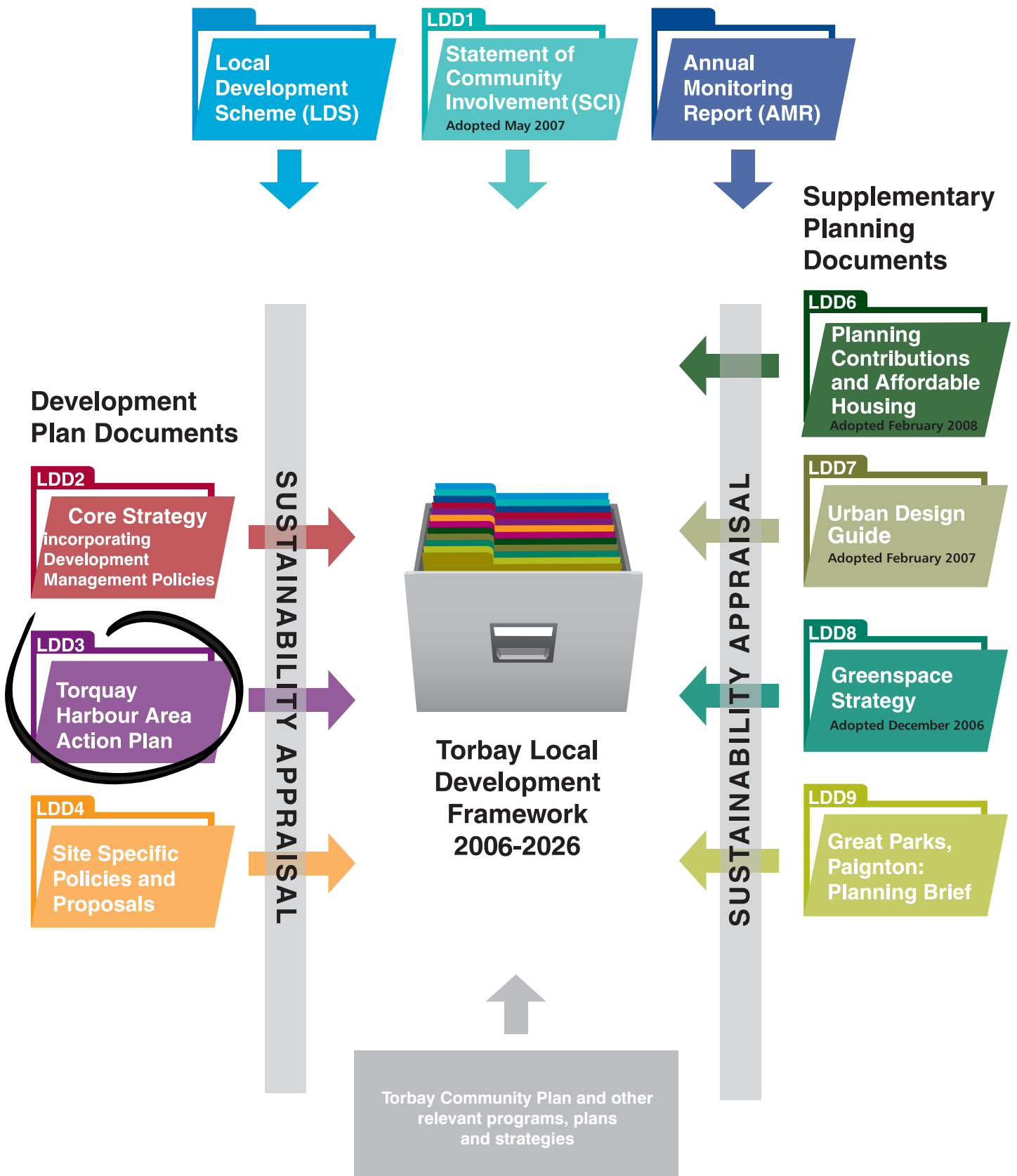
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4. Next Step

The next stage in the development of the THAAP Sustainability Appraisal is to take on board the feedback from this consultation and update the SA Report accordingly and appraising any significant changes to the THAAP Regulation 27 Pre-Submission Publication.

A full final Sustainability Appraisal will be submitted alongside the submission version of the THAAP. A statement will be published upon adoption of the THAAP to indicate how the sustainability appraisal process and consultation responses have influenced the development of the DPD. These documents will be made available in hard copy in the locations listed on the inside cover of the report and in electronic format on the LDF website (www.torbay.gov.uk/ldf - click on sustainability appraisal).

The structure of the Local Development Framework



Note: The status of certain Local Development Documents identified in earlier versions of the Torbay Local Development Scheme has changed as follows: LDD5 Generic Development Control Policies - now included in LDD2 Core Strategy. LDD10 Yalberton Road Paignton: Planning Brief has now been deleted.