

Core Strategy
Development Plan Document

Sustainability Appraisal

Regulation 25 Consultation

Vision, Objectives and Options for Growth in Torbay

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

Purpose of this Document

This report has been published alongside the Regulation 25 Draft Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). The Core Strategy outlines a number of possible growth options for Torbay.

This report considers each of these options and tests them for sustainability to determine their possible environmental, social and economic impacts. This paper provides information to assist in making an informed decision on the best option to take forward.

We Want Your Views

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

- Have all the impacts of each of the options being identified?
- Are there any impacts have not been identified
- Are there any further mitigation measures which have not been identified?

The consultation period extends in parallel to that of the Regulation 25 Draft Core Strategy which runs from Monday 14 September to Friday 23 October 2009.

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Reference copies of this Sustainability Appraisal and related leaflets are available at the Council's Libraries, Connections Offices and at Roebuck House, Torquay

This document can also be accessed via the internet: <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/ldf> or <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/sustainabilityappraisal>

Key Terms and Abbreviations

Development Plan Document (DPD)

Local Development Framework (LDF)

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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1.1 The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of development plans.

1.2 SA is mandatory for Development Plan Documents (DPD) under the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). SAs of DPDs should also fully incorporate the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.

1.3 This document presents the findings of the appraisal of the Core Strategy Growth Options Paper. Its role is to assist with the identification of the most appropriate option, in sustainability terms, to predict implications for sustainable development and put forward recommendations for improvement where necessary.

1.4 The Sustainability Appraisal sought to determine the performance of options in sustainability terms but does not seek to pre-judge the approach which the Core Strategy should adopt.

2 Growth Options

2.1 The overall level of growth is set by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The Proposed Changes of the RSS (2008) required Torbay to create 15,000 new homes and 10,000 jobs between 2006-2026. The Growth Options paper proposes five different options to provide homes, employment uses, local retail and open space to meet the RSS requirement.

Option 1: Constrained development approach

No development outside the built up area of the three towns, other than development already allocated in the Saved Adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011. The entire growth requirement (i.e. 15,000) will be met on sites in the built up area, which will entail high rise development.

Option 2: Urban focus and limited greenfield development approach

Some new greenfield development will be proposed around Torbay to avoid “town cramming” but the main focus remains on development in the built up area. It is assumed that no more than 10,700 dwellings can be achieved in the urban area and that the remainder (i.e. 4300 dwellings) will need to be found on sites around Torbay.

Option 3A: Mixed greenfield approach

It is assumed that no more than 8300 dwellings can be achieved in the urban area and that the remainder (i.e. 6700 dwellings) will need to be found on sites around Torbay.

Option 3B: Single urban extension approach

It is assumed that no more than 8300 dwellings can be achieved in the urban area. There would be a single, planned urban extension on the edge of the built up area to provide around 6700 dwellings.

Option 3C: Northern Torbay approach

It is assumed that no more than 11,460 dwellings can be achieved in the urban area in Torbay and that the remainder (i.e. 3540 dwellings) will need to be found on sites around Torquay.

Option 4: Business as usual

This option represents development as outlined in the Adopted Torbay Local Plan (1995-2011) the growth rate relates to Devon Structure Plan growth of approximately 300 dwelling per year. This option would not conform to the RSS.

3.1 The SA involved assessing the performance of each option against the SA framework (see Appendix A). The appraisal was a qualitative exercise based on professional judgement taking into account the information gathered in the SA Scoping Report.

3.2 The magnitude of the effects of the different options on each objective were defined as significant positive benefit, some positive benefit, neutral or no link, significant negative impact, negative and uncertain impacts.

3.3 The SA should also consider the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects, including cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects whenever possible.

3.4 Option 4 “Business as usual” scenario enables a comparison between the proposed options and the current adopted Torbay Local Plan (1995-2011). This option has been considered as a requirement of the SEA Directive, although it has not been considered in the Growth Options paper.

4 Key Findings

4.1 The full SA matrix of the options is included in Appendix B. However, each option has been summarised, identifying the nature of the impacts (positive and negative) in this section. This summary also provides an opportunity to make a comparison between the different options and therefore identify the most and least sustainable option.

Option 1: Constrained development approach

(+)	(-)
<p>Reduces the need to travel.</p> <p>Reduces loss of rural greenfield sites and agricultural land</p>	<p>Little opportunity to provide affordable housing;</p> <p>Reduces open space available for recreation;</p> <p>Possible noise pollution;</p> <p>Loss of tourism related development to residential developments;</p> <p>Possible loss of employment sites to residential developments;</p> <p>Possible damage to townscape and landscape;</p> <p>Possible loss of historic assets;</p> <p>Increased risk of flooding;</p> <p>Possible affect on the SAC integrity.</p>

4.2 Option 1 performs poorly against most of the social and economic objectives and relatively well against the environmental objectives. It is considered to be the least sustainable among the 6 options

4.3 This option proposes development in four holiday parks, two of which are in Brixham at the boarder of South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at Berry Head. This might affect the integrity of the SAC. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required if this option is put forward through public consultation as the Core Strategy Preferred Spatial Option.

Option 2: Urban focus and limited greenfield development approach

(+)	(-)
<p>Provides opportunities for affordable housing;</p> <p>Limited loss of habitats and species;</p> <p>Provides wide range of house types.</p>	<p>Increases the need to travel;</p> <p>Increased risk of flooding;</p> <p>Loss of tourism related development to residential developments;</p>

	Possible loss of employment sites to residential developments;
	Possible loss of historic assets;
	Possible affect on the SAC integrity.

4.4 Option 2 performs well against social and economic objectives and scored better than Option 1 against environmental objectives. It is considered to be the second strongest option in terms of sustainable development.

4.5 This option proposes development in four holiday parks, two of which are in Brixham as in Option 1 above. This might affect the integrity of South Hams SAC at Berry Head as well as the quality of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). HRA is required if this option is put forward through public consultation as the Core Strategy Preferred Spatial Option.

Option 3A: Mixed greenfield approach

(+)	(-)
Provides opportunities for affordable housing;	Increases the need to travel;
Provides good access to open space;	Possible damage to landscape;
Takes the pressure off employment land;	Possible fragmentation of rural habitats;
Provide wide range of house types;	Unlikely to encourage sustainable transport;
Assists diversifying the tourism industry.	Irreversible loss of undeveloped land and productive agricultural holdings;
	Possible adverse effect and damage to AONB and locally designated sites and protected species.

4.6 Option 3A performs well against the economic objectives. It might provide significant benefits in terms job opportunities. However, it has considerable cumulative environmental impacts including landscape degradation and loss of flora and fauna. This option comes in third place when ranking the options in terms of achieving sustainable development.

Option 3B: Single urban extension approach

(+)	(-)
Provides opportunities for affordable housing;	Increases the need to travel;

4 Key Findings

<p>Provides wide range of house types;</p> <p>Provides good access to open space;</p> <p>Assists diversifying the tourism industry;</p> <p>Takes the pressure off employment land.</p>	<p>Possible damage to landscape;</p> <p>Loss of habitats and species;</p> <p>Fragmentation of habitats;</p> <p>Possible irreversible loss of undeveloped land and productive agricultural holdings;</p> <p>Unlikely to encourage sustainable transport.</p>
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4.7 Option 3B scores significantly positive on economic and social objectives. There are likely significant benefits in terms of health, job opportunities and community improvements but it might cause considerable negative environmental impact. Developing large greenfield sites may be more acceptable once all brownfield capacity has been exhausted. This option is the strongest in terms of sustainable development.

Option 3C: Northern Torbay approach

(+)	(-)
<p>Provides opportunities for affordable housing;</p> <p>Provides wide range of house types;</p> <p>Takes the pressure off employment land.</p>	<p>Increases the need to travel;</p> <p>Loss of tourism related development to residential developments;</p> <p>Possible damage to landscape;</p> <p>Loss of habitats and species;</p> <p>Increased risk of flooding;</p> <p>Unlikely to encourage sustainable transport;</p> <p>Possible negative impact on the quality of locally designated areas.</p>

4.8 Option 3C performs relatively well against the economic and social objectives. However, it has considerable cumulative environmental impacts. Particularly it might affect a number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in North of Torbay. This option also might increase inequalities between the three towns by concentrating the growth in Torquay and neglecting Paignton and Brixham for the next 20 years. It is the second least sustainable option.

Option 4: Business as usual

(+)	(-)
Reduces the need to travel; Limited loss of habitats and species; Protects and enhances landscape	Unlikely to provide sufficient affordable housing; Loss of tourism related development to residential developments; Possible loss of employment sites to residential developments.

4.9 Option 4 performs well against environmental objectives but poorly against social and economic objectives. This option comes in fourth place when ranking the options in terms of achieving sustainable development.

4.10 There are a number of potential cumulative impacts arising from all the options above. A careful consideration is required to maximise social, economic and environmental and minimise adverse impact.

5 Limitations

5.1 The assessment on pollution, resource consumption and waste generation objectives (see Appendix B) is rather general e.g. it is assumed that the higher the growth levels the higher the level of pollution. In some circumstances this is not accurate and it should be considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of specific developments.

5.2 There is uncertainty on what increases crime; overcrowding or dead pockets between and within urban areas. The SA considers crime reduction measures depend on individual application.

6.1 Where negative impact has been identified, measures to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effect should be proposed. These measures include proactive avoidance of adverse effects as well as actions taken after effects are noticed. Mitigation measures also include recommendation for improving beneficial effects. Table 1 below includes all the negative impacts identified for the six options and proposes mitigation measures to overcome the adverse effects.

Negative Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Increased need to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote car sharing, home working, and integrated public transport. - Improvement of pedestrian access and cycle routes in Torbay.
Loss of employment land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict control on planning decisions that causes loss of employment land. - Provision of mixed use development
Loss of habitats and species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using section 106 Agreements to promote the creation of new habitats and the protection of existing - Incorporate biodiversity features in new and existing buildings including green roofs, green walls, tree planting, nesting boxes etc.
Possible adverse effect and damage to locally designated sites and protected species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict control on planning decisions that affect locally designated areas. - Use of planning conditions/s106 to protect locally designated areas and protected species
Increased risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid development in zone 2 and 3 where possible; - Incorporating sustainable drainage systems of all proposed development.
Loss of tourism related development to residential developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict control on planning applications proposing change of use. - Creating modern purpose built tourist accommodation - Protection of core holiday areas through LDF policies.

6 Mitigation Measures

Negative Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Irreversible loss of undeveloped land and productive agricultural holdings	Strict control on planning applications proposing change of use.
Loss of historic assets	Strengthen controls with concise policy formulation to prevent any degradation to protected historic sites and buildings as a result of any proposed development.
Air, water, land and noise pollution	Requirement of a high standard of sustainable urban design.
Provision of affordable housing less than the demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration of lowering the threshold for affordable housing. - Introduction of a system whereby financial contributions are requested from smaller developments instead of on-site affordable housing provision.
Reduced open space available for recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict control on planning applications proposing change of use. - Upgrading other play/recreational facilities.
The increase of new housing will add pressure on existing water resources	Incorporate water efficiency measures in all new and existing buildings.
The increase of new housing will add pressure and increase energy use	Consider opportunities for energy efficiency improvements, implementation of CHP, on-site renewables etc.

7.1 The sustainability appraisal process runs parallel to the Core Strategy. The Scoping Report represents the first stage of the SA process. It sets out the context of the SA and provides information on the sustainability framework, sustainability issues in Torbay and plan policies and programmes related to the Core Strategy. The Scoping Report and the Baseline Report are at statutory consultation stage (May-June 2009) and they are available to view at <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/sustainabilityappraisal>

7.2 This report on the Growth Options represents the second stage of the SA process. The responses from this consultation will be taken on board and will be fed into the Core Strategy to determine the Preferred Option.

7.3 The draft Core Strategy will be consulted on based on the Preferred Option. In parallel a draft Sustainability Appraisal will be prepared which will provide a detailed assessment of the Core Strategy Preferred Option and will also provide possible mitigation measures and set out a framework for monitoring.

7.4 The Growth Options were also subject to **Habitats Regulation Assessment** screening to determine whether any of the Options could have negative impacts on European sites within and in the vicinity of Torbay. Natural England agreed that Options 1 and 2 with development close to Berry Head and Sharkham Point are likely to have a significant effect on the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and therefore require Appropriate Assessment. Torbay Council will undertake further assessment should any of these options be chosen as a preferred spatial approach for development in Torbay.

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

High Level Objectives	Sub-objectives
1. Improve health and wellbeing	1.1 Improve health of all communities in Torbay
	1.2 Reduce health inequality
	1.3 Promote healthy lifestyles
2. Support communities that meet people's needs	2.1 Help make suitable and affordable housing available to everyone
	2.2 Provide everyone with opportunities for education and training
	2.3 Reduce crime and fear of crime
	2.4 Promote stronger and more vibrant communities
	2.5 Increase access to and participation in cultural activities
	2.6 Provide the required infrastructure and services in line with the rate of population increase
3. Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs	3.1 Give everyone in Torbay access to work opportunities
	3.2 Reduce poverty and income inequality
	3.3 Meet local needs locally
	3.4 Harness the economic potential of the coast in a sustainable way
	3.5 Increase circulation of wealth within Torbay
	3.6 Promote diversification of the economy to provide a range of satisfying job opportunities.
	3.7 Reduce the vulnerability of the economy to climate change and harness opportunities arising
	3.8 Contribute to the regeneration and quality and diversity of the tourism industry
	3.9 Reduce reliance on seasonal and part time work within Torbay
4. Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment	4.1 Reduce the need /desire to travel by car
	4.2 Reduce the need /desire to travel by air
	4.3 Help everyone access basic services easily, safely and affordably

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

High Level Objectives	Sub-objectives
	4.4 Make public transport, cycling and walking easier and more attractive
	4.5 Encourage a switch from transporting freight by road to rail or water
5. Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	5.1 Protect and enhance habitats and species
	5.2 Promote conservation and wise use of land
	5.3 Protect and enhance landscape and townscape
	5.4 Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness including rural ways of life
	5.5 Maintain and enhance historical assets
	5.6 Reduce vulnerability to flooding and sea level rise
6. Minimise consumption of natural resources	6.1 Reduce non renewable energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
	6.2 Keep water consumption within local carrying capacity limits
	6.3 Minimise consumption and extraction of minerals
	6.4 Reduce waste generation and increase materials efficiency
	6.5 Minimise land, water, air, light, noise and generic pollution

Appendix B: Core Strategy Growth Options Matrix

SA Sub-objectives	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 3C	Option 4
1.1 Improve health to all communities in Torbay	-	+	++	++	+	-
1.2 Reduce health inequality	-	+	+	++	+	-
1.3 Promote healthy lifestyles	+	+	-	+	-	-
2.1 Help make sustainable and affordable housing available to everyone	-	++	++	++	++	--
2.2 Provide everyone with opportunities for education and training	+	?	-	++	?	+
2.3 Reduce crime and fear of crime	?	?	?	?	?	?
2.4 Promote stronger and more vibrant communities	+	-	-	?	+	+
2.5 Increase access to and participation in cultural activities	-	+	-	-	+	+
2.6 Provide the required infrastructure in line with the rate of population increase	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.1 Give everyone in Torbay access to work opportunities	--	+	+	+	+	--

Appendix B: Core Strategy Growth Options Matrix

SA Sub-objectives	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 3C	Option 4
3.2 Reduce poverty and income inequality	-	+	+	+	+	--
3.3 Meet local needs locally	+	+	-	+	+	++
3.4 Harness the economic potential of the coast in a sustainable way	-	-	+	+	+	-
3.5 Increase circulation of wealth within Torbay	?	?	?	?	?	?
3.6 Promote diversification of the economy to provide a range of satisfying job opportunities	--	+	++	++	-	--
3.7 Reduce the vulnerability of the economy to climate change and harness opportunities arising	?	?	?	?	?	?
3.8 Contribute to the regeneration and quality and diversity of the tourism industry	--	-	+	++	-	--
3.9 Reduce reliance on seasonal and part time work within Torbay	--	-	+	++	-	--
4.1 Reduce the need /desire to travel by car	--	+	-	-	-	++

Appendix B: Core Strategy Growth Options Matrix

SA Sub-objectives	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 3C	Option 4
4.2 Reduce the need /desire to travel by air	?	?	?	?	?	?
4.3 Help everyone access basic services easily, safely and affordably	+	+	-	+	+	+
4.4 Make public transport, cycling and walking easier and more attractive	++	++	-	-	+	++
4.5 encourage a switch from transportation freight by road to rail or water	0	0	0	0	0	0
5.1 Protect and enhance habitats and species	-	+	-	--	-	+
5.2 Promote conservation and wise use of land	-	+	-	-	-	+
5.3 Protect and enhance landscape and townscape	-	+	-	-	--	+
5.4 Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness including rural ways of life	+	+	-	-	+	+
5.5 Maintain and enhance historical assets	--	+	+	+	-	+
5.6 Reduce vulnerability to flooding and sea level rise	--	--	+	+	-	?

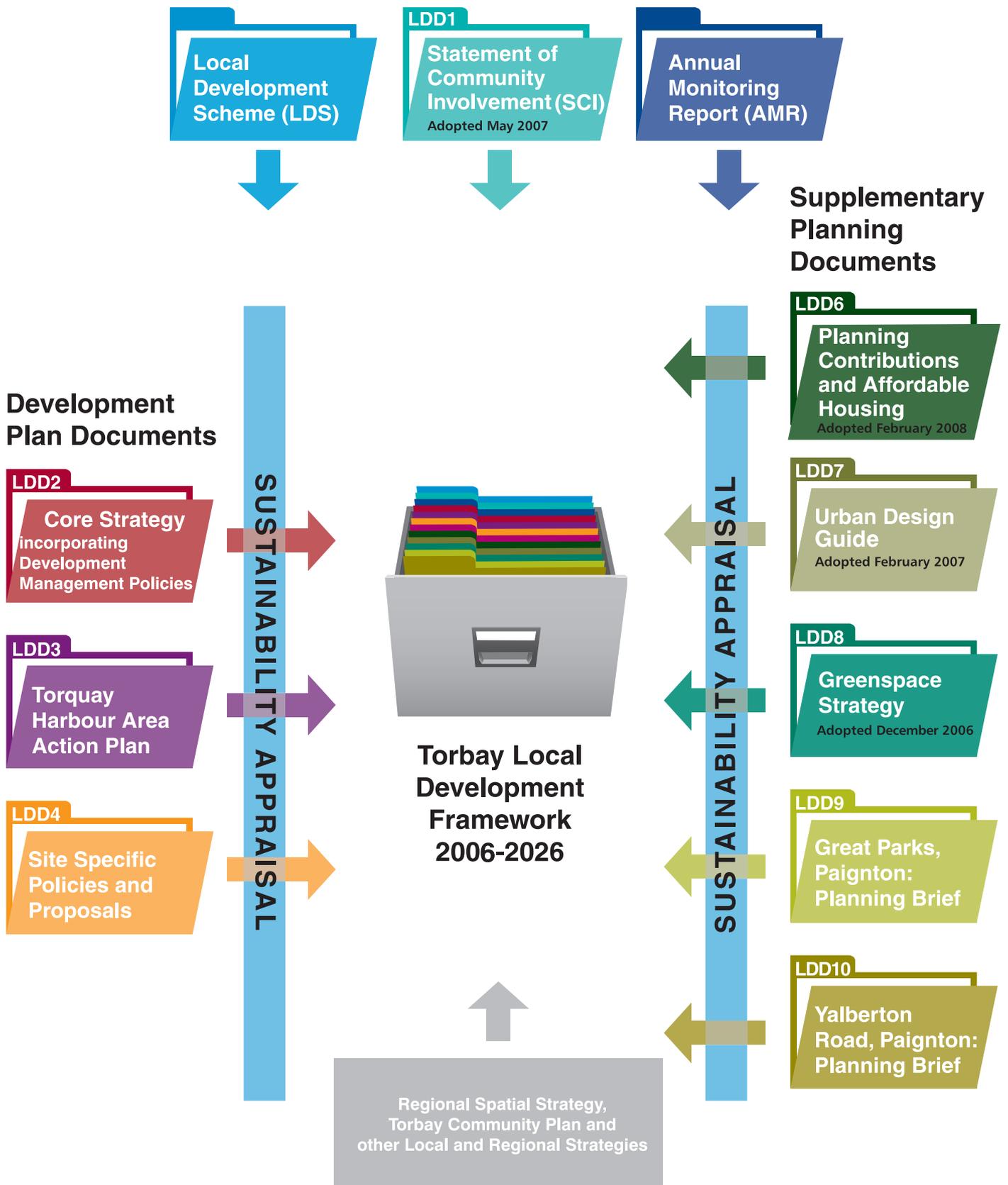
Appendix B: Core Strategy Growth Options Matrix

SA Sub-objectives	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 3C	Option 4
6.1 Reduce non renewable energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions	0	0	0	0	0	0
6.2 Keep water consumption within local carrying capacity limits	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.3 Minimise consumption and extraction of minerals	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.4 Reduce waste generation and increase materials efficiency	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.5 Minimise land, water, air, light, noise and generic pollution	-	-	-	-	-	-
Order of the options in terms of achieving sustainable development	Sixth	Second	Third	First	Fifth	Fourth

Key

++	Clear benefits	--	Clear negative impacts
+	Minor benefits	-	Minor negative impacts
0	Neutral	?	Uncertain

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 - now deferred pending progression of LDD2.