

**CORPORATION STREET
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING
DOCUMENT**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT
&
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

**DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY
APPRAISAL REPORT**

**PREPARED BY
MEDWAY COUNCIL**

JUNE 2008

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SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

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GLOSSARY

Within this Sustainability Appraisal Report the following terms are defined as:

Adopted Local Plan	The existing adopted statutory plan for Medway Council, the Medway Local Plan (Adopted May 2003), which sets out the detailed policies for development and its control and proposals for particular areas/sites.
Baseline	Existing environmental conditions present on, or near a site, against which future changes may be measured or predicted.
Development Plan Document	Sets out a Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the borough. The Development Plan guides day to day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted.
Effect	A physical or measurable change to the environment attributable to the Proposed Development.
Local Development Document	The individual documents that set out planning policies and guidance for the local authority for specific topics or for the geographical areas.
Local Development Framework	The collective name given to all those policies and documents forming the planning framework for Medway Council.
Sustainability Appraisal	Assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects of the policies and proposals of each LDD.
Scoping Study	An exercise undertaken to determine which elements will be covered in a Strategic

Environmental Assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

An assessment of the potential effects of policies and proposals on the environment to include proposals for the mitigation of effects.

Supplementary Planning Document

Elaborates upon the policies and proposals contained in Development Plan Documents but does not have statutory status.

ABBREVIATIONS

DPD	Development Plan Documents
LDD	Local Development Document
LDF	Local Development Framework
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance note
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEB	Statutory Environmental Body
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

Non Technical Summary

Introduction

- 1 This is the non technical summary of the draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), of the Corporation Street Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Corporation Street area is a section of the wider A2 road network that connects the local towns within Medway and other towns in north Kent. At local level, it is a major through route that carries a large volume of traffic and links the centres of Strood, Rochester and Chatham.

Appraisal Methodology

- 2 This Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the Government publication "A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), 2005) and includes baseline information, identifies the key sustainability issues associated with the redevelopment of Corporation Street area, and assesses the predicted effects of the draft SPD. As part of the SA process, a scoping exercise was first carried out, which involved consultation with the three statutory bodies who have environmental responsibilities; namely English Heritage, the Environment Agency, and Natural England. Comments received are summarised in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Comments received from Statutory Consultees

Consultee	Issue raised	How addressed in SA Report
English Heritage	SPD objective to cover the historic environment, such as Preservation and enhancement of the historic character which is of value, including buried archaeological remains.	An objective referring to character of Rochester has been added.
	Objective (i) (now Objective (ii)) to be rephrased as Integration of the historic City of Rochester, based around its High Street with the new part of the city being created by the regeneration of Rochester Riverside.	The importance of integration between these two areas has been covered elsewhere in the document.
	Objective (vi) to make specific reference to reduction of the dominance of traffic in favour of improved priority for pedestrians,	This has been covered elsewhere in depth in the document.

	whilst recognizing the importance of Corporation Street as a major through route.	
	Landscape and Visual Appraisal (pg.16) to make reference to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to protect views of Cathedral and Castle • historic street pattern • archaeological issues (reference to the Historic Environment Records held at KCC). 	Reference made.
	Paragraph 6.6 (Sustainability issues) to be called Historic Environment.	Noted and amended.
	Paragraph 6.7 to make reference to the need to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance and preserve the character of conservation areas • preserve listed buildings and schedule monuments and their settings 	Reference made.
	SA Objective referring to protected views to also include views from within the study area and Rochester Riverside.	Text amended to include views from within the study area and Rochester Riverside.
Natural England	Potential direct and/or indirect impacts on nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites should be considered.	It is not considered that the SPD proposals will have direct/ or indirect impacts on the nationally and locally designated conservation sites that are within 5 kilometres of the Study Site.
	Opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value of the site through the redevelopment process to be maximized.	Noted.
Environment Agency	Satisfied with the proposed approach to SEA/ SA.	Noted.

Background to the SPD

- 3 The Corporation Street SPD has been prepared as a development framework to achieve a comprehensive and well coordinated form of development that accords with the Medway Adopted Local Plan (2003) and reflects the natural features and assets of the area. The objectives of the draft SPD, in no particular order, are:
- A form of development that reflects the character of central Rochester
 - Integration of Rochester High Street and Rochester Riverside
 - Attractive and high quality publicly accessible open space and public realm
 - An active and vibrant environment that complements Rochester High Street and the uses coming forward within Rochester Riverside
 - Improved street-level activity along the length of Corporation Street, with a particularly strong focus at Rochester Station
 - Measures to help reduce the severance currently caused by the railway and Corporation Street.

Relationship to other plans, programmes and objectives

- 4 The purpose of reviewing other plans, programmes and sustainability objectives such as those of the Medway Council Core Strategy is to ensure that the relationship with these other documents and requirements are explored to enable Medway to take advantage of any potential synergies and to deal with any inconsistencies and constraints. The plans, programmes and sustainability objectives that were considered included those at an international, national, regional and local scale (see Appendix A).

SA Baseline

- 5 The collection and assessment of information and data about the current and likely future state of Corporation Street area was used within the SA to help and identify sustainability problems and predict the SPDs effects. Baseline topics and subtopics, covering the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability, focused on the key issues facing Corporation Street area and the potentially significant effects the SPD could have. Key trends and targets were identified, along with any difficulties and limitations in the data.

- 6 Medway Council do not collate statistics for the Study Site (Corporation Street area) directly as the area lies across the boundary of two wards: Rochester West and River, so in many cases the data collected was at ward level, in which case it was identified for both wards. Data from other established data sources, such as the Office for National Statistics and Kent and Medway District Biological Records Centre was also collated. The baseline study data can be found in Section 4 of this report.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 7 The establishment of SA objectives and criteria is central to the SA process and provide a way in which sustainability effects can be described, assessed and compared. The SA framework was devised with regard to the baseline conditions and potential sustainability issues facing the Medway and in consultation with Medway Council officers and other stakeholders. The 15 key objectives relate to 10 specific issues which comprise:

- air quality;
- movement;
- biodiversity;
- climatic factors;
- cultural heritage and landscape;
- housing;
- material assets;
- population and human health;
- regeneration and economic benefit; and
- social inclusiveness;

Appraisal of the Strategic Options

- 8 A key requirement of the SA is to consider the reasonable alternatives to the SPD. As the nature of the SPD is in itself very flexible the only alternative considered was the “DoNothing Alternative”.
- 9 The “Do Nothing Alternative” for Corporation Street area was assessed and then discounted as the effects of the adoption of the SPD against the SA Objectives indicated that adoption of the draft SPD would prove more beneficial to the sustainable redevelopment of the Study Site.

Appraisal of the SPD aims

- 10 The Objectives of the SA Framework were tested against each other to determine their compatibility, and were then used to test the sustainability of the effects of the SPD. On the whole, the aims of the SPD performed well against the SA objectives and only a few potential areas of conflict were identified mainly relating to the preservation of historic buildings and cultural features. It is thought that through effective mitigation measures, summarised in **Table 2**, these effects can be avoided.

Table 2: Summary of Mitigation Measures

SA Objective	Mitigation measure
Air Quality	A commitment to the provision of enhanced pedestrian and public transport facilities should be incorporated into development proposals.
Movement	To ensure that there will be no standing traffic.
	Reduced car parking standards to be encouraged.
	To ensure every opportunity is taken to enhance pedestrian environment.
	To ensure that the hostile Star hill junction offers better environment for pedestrians.
Biodiversity	Encouragement of habitat creation within new developments and introduction of new tree lined boulevard
Climatic Factors	Improve existing traffic flows (and hence reduce pollution from standing traffic) through provision of better bus + pedestrian facilities.
	To encourage reduced car parking standards in new developments
	10m setback of buildings will significantly reduce exposure of residents to any pollution (air + noise)
Cultural Heritage and Landscape	Ensuring development on vacant sites and redevelopment of derelict properties within the Study Site.
	To ensure that there are entrances and windows at regular intervals.
	To ensure a variety of land uses at ground level.
	To ensure the scale of new development will be appropriate to Rochester conservation area.
	The brief restricts building heights in order to maintain views.
Housing	Reprovision of existing and new affordable housing in line with that of the Adopted Local Plan must be made.
Population and Human Health	To ensure that within the new development there are regular entrances and windows facing Corporation Street.
Material Assets	To ensure maximum land use efficiency, residential unit density may be allowed for in individual development sites.

	Reduced parking standards should be considered allowing more space for development.
	To ensure that residential developments will meet Code for Sustainable Homes standards.
	To ensure that a commitment is made to renewable energy use in developments.
Regeneration and Economic Development	To ensure that the uses on Corporation Street do not compete with Rochester high street.
	Ensure minimum proportion of employment floor space.
Social Inclusiveness	None required.

Implementation and Monitoring

- 11 The draft SPD and SA will be issued for public consultation for six weeks and before being adopted later this year. A key part of the SA process is establishing how the significant sustainability effects of implementing the SPD will be monitored. Some potential indicators have been proposed for developing the SPD and sustainability monitoring programme. Once the SPD has been adopted its effects will be monitored by Medway Council through the Kent and Medway Structure Plan monitoring process and the monitoring of specific indicators.

How has the SEA / SA influenced the SPD?

- 12 This draft SA is being issued for public consultation alongside the draft Corporation Street SPD. Following the receipt of comments from the public and the Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs), the comments and findings of the SA will be taken into account during the finalisation of the SPD.
- 13 Once a plan or programme has been adopted, Article 9 of the SEA Directive¹ requires those responsible for preparing it to provide the public and the SEBs with information on how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been reflected in the plan or programme.
- 14 In the case of this SA, Article 9 will be complied with through the inclusion of a statement summarising how the SA has influenced the development of the SPD in the adopted SA. This will be issued after the SPD has been adopted.

How to comment on the SA Report

- 15 Public consultation on the draft Corporation Street SPD and its draft SA Report run from Monday 4th August until Friday 12th September 2008.
- 16 All comments should be sent to Gaurav Choksi, at the following address, by Friday 12th September 2008.

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