

Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal:

Sustainability Appraisal and
Strategic Environmental
Assessment



SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL & STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SA&SEA) FOR TIVERTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

1. Background

In order that the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal can be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment to meet the requirement of the European Directives 2001/42/EC, the SEA Directive) needs to be undertaken as part of the process of development of the document. The Local Development Framework includes a commitment to ensure that future Conservation Area Appraisals are adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) under the new Planning system.

The Mid Devon Local Development Framework, including all the integrated SPDs, need to secure sustainable patterns of land use, development and transport. To this end policies and proposals should result in the protection and enhancement of the environment, should meet social and economic needs of the community, should conserve natural resources and maintain the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2. Consultations

A scoping report (Appendix 1) was the subject of consultation during December 2004 – January 2005, (along with the scoping report for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document). A list of the bodies consulted is attached at Appendix 2. Responses were received from 4 out of the 15 consultees. 2 of them have no comments on the report while the responses from English Heritage and Tiverton Civic Society are attached at Appendix 3.

Tiverton Civic Society concurred with the structure of the proposed report.

English Heritage considered that the proactive process outlined should ensure both protection of the Conservation Area and hopefully enhancement through new development. Inclusion of design guidelines either in the Conservation Area Appraisal or in the Development Plan Document is raised as an issue. The suggestion that buildings and assets of local importance that add value to the special interest of the area, be considered in the assessment, has been addressed in the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

An initial draft of the Conservation Area Appraisal commenced ahead of the issue of ODPM documents on sustainability appraisals for Supplementary Planning Documents. Nevertheless, a process of review and amendment had informed the development of the document. Internal inputs included the emerging context of the Local Development Framework and development control, together with a detailed contribution from the County Council's Archaeology Service.

3. Sustainability Appraisal

The scoping report considered 3 options; do nothing ie no appraisal; carry out appraisal or carry out appraisal together with a boundary review. The preferred option is for an appraisal with a boundary review as this is likely to result in a greater protection of the historic environment and enable Tiverton to maintain its status as a historic market town.

The objectives of the sustainability appraisal for the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal are to enable:

- underpinning of local distinctiveness
- protection of the built heritage
- protection of the archaeological and historic heritage
- protection of important open spaces, green spaces and trees
- integration of conservation and regeneration opportunities

These objectives are in conformity with the Core Strategy as it relates to the historic environment policies and design policies.

4. Methodology:

The Council has prepared a “baseline assessment” which is the first stage of the SA&SEA process. This is being published separately. One of its outputs is the list of sustainability criteria, against which the SPD can be assessed. A summary of these is set out below, together with their indicators (which show how these objectives can be measured over time) and a note of the favoured direction for sustainable development. It should be clarified that these are not council or planning objectives as such, but intended to give guidance on what are or are not sustainable changes in the economy, environment and society.

Criterion	Indicators and desired direction of change
Environment	
☺(A) Biodiversity, flora and nature conservation.	Maintain or increase the number of sites of nature conservation importance and area of Priority Habitat
☺ (B) Landscape	Maintain areas of designated landscape, landscape features and conservation areas. Increase public open space.
☺ (C) Cultural Heritage	Maintain number of and enhance features/sites of archaeological and historical importance. Reduce number of listed buildings on Buildings At Risk Register. Preserve and enhance character of conservation areas.
Natural Resources	
☺ (D) Water	Reduce total length of river being graded bad or poor and increase length of river graded as fairly good or good.
☺ (E) Land and Soils	Increase the proportion of development on brownfield land within settlement boundaries. Reduce the number of contaminated land sites. Maintain the quantity of good to high quality agricultural land.
☺ (F) Air Quality	Reduce the incidence of airborne pollution, particularly close to dwellings.
☺ (G) Traffic and Transport	Increase the number of households that have access to public transport. Increase the number of people that use public transport, walk or cycle to work
☺ (H) Waste	Increase the percentage of household waste recycled.
☺ (I) Climatic Factors	Reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions. Reduce the number of developments located on land that is liable to flood or in areas that could lead to flooding elsewhere.

Social Issues	
(J) Healthy and Safe Living Environments	Increase the proportion of households with access to public open space and reduce levels of Living Environment Deprivation.
(K) Health care, community services and facilities.	Maintain or increase the proportion of households with access to public transport, community facilities and services and reduce the level of Barrier to Housing and Services Deprivation Domain.
(L) Housing	Reduce the level of deprivation caused by Barriers to Housing and Services. Increase the number of affordable housing units. Ensure that the total number of houses available within Mid Devon meets local housing demand.
(M) Consultation and Social Deprivation	Reduce Multiple Deprivation. Sustain appropriate community consultation and involvement in the preparation of plans
Economic Issues	
(N) Economic Growth	Reduce Income Deprivation. Maintain or increase number of enterprises. Maintain/increase economic stability by maintaining the diversity in turnover size of enterprises.
(O) Rural and Urban Diversification.	Maintain or increase number of enterprises. Maintain the number of small businesses and increase the diversity of enterprise sizes. Increase the number of economic developments in rural areas.
(P) Employment	Reduce Employment Deprivation. Increase the number of jobs and the diversity of enterprise sizes. Increase the number of employment areas that have access to public transport and are located within settlement boundaries.
(Q) Retail	Maintain and increase the number of retail, housing and economic developments within town centres. Maintain the number of retail units in Local Centres.
(R) Tourism	Maintain and increase the number of tourists visiting and spending nights in Mid Devon.

Note: ☺ indicates the components that make up the Environment Report for the purposes of the SEA Directive

There are 3 options in the SA for the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal. They are:

- i) do nothing
- ii) conservation area appraisal
- iii) conservation area appraisal with boundary review

The following table assesses the sustainability impacts of the 3 options with all the sustainability criteria. The impact on each sustainability criterion is forecast, and given one of five scores ranging from “much worse” through “no better or worse” to “much better”. A coding system based on traffic light colours is used to give a clear visual indication of the expected impact. A general discussion and explanation of the appraisal is included with the table. Keys are provided to aid understanding. The analysis looks at the medium/long term impacts. In general, the short-term impacts are likely to be similar, but at a lower intensity.

Sustainability Impacts of different strategy options																		
Strategy Option	Environment				Natural Resources					Social Issues				Economic Issues				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
i)		Worse	Worse											Worse			Worse	Worse
ii)		Better	Better											Better			Better	Better
iii)		Much better	Much better											Better			Better	Much better

The “Do nothing” option is likely to have a neutral or more likely a negative impact with the current lack of guidance resulting in an ongoing harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and loss of heritage capital. This in turn would reduce the attractiveness of the town as a retail centre and visitor focus, with consequent detriment to economic growth.

Undertaking an appraisal of the existing conservation area would ensure a better appreciation of its special qualities with a subsequent rising standard of proposals for development in the area and greater protection of the environment.

Adding a boundary review will ensure that areas of architectural or historic importance not currently designated as conservation area can also be assessed and if appropriate can be designated with the benefit of protection of more of the cultural heritage.

It is recognised that inclusion within a conservation area may impose additional economic costs, in that a high standard of design is likely to be required and use of traditional materials will be encouraged. However, there is a net benefit overall in that protection of the heritage increases the attractiveness of the town to shoppers and visitors and attracts heritage regeneration funding.

Keys to table

Strategy Options	
i)	Do nothing – No appraisal
ii)	Appraisal only
iii)	Appraisal with boundary review

Impact compared with Continued trends	
Red	Much worse
Orange	Worse
White	No better or worse
Yellow	Better
Green	Much better

Sustainability Factors					
Environment	A	Biodiversity, Flora and Nature Conservation	Social Issues	J	Healthy and Safe Living Environments
	B	Landscape		K	Access to Facilities
	C	Cultural Heritage		L	Housing
	D	Water		M	Consultation and Social Deprivation
Natural Resources	E	Land and Soils	Economic Issues	N	Economic Growth
	F	Air Quality		O	Rural and Urban Diversification
	G	Traffic and Transport		P	Employment
	H	Waste		Q	Retail
	I	Climatic Factors		R	Tourism

Appendix 1:

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL & STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT FOR THE TIVERTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

This report outlines the scope and level of detail that will be contained in the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal and its context within the required Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. This Supplementary Planning Document is intended to be an integral part of the Mid Devon Local Development Framework.

OVERALL AIMS OF THE MID DEVON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

To provide a sustainable pattern of land use, development and transport which best protects and enhances the environment, meets the social and economic needs of the community, conserves natural resources and maintain the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal will consider the implications for the environment (historic built heritage, archaeology, and green spaces) and for the local economy (tourism, investment in property and grants for regeneration).

Methodology

Existing information on the existing heritage resource within and in the immediate vicinity of the current Conservation Area has been collected. This includes

- Listed building including their grades and descriptions
- The sites and monuments record
- Written and pictorial documents relating to the town and its development

Existing and emerging policy contexts

- Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, and 16: Planning and Archaeology
- Mid Devon Local Plan
- Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration Revised Deposit
- Emerging Local Development Framework

These last 3 will provide information about existing levels of economic activity, development activity and the existing natural resources.

The above sources of information provide the base line data against which the options contained within the Sustainability Appraisal will be measured to

assess impact of the Conservation Area Appraisal and to allow for future monitoring.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL FOR TIVERTON

The Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal will identify and assess the qualities that make the area special.

The Appraisal will consider the architectural interest and historic interest of the town, together with an analysis of its character and appearance. Opportunities for preservation and enhancement will be highlighted. The existing conservation area boundary will be renewed and where appropriate alterations will be proposed.

The appraisal will be used for development control purposes enabling those involved in the process to

- Understand what it is that should be protected or enhanced
- Make sympathetic proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the areas character and appearance, including identification of development opportunities
- Help residents, traders, investors and developers to understand the background to designation
- Help potential developers to formulate their applications
- Be able to justify the designation when making development control decisions and at appeal

The appraisal will assist in the formulation of effective policies to protect the town's heritage.

It will also be used to guide bids for funding, and guide the use of monies within the public realm. It will also be used to encourage inward investment.

The Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal will include the following:

- (1) Description of its location and context.
- (2) Summary of its Architectural Interest.
- (3) Summary of its Historic Interest.
- (4) Assessment of its character.
- (5) Description and evaluation of its appearance.
- (6) Description and assessment of opportunities for preservation and enhancement, including reference to sites already identified through the Local Plan process as being suitable for new uses or redevelopment and highlighting existing commitments within the area.

- (7) A review of the existing conservation area boundary to ensure that where appropriate alterations are made to incorporate new areas, or to delete areas currently within the boundary.

The document will be supported by Appendices setting out the legal implications of inclusion within a conservation area; the text of policies applicable to the historic environment and conservation areas both in the adopted Local Plan and in the Local Plan First Alteration, Revised Deposit; implications of the archaeological heritage of the town on development proposals.

OPTIONS FOR THE TIVERTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The Council has committed itself to conduct conservation area appraisal for each conservation area. The Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal contains two broad options.

<i>Options Considered</i>	<i>Implications</i>
1. Appraisal Only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiverton would be an equal footing with other towns that have already had Conservation Area Appraisals • Demonstrates the Authority's commitment to raise the profile of the Districts heritage
2. Appraisal with boundary review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As for 2 above with the additional benefit of ensuring that the authority also fulfils the duty placed on them by the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Part II para 69 to consider which parts of the area should be designated.

Other Options

- If boundary review is undertaken the implications of proposing inclusion or deletion within the Conservation Area will need to be considered in particular the impacts on
 - Economy
 - Environment
- With regard to opportunities for preservation or enhancement, many of the options identified have been previously included in specific proposals for the emerging Local Plan First Alteration and will be subject of sustainability appraisals within that context.

- The proposed urban design framework also relates to enhancement opportunities this is to be separate Supplementary Planning Document.

The existence of the emerging Local Plan, and the forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document on the urban design framework for the central area of Tiverton, means that the identified sites will not be subject to duplicate sustainability appraisals.

Appendix 2:

- C.P.R.E (Mid Devon)
- Devon County Council
- Devon Gardens Trust
- Devon Wildlife Trust
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- Environment Agency
- Government Office for the South West
- Housing Corporation (West Region)
- Mid Devon Primary Care Trust
- South West of England RDA
- The Countryside Agency
- The South West Regional Assembly
- Tiverton Archaeological Group
- Tiverton Civic Society

Appendix 3:

TIVERTON CIVIC SOCIETY

Registered Charity 1043675

10 Blundell's Avenue,
Tiverton,
Devon,
EX16 4DL

Belinda Lau,
Forward Planning and Conservation,
Phoenix House,
Phoenix Lane,
Tiverton,
Devon,
EX16 6PP

15th January 2005

Dear Belinda,

Thank you for sending the SA&SEA Scoping Report for the Tiverton Conservation Area, which Tiverton Civic Society considered at their last Planning Subcommittee meeting on 3rd January 2005.

Members appreciated the clear outline given for the structure of the full report, with which they concurred. With regard to the two options for the Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal, the Society would not wish to see a deletion of any part of the existing Conservation Area should an appraisal with boundary review be undertaken.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Fern Clarke



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH WEST REGION

Ms Belinda Lau
Mid Devon District Council
Forward Planning and Conservation
Phoenix house
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton
Devon EX16 6PP

M.D.D.C.

24 JAN 2005

Our ref: HD/P 5182
Your ref:
Telephone 0117 975 0692
Fax 0117 975 0683

21 January 2005

TIVERTON

Dear Ms Lau

re: **SA and SEA Scoping Reports - Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal and Core Strategy for the Mid Devon Local Development Framework**

English Heritage welcomes the opportunity to comment on these important processes. Firstly my response deals with the Conservation Area Appraisal and secondly the Core Strategy. My comments are general in nature but should you wish clarification or detail please feel free to contact me.

Tiverton Conservation Area Appraisal

This document outlines a useful proactive process that will hopefully ensure not only the protection of the Tiverton Conservation Area but also that new development will not detract from its character but may also enhance it.

As well as identifying the development opportunities, could the SPD advise on appropriate design guidelines based on the character of the Conservation Areas in order to preserve and possibly enhance the Conservation Area. Alternatively the appraisal could refer to appropriate design policies in the LDD.

Those buildings and assets of local importance that add value to the special interest of the area should also be considered in the assessment.

Core Strategy for the Mid Devon Local Development Framework

The Stage A scoping report carried out by the consultants could expand upon the Historic Environment, the weight attached to it and the part it plays in the environment, the economy and the social wellbeing of Mid Devon. English Heritage promotes a wide definition of the historic environment which includes not only those area and buildings with statutory protection but also that which is locally valued and

