

## SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Sustainability Appraisal is a process through which the sustainability of a plan under preparation is assessed. The Planning and Compulsory Act (2004) requires Local Planning Authorities to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal of all documents adopted under their Local Development Framework including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) such as the Urban Design and Public Realm framework. The process to be adopted is set out in Office of the Deputy Prime Minister<sup>1</sup> guidance on the Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (2005).

Cumbria County Council in consultation with the statutory consultees (Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage) has developed a set of objectives against which Sustainability Appraisal can be carried out. These have been adopted in appraising the Urban Design and Public Realm framework, the first column of Table 1 sets out the objectives to be achieved.

The Sustainability Appraisal process enables the positive effects that the Urban Design and Public Realm framework could have on sustainability to be highlighted and areas where negative effects could potentially arise to be identified. Initially the Sustainability Appraisal fed into the development of the Urban Design and Public Realm framework by providing an indication of the measures that could be incorporated to ensure that its sustainability credentials are maximised. Following finalisation of the Urban Design and Public Realm framework a detailed Sustainability Appraisal will be carried out, resulting in the production of a Sustainability Report to accompany the Urban Design and Public Realm framework during the consultation process. In the interim a summary of the main sustainability issues arising from the current version of the Urban Design and Public Realm framework is shown in Table 1.

Overall the Urban Design and Public Realm framework contributes positively towards achievement of the objectives. Some areas of uncertainty with regards to how the framework will be implemented have been highlighted in Table 1 for further consideration, but the framework itself does not appear to have any negative effects.

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is now the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

**Table 1 – Summary of Interim Sustainability Appraisal**

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	
<b>SP1: To increase the level of participation in the decision making process.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The SPD has been produced with the support of project champions, stakeholders and the wider public.</li> <li>+ Consideration is given to the needs of different members of the community, e.g. the urban design and public realm strategies place emphasis on ensuring that public spaces are accessible to everyone. The ‘Diversity’ urban design principle should help to ensure the provision of a mix of uses that meet local requirements.</li> <li>+ The ‘Sustainability’ urban design principle (<i>creating a social, economic and environmentally sustainable city centre for the future</i>) should help to ensure that future generations are considered. The SPD encourages sustainable design and construction (e.g. the use of SuDS and sustainable materials), which should help to reduce the impact of development upon the environment.</li> <li>+ The SPD encourages the engagement of young people in identifying play requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>SP2: To improve access to services, facilities, the countryside and open spaces.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The ‘Diversity’ urban design principle and key character area development recommendations should help to ensure the provision of a mix of uses that meet local requirements.</li> <li>+ The SPD places emphasis on ensuring that the city centre is accessible to everyone, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled. Positive recommendations include the creation of safe pedestrian and cycle routes, the use of traffic restrictions to ensure that access is maintained and the development of a sustainable transport interchange.</li> <li>+ The creation of a clear network of open spaces should help to improve access to open space. The ‘Quality Public Realm’ urban design principle and the public realm strategy place emphasis on ensuring that public spaces are accessible to everyone.</li> </ul>
<b>SP3: To provide everyone with a decent home.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The SPD encourages sustainable design and construction, which should help to ensure that new housing built in the city centre is of a decent standard and is resource efficient, reducing the potential for fuel poverty.</li> <li>+ The SPD emphasises that new residential development in Rickergate should accommodate a positive mix of tenure types. The provision of a mix of tenures, including affordable housing is recommended for new residential development in the Western Approaches and Botchergate.</li> <li>? The SPD encourages the development of high quality apartments in the Retail Core – such apartments may not meet local housing needs / be suited to the needs of the local community.</li> </ul>
<b>SP4: To improve the levels of skills, education and training.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? The SPD encourages the provision of flexible internal layouts in the Western Quarter that can accommodate a range of studio, workspace and offices sizes, which should help to encourage a range of new businesses to establish in the area. This may help to attract employment opportunities that offer skills training.</li> <li>? Good urban design and public realm should help to improve the city’s image, which should help to attract new businesses to the area that can offer skills and training opportunities for employees.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>SP5: To improve the health and sense of well-being of people.</b></p>	<p>+ Good urban design and improvements to the public realm and road network should help to create a more attractive and safe working and living environment. Open and greenspaces in particular provide space for people to play, relax and socialise, which can benefit people's physical and mental health and well being.</p> <p>+ The SPD states that buildings should have active frontages to overlook and animate the public realm and to provide natural surveillance. The use of street lighting as a crime reduction and safety measure is also recommended.</p> <p>+ Improvements to the transport network in the city centre (e.g. the creation of safe pedestrian and cycle routes, the creation of a road hierarchy and the implementation of traffic restrictions) should help to reduce the potential for road traffic accidents and should also encourage people to walk or cycle, which has associated health benefits.</p> <p>? The promotion of the evening economy in certain areas of the city centre could have an effect upon crime and anti-social behaviour in the city (e.g. an increase in alcohol related incidents). The SPD does, however, highlight that the location of premises contributing to the evening economy needs to be carefully planned, particularly bars and clubs.</p>
<p><b>SP6: To create vibrant, active, inclusive and open minded communities with a strong sense of local history.</b></p>	<p>+ The SPD places emphasis on creating friendly and vibrant places where people feel welcome to visit and socialise. Positive recommendations include the improvement and enhancement of existing open spaces within the city, and the creation of new spaces. Such areas provide space for people to relax and socialise and can also serve as a community resource (e.g. a venue for fairs and events), which can encourage social cohesion.</p> <p>+ The reinforcement of the identity and character of the city centre through good urban design, particularly its heritage, should help to create a sense of place and community identity. The inclusion of sculptures and public art, as proposed in the public realm strategy, should also help to enhance the sense of place.</p>
<p><b>EN1: To protect and enhance biodiversity.</b></p>	<p>+ The SPD places emphasis on ensuring that new landscape features and green spaces are of value to wildlife wherever possible to support increased biodiversity. Other positive recommendations includes street tree planting, which could provide nesting and foraging habitat for species, such as, bats and birds, the use of floral displays and baskets and the incorporation of green roofs and bird and bats boxes where possible.</p> <p>+ Deculverting of the Little Caldey and improvement of the waterway should help to increase biodiversity.</p> <p>? The SPD encourages the use of the Rivers Eden and Caldey for recreation purposes and proposes to enhance access to these areas. There is the potential for increased access to and use of the rivers to have an adverse effect upon biodiversity (disturbance, littering etc). The SPD does, however, state that new interventions should ensure that habitats and biodiversity are protected. The public realm should seek to enhance the natural environment.</p>

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<p><b>EN2: To preserve, enhance and manage landscape quality and character for future generations.</b></p> <p><b>EN3: To improve the quality of the built environment.</b></p>	<p>++ The urban design and public realm framework should help to create a more attractive living and working environment in the city centre. Emphasis is placed upon reinforcing the distinct identity of the city centre, particularly in relation to its cultural heritage.</p> <p>++ The SPD should help to ensure that new development respects and enhances its surroundings (e.g. by ensuring that new development responds to both its context and the character of the city centre). Positive recommendations include the use of local materials and styles and the reinforcement of local positive characteristics. The SPD states that only well considered designs, which are of a form, scale, proportion and style appropriate to the urban fabric will be acceptable in the Historic Core.</p> <p>++ The SPD encourages the conservation and enhancement of cultural historic features (e.g. historic street patterns and facades) and the re-use and recycling of existing buildings, particularly historic ones.</p> <p>+</p> <p>?</p> <p>The SPD encourages sustainable design and construction, including the use of sustainable locally sourced materials and SuDS.</p> <p>Land adjacent to the River Caldwew is identified as an opportunity area and the SPD makes reference to the types of development that should be pursued in these areas. However, this area with a floodplain and flood risk is a key issue. The general issue of flood risk in the city is, however, acknowledged and the use of SuDS is promoted. <i>Flood risk associated with the River Caldwew should be highlighted in the proposals for the Caldwew Riverside key character area and inappropriate development within the floodplain should be discouraged.</i></p>
<p><b>NR1: To improve local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</b></p>	<p>+</p> <p>+</p> <p>The SPD proposes a number of measures that should help to encourage use of sustainable modes of transport and discourage unnecessary use of the private car (e.g. the creation of safe pedestrian and cycle routes, the provision of dedicated cycle infrastructure, the consolidation of car parking and the implementation of traffic restrictions). Any reductions in car traffic should have a positive effect upon local air quality and help to reduce car related greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The SPD encourages sustainable design and construction, including the incorporation of renewable energy technologies where appropriate.</p>
<p><b>NR2: To improve water quality and water resources.</b></p>	<p>+</p> <p>?</p> <p>?</p> <p>The SPD emphasises that new buildings should be efficient in their use of water by incorporating water saving devices. The use of SuDS is also encouraged in both new developments and the public realm where possible.</p> <p>The SPD encourages the use of the Rivers Eden and Caldwew for recreation purposes and proposes to enhance access to these areas. There is the potential for increased access to and use of the rivers to have an adverse effect upon water quality (e.g. pollution incidents).</p> <p>The SPD encourages the inclusion of water features in the city centre. Although water features are visually attractive, certain types of water feature can consume significant amounts of water. <i>The SPD should ensure the inclusion of water features that recycle water.</i></p>



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<b>NR3: To restore and protect land and soil.</b>	+ The SPD proposes the improvement and enhancement of existing areas of open space in the city centre and promotes the development of two new areas of open space.
<b>NR4: To manage mineral resources sustainably and minimise waste.</b>	<p>++ The SPD encourages sustainable design and construction, such as, the re-use and recycling of buildings and the use of sustainable building materials and techniques, including waste reduction and recycling. The SPD states that all new development should have a waste management strategy to ensure adequately sized storage areas, particularly for recycling. For certain key character areas the SPD emphasises that building materials should be locally sourced or from sustainably managed resources.</p> <p>++ The public realm strategy advises that all materials used within Carlisle's public realm should be subject to a sustainability review, to help lower the environmental impact of projects. This should include consideration of embodied energy, energy consumption during a products lifetime, choice of environmentally responsible materials, sourcing 'locally' and durability, reuseability and recyclability.</p>
<b>EC1: To retain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities.</b>	+ Good urban design and public realm should help to improve the city's image and will create a more attractive living and working environment, which may help to retain the existing workforce and graduates, and should help to attract new businesses to the area that can offer a more diverse range of employment opportunities.
<b>EC2: To improve access to jobs.</b>	<p>+ The SPD places emphasis on ensuring that the city centre is accessible to everyone. Positive recommendations include the development of a sustainable transport interchange and the creation of safe pedestrian and cycle routes.</p> <p>+ Good urban design and public realm should help to improve the city's image and will create a more attractive living and working environment, which should help to attract new businesses to the area that can offer a diverse range of employment opportunities.</p>
<b>EC3: To diversify and strengthen the local economy.</b>	+ Good urban design and public realm should help to improve the city's image and will create a more attractive living and working environment, which may help to retain the existing workforce and graduates, and should help to attract new businesses to the area that can offer a more diverse range of employment opportunities.

