

Sustainability check

This paper presents a Sustainability Check (SC) of Morval Parish's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This SC reflects the intentions of a more formal Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and aims to predict and assess the social, environmental and economic effects that are likely to arise from the adoption of the Morval Parish NDP, in order to ensure that the strategies and policies within this contribute to and promote sustainable development. The Morval Parish NDP Steering Group considered carrying out a full SA (which is not a requirement of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012), but it was decided that applying a 'lighter touch' SC would be less resource intensive, whilst achieving suitable outcomes to inform the NDP making process. It was considered it to be good practice to carry out a SC as it provides a useful means to assess plan proposals against a set of sustainability objectives - the intention being to help avoid negative environmental and socio-economic effects and to identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of Morval Parish and the prosperity and quality of life of residents through the NDP. This report sets out how the SC was applied to Morval Parish NDP and the results of this.

NB. The SC or SA should not be confused with a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The SEA is a separate assessment to the SA and focuses in more detail on the environmental impact of plan proposals.

Morval Parish NDP: The SC process

When adopted, Morval Parish NDP will sit within a framework of higher-level planning documents, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Cornwall's Local Plan. The Cornwall Local Plan: Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (Local Plan) was adopted in November 2016 and was subject to a SA (further details available at www.cornwall.gov.uk). For consistency, the SC of the Morval Parish NDP reflects the 'SA Framework' which was used for the SA process on the Local Plan. The SA Framework is a framework of 19 SA themes together with a number of objectives, appraisal questions and indicators, which provided a methodological framework for the SA on the Local Plan. For the purpose of carrying out the SC on Morval Parish NDP, it was considered unnecessary to apply the full SA Framework, as this would have entailed a very lengthy and detailed analysis. Instead, the 19 SA Framework themes and objectives (hereafter referred to as the SC themes and objectives) have been considered directly against Morval Parish NDP (i.e. without presenting answers to each of the individual appraisal questions which are included within the more detailed SA Framework). The SC themes and objectives, with questions reflecting those used in the Cornwall Local Plan, are set out in Table 1.

Table 1

SC Theme	SC Objectives	Decision making questions
Climatic factors	To reduce our contribution to climate change through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does it limit greenhouse gas emissions?• Does it secure the highest viable resource and energy efficiency?• Does it encourage the use of renewable energy technologies?

Waste	To minimise the generation of waste and encourage greater re-use and recycling of materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce the amount of waste produced, collected, and or landfilled? • Will it increase the amount of waste recycled or recovered? • Will it increase levels of composting or anaerobic digestion? • Has space for storage of recycled materials been planned for? • Will it reduce the waste management industry's contribution to climate change?
Minerals and geo-diversity	To minimise the consumption of mineral resources and ensure the sustainable management of these resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it minimise the consumption of primary mineral resources and encourage re-use of secondary resources? • Will it ensure development does not irreversibly sterilise important mineral resources?
Soil	To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect and enhance soil quality. To safeguard the agricultural context of the parish and encourage local food production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect, enhance and improve soil quality? • Will it avoid development that leads to the loss of productive soils?
Air	To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce pollution including greenhouse gas emissions? • Will it maintain or improve air quality?
Water	To reduce the risk of flooding and vulnerability to flooding by ensuring sufficient drainage and run-off in the planning of any new development To maintain and enhance water quality and reduce consumption and increase efficiency of water use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce, or avoid increasing the risk of flooding overall? • Will it maintain or enhance water quality overall? • Will it reduce the overall demand for water?
Biodiversity	To conserve, enhance and restore the condition and extent of biodiversity in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it protect not only designated areas but also of wildlife interest everywhere? • Will it encourage the provision of new or improved wildlife habitats?

Landscape	To protect and enhance the quality of the natural, historic and cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it sustain and enhance and/or restore the distinctive qualities and features of the natural, historic and cultural landscape character? • Will it conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AGLV? • Will it protect, enhance and promote opportunities for green infrastructure within and between settlements? • Will it maintain and enhance a high quality living environment? • Will it encourage the location and design of development to respect and improve landscape character and the landscape setting of settlements?
Maritime	[Not immediately relevant to our location]	
Historic environment	To protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal reinforce the distinctive character of Cornwall? • Does the proposal have an acceptable/unacceptable level of impact on the historic environment? • Does the proposal preserve and enhance the cultural and social significance of the historic asset?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it result in development which is sympathetic towards the need to promote the Cornwall's unique heritage value, historic environment and culture? • Have flood mitigation measures been designed to be compatible with the immediate historic environment? • Has a balance been struck between the level of risk (e.g. in adaptation to climate change or flood risk) and the aspiration to preserve the distinctive qualities of the historic environment?

Design	To promote and achieve high quality, locally distinctive design, sustainable land use and sustainable built development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it encourage developers to build to higher environmental standards? • Will it help to promote local distinctiveness? • Does the proposal meet targets for renewable energy capture and sustainable construction using BREEAM or Code for Sustainable Homes? • Will it promote high quality, sustainable and sympathetic design that takes account of sustainable construction and transport modes, and green infrastructure?
Social inclusion	To reduce poverty and social exclusion and provide opportunities for all to participate fully in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve access to and provision of services, health and community facilities (including community youth facilities) especially in rural areas and for the socially excluded? • Will it reduce poverty, deprivation, discrimination, social exclusion and inequalities?
Crime and anti-social behaviour	To maintain the very low crime rate and very low fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce crime and anti-social activity, and in turn, provide safer communities? • Will it help reduce the fear of crime?
Housing	To meet the needs of the local community in terms of general market, affordable, adaptable and decent housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide an appropriate mix of housing to ensure delivery of long-term regeneration? • Will it reduce the number of people homeless or in temporary accommodation? • Will it contribute towards the provision of affordable, social and key worker housing? • Will it reduce the number of unfit homes, and those falling below the decent homes standards? • Will it deliver adaptable housing to meet the lifelong needs of the population?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide a well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes? • Will it provide energy efficient development which reduces the annual cost of heating/lighting and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions? • Will it make the best use of land?

Health, sport and recreation	To improve health through the promotion of healthier lifestyles and improving access to open space, including the re-establishment of footpaths where necessary, and the provision of health promoting community facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health? • Will it improve access to health services? • Will it improve access to the countryside, coast, recreation and open spaces? • Will it increase participation and engagement in physical activity and sport? • Will it lead to unacceptable noise levels?
Economic development	To support small scale businesses that meet the needs of the area and provide local employment without impacting on its quiet rural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote a diverse range of employment opportunities? • Will it provide affordable, small scale, managed workspace to support local need? • Will it support the development of access to ICT facilities including Broadband? • Will it raise the quality of employment and reduce seasonality?
Education and skills	To maximise accessibility for all to the necessary education, skills and knowledge to play a full role in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it help improve the qualifications and skills of young people? • Will it improve facilities and opportunities for lifelong learning (particularly for those with greatest need)? • Will it help increase the County's skilled and professional workforce? • Will it support a viable future for rural communities? • Will it encourage a greater diversity of choice in skills training as part of regeneration efforts? • Will it increase accessibility to training facilities?
Transport and accessibility	To improve pedestrian access to local facilities To improve public transport through the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote sustainable forms of transport (public transport including bus and rail, cycle and pedestrian routes) and ensure the necessary associated infrastructure is made available? • Will it reduce traffic congestion by promoting alternative modes of transport?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce the need to travel by seeking to balance homes, jobs, services and facilities? • Will it lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve service provision or provide a service or facility which is accessible to all, including those with disabilities and those in the more rural areas?
Energy	To encourage the use of renewable energy and increase energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it promote and support the use of renewable and low carbon energy technologies? Will it help reduce fuel poverty? Will it encourage local energy production?

	Environmental themes
	Social themes
	Economic themes

The Morval Parish NDP Steering Group have carried out the SC, by considering SC themes and objectives (see Table 1) against the overall Morval Parish NDP and including consideration of all of the following elements of this:

- The Vision for Morval Parish
- The NDP Objectives for Morval Parish; and,
- Each of the NDP Policies.

The Morval Parish NDP was considered as to whether it is likely to undermine, support, be neutral, have both positive and negative effects or is irrelevant to the NDP or the anticipated outcome is unknown at this stage. The results are set out in table 2:

Table 2

SC Theme	SC Objectives	Comment	Likely impact
Climatic factors	To reduce our contribution to climate change through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	The NDP has a robust Sustainable Development and Climate Change policy. It is designed to ensure that all new builds and refurbishments embrace renewable energy potential at the planning stage.	
Waste	To minimise the generation of waste and encourage greater re-use and recycling of materials	Proposals for the installation of a Recycling Collection Point in the parish and the setting up of a Community Repair Café will be supported by the NDP	

Minerals and geo-diversity	To minimise the consumption of mineral resources and ensure the sustainable management of these resources	Care for the environment encompasses these objectives indirectly	
Soil	To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect and enhance soil quality. To safeguard the agricultural context of the parish and encourage local food production	NDP policies seek to safeguard agricultural land from development, offering support to proposals using previously built land. The sale of locally grown produce is encouraged through farm shops and small businesses.	
Air	To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve	Climate Change and Carbon Reduction policies address this objective indirectly.	
Water	To reduce the risk of flooding and vulnerability to flooding by ensuring sufficient drainage and run-off in the planning of any new development To maintain and enhance water quality and reduce consumption and increase efficiency of water use	The Flood Risk and Mitigation policy prioritises Sustainable Drainage Systems wherever possible, and seeks to incorporate proportionate and appropriate pollution control measures to prevent adverse impacts on the water environment.	
Biodiversity	To conserve, enhance and restore the condition and extent of biodiversity in the area	The NDP has a robust Biodiversity Policy which seeks not only to protect existing habitats but also to achieve a net gain in wildlife by creating, restoring, enhancing and linking areas of semi-natural habitat	
Landscape	To protect and enhance the quality of the natural, historic and cultural landscape	The Protected Green Spaces policy seeks to safeguard designated areas. Additionally, biodiversity and design objectives seek to preserve the natural, historic and cultural landscape. Much of the parish is protected by AGLV legislation	
Maritime	[Not immediately relevant to our location]		
Historic environment	To protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment	Care for the environment, heritage and landscape and supporting sense of local identity encompasses these objectives directly.	
Design	To promote and achieve high quality, locally distinctive design, sustainable land use and sustainable built development	The NDP has a robust Design Requirements policy which directly addresses this objective. An appendix lists all Historical Buildings, Sites and Monuments identified on the Cornwall Interactive Map.	
Social inclusion	To reduce poverty and social exclusion and provide opportunities for all to participate fully in society	Policies prioritise local need and affordable housing in the parish. A range of housing is supported to meet varying needs and requirements, and small scale enterprise is encouraged.	

Crime and anti-social behaviour	To maintain the very low crime rate and very low fear of crime	Addressed within the Design Requirements policy.	
Housing	To meet the needs of the local community in terms of general market, affordable, adaptable and decent housing	Policies prioritise local need and affordable housing in the parish. A range of housing is supported to meet varying needs and requirements.	
Health, sport and recreation	To improve health through the promotion of healthier lifestyles and improving access to open space, including the re-establishment of footpaths	Policies seek to safeguard open spaces and improve access to them by protecting and reopening footpaths and introducing cycleways. Small scale provision of and access to community health and welfare facilities is supported.	
	where necessary, and the provision of health promoting community facilities		
Economic development	To support small scale businesses that meet the needs of the area and provide local employment without impacting on its quiet rural character	The Employment Development policy addresses this objective in detail.	
Education and skills	To maximise accessibility for all to the necessary education, skills and knowledge to play a full role in society	Support is given to the Primary School in the parish, and opportunities for Adult Education and Key Skills would be encouraged.	
Transport and accessibility	To improve pedestrian access to local facilities To improve public transport through the parish	Safe pedestrian access is a priority. Public transport is yet to be addressed	
Energy	To encourage the use of renewable energy and increase energy efficiency	This objective is fully addressed in the Sustainable Development and Climate Change policy and in Design Requirements	

Key:

	Likely to undermine the SC Objective
	Likely run against the SC Objective
	Likely to neither undermine or contribute to meeting the SC Objective
	Likely to support the SC Objective indirectly
	Likely to support the SC Objective directly
	Impacts unknown or SC theme/objective(s) irrelevant to this element of the NDP

Conclusion

The Sustainability Check on Morval Parish's NDP has demonstrated that the policies within this and the vision and objectives that it seeks to achieve succeed in encouraging sustainable development.