



Cuckfield Parish Council

Sustainability
Report: Non-
Technical Summary
Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan,

Cuckfield Parish Council
July 2013

What is Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Appraisal?

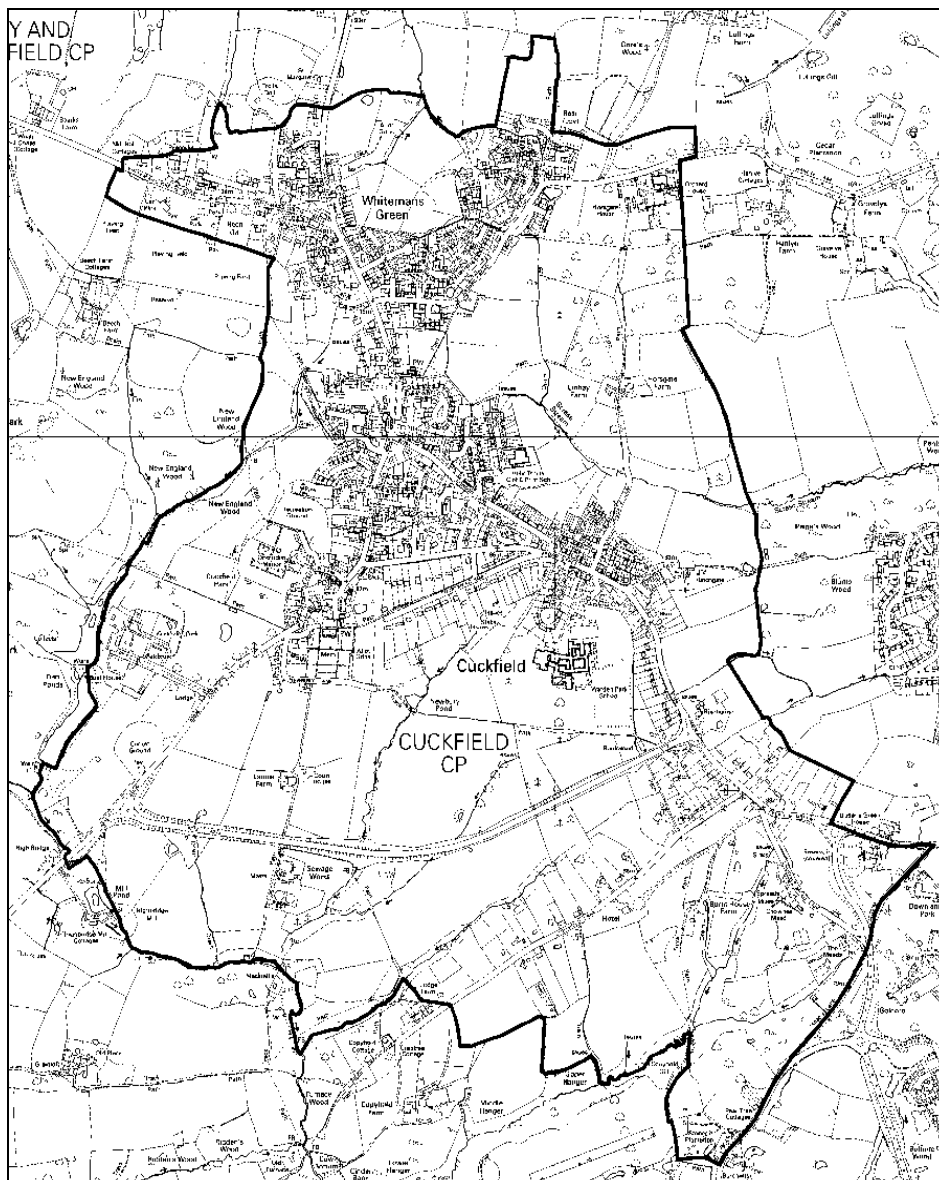
We are required by European Law to undertake what is known as a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan (CNP). An SEA is a process for identifying the environmental impacts likely to arise from the Plan.

To help ensure that the CNP will promote sustainable development, it is best practice in the UK to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). An SA is a process that aims to predict and then assess the economic, environmental and social effects likely to arise from the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As both the SA and the SEA aim to predict and assess the impacts of plans, they are usually combined to avoid duplication. They are referred to as the SA/SEA.

Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Neighbourhood Plan is for Cuckfield Parish. The SA addresses the area within the Parish Boundary that the Plan affects.



Sustainability Objectives

Sustainability Objectives have been chosen to represent the economic, environmental and social issues facing the Parish – enabling the assessment to show whether policies would result in balanced, ‘sustainable’ development, or would favour one of these three themes over another.

There are 13 Sustainability Objectives for Cuckfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan:

1. To ensure that those in need of local housing have the opportunity to live in a, sustainably constructed and affordable home of the appropriate type.
2. To ensure development does not take place in areas of flood risk, or where it may cause flooding elsewhere.
3. To maintain a safe environment with a high level of community wellbeing
4. To ensure that the Parish has adequate amenities for local residents, including health, education, local shopping and leisure facilities
5. To ensure development in the Parish complements the character of the village, including the Conservation Areas and the village setting
6. To reduce the Parish’s impact on climate change and prepare the community and environment for its impacts
7. To conserve and enhance biodiversity within the Parish, as part of a wider landscape of biodiversity enhancement across the district and the South East
8. To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the high quality and sensitive landscape within the Parish and prevent the coalescence of settlements
9. To reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys, reduce road congestion and improve and promote travel by cycle and on foot within the Parish
10. To encourage lower production of waste to landfill
11. To maintain and improve the water quality of the Parish's watercourses and aquifers, and to achieve sustainable water resources management
12. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Parish and to utilise sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.
13. To promote opportunities for employment within the Parish and support local businesses and tourism

Methodology

A Scoping Report was prepared containing a summary of what we already know about Cuckfield. Feedback from the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage was received and as a result modifications were made to the evidence base, and some of the Sustainability Objectives and Monitoring Indicators.

Sustainability Appraisal of Policy Options, and of Draft Policies was carried out in early 2013. After consultation on the Draft CNP and Draft Sustainability Report the Plan policies were revised. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission CNP policies is displayed in Appendix 1 of the Sustainability Report.

Each policy or policy option is appraised against each Sustainability Objective and scored according to whether its impact on the Objective would be: significantly negative; negative; neutral; positive; significantly positive, or whether the impact is not known. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan contains an account of how it has responded to the Sustainability

Appraisal, and any justification for instances where the most sustainable policy recommendation is not proposed to be adopted in the Plan.

Sustainability Framework

The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan were compared against the Sustainability Objectives and showed that the Plan does not conflict with the aims of Sustainable Development. Some issues are not covered by the Plan, such as climate change, flooding, and waste disposal. This is because these issues are outside the scope or influence of the Parish. Policies of the National Planning Policy Framework, and adopted policies at County and District level will ensure development fulfils all Cuckfield Parish's Sustainability Objectives.

Recommendations of Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan

The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that implementation of the Draft Plan policies will result in no net negative impact on the sustainability objectives of the Parish. The overall effect of the implementation of the Plan will contribute to the objectives of sustainable development within the Parish.

It is recommended that to avoid negative impacts, development applications should be considered in the light of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole; and taking into consideration the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework where issues are not covered directly by policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Monitoring and Review

Development within Cuckfield will be monitored, and if development is shown to be falling short of the Sustainability Objectives set, some policies may be amended or new policies created to mitigate any negative effects. The Draft Sustainability Report contains Sustainability Indicators to measure the success of the Sustainability Objectives.

Next Steps

The Submission CNP will be examined by an independent inspector who will decide whether the process of producing the Plan has met legal requirements. If the Plan passes the exam, it will be proposed for adoption by Cuckfield Parish. The Plan will be adopted if more than 50% of people voting in a referendum vote for the Plan.

If you have any questions you can contact the Neighbourhood Plan team:

- By email to: [**info@cuckfieldplan.com**](mailto:info@cuckfieldplan.com)
- By post or by hand to: Cuckfield Parish Council, The Queen's Hall, High Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5EL