



Sustainability Appraisal  
(incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)  
Interim Report Non-Technical Summary

# Local Development Plan 2020-2035



Belfast  
City Council

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## **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report: Non-Technical Summary relates to Belfast City Council's Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP is fundamental to delivering sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspiration of local communities. It will address the needs and opportunities of Belfast in terms of housing, economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and ensuring good design.
- 1.2 A Sustainability Appraisal is a methodical process that is undertaken during the preparation of the Local Development Plan. It promotes sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when appraised against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve the environmental, economic and social objectives.
- 1.3 This Non-Technical Summary relates to the full Interim Report for the Preferred Options Paper (POP) for Belfast's LDP, which is being published for a 12 week consultation from 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

## **The Local Development Plan**

- 1.4 Part 2 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) provides for the preparation of a local development plan by a council for its district, which will (when adopted) replace current development plans produced by the Department of the Environment (now Department of Infrastructure), namely the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The local development plan (LDP) will comprise of two development plan documents; The Plan Strategy (PS); and, The Local Policies Plan (LPP).
- 1.5 Belfast City Council is now working on the preparation of its new LDP, which will guide development in Belfast up to 2035. The local development plan will:
  - provide a 15 year plan framework to support economic and social needs in the city, in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing the delivery of sustainable development.
  - facilitate growth by coordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the wellbeing of the community.
  - allocate sufficient land to meet the needs of the city.
  - provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within the local area should take place.
  - provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals.
  - deliver the spatial aspects of The Belfast Agenda, the city's community plan.
  - Ongoing community consultation is an important element and these stages are set out in our Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.6 The Statement of Community involvement sets out the Council's policy for involving the community in the production of Belfast's LDP and the consideration of planning applications. It describes who, how and when the community will be invited to participate in the different stages of both LDP formulation and the determination of

planning applications. The document will support and supplement the commitments in our Equality Scheme and our responsibilities to consult under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and represents a further step towards embedding meaningful consultation into our planning and decision-making processes.

- 1.7 The LDP Timetable sets out the key stages and indicative timescales in the process to produce the Belfast City LDP 2035. It will help to make sure that the plan process is efficiently managed and that the key stakeholders, including the consultation bodies and the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC).
- 1.8 The Statement of Community Involvement and Timetable were approved by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in June 2016.

### Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 1.9 The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires Council, under statutory duty, to undertake a SA. SA is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives, that is social, environmental and economic factors. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is to provide for a high level protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with the view to promoting sustainable development.
- 1.10 Both the SA and SEA are required in relation to both development plan documents, the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, and will involve consultation on the scope of the appraisal alongside the Preferred Options Paper (POP) consultation.
- 1.11 The key output of the SA/SEA process is an Environmental Report that will present information on the likely effects of the draft LDP. This Interim Report provides an appraisal of reasonable alternatives of the preferred options for delivering the objectives of the LDP against the SA Framework developed in the Scoping Report.
- 1.12 This Non-Technical Summary relates to the full Interim SA Report for Belfast's Local Development Plan. The SA is being undertaken in stages alongside the preparation of the LDP in order to provide sustainability guidance as the plan is being developed.
- 1.13 Table 1 below signposts how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met within the SA work undertaken to date.

**Table 1: Meeting the Requirements of the SEA Directive**

SEA Directive Requirements	Covered in the Interim Report?
<p><b>Preparation of an environmental report</b> in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated. The information to be given is (Art. 5 and Annex I):</p>	<p>The full SA Report for the Belfast Local Development Plan will constitute the 'Environmental Report', and will be produced at a later stage in the SA process.</p>

SEA Directive Requirements	Covered in the Interim Report?
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Chapter 2 of the Interim SA Report provides an outline of the contents, main objectives of the Belfast LDP and chapter 3 outlines the relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. Appendix 2 provides a review of the Plans, Policies and Programme which are relevant to the Belfast LDP.
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	Chapter 3 and Appendix 3 of the Interim SA Report
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	Chapter 3 and Appendix 3 of the Interim SA Report
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.;	Chapter 3 and Appendix 3 of the Interim SA Report
e) The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	Chapter 3 and Appendix 2 of the Interim SA Report
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Appendix 4 of the Interim SA Report
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Chapter 4 and 5 and Appendix 4 of the Interim SA Report
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Chapters 2, 4 and 5 and Appendix 4 of the Interim SA Report
i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;	Chapter 6 and Table 7 of the Interim SA Report
j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	This non-technical summary document has been prepared to accompany this Interim SA Report.

SEA Directive Requirements	Covered in the Interim Report?
<p>The report shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment (Art. 5.2)</p>	<p>Addressed in the Interim SA Report and will adhere to this requirement.</p>
<p><b>Consultation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>authorities with environmental responsibility, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report (Art. 5.4)</li> </ul>	<p>Consultation on the Scoping Report was undertaken between November 2016 and December 2016. The Scoping Report was published in January 2017 along with the Interim SA Report and the Preferred Options Paper.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Consultation is being undertaken in relation to the Preferred Options Paper in January 2017 for a period of 12 weeks and will be undertaken for all future iterations of the plan. The current consultation documents are accompanying by this Interim SA Report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other EU Member States, where the implementation of the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment of that country (Art. 7).</li> </ul>	<p>Not relevant as there will be no effects beyond the UK from the Belfast City Local Development Plan.</p>
<p><b>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Art. 8)</b></p>	
<p><b>Provision of information on the decision:</b> When the plan or programme is adopted, the public and any countries consulted under Art.7 must be informed and the following made available to those so informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the plan or programme as adopted</li> <li>A statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report of Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of consultations entered into pursuant to Art. 7 have been taken into account in accordance with Art. 8, and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and</li> <li>the measures decided concerning monitoring (Art. 9)</li> </ul>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b> of the significant environmental effects of the plan's or programme's implementation (Art. 10)</p>	<p>Requirement will be met fully at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p><b>Quality Assurance:</b> environmental reports should be of a sufficient standard to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive (Art. 12).</p>	<p>This report has been produced in line with current guidance and good practice for SEA/SA and this table demonstrates where the requirements of the SEA Directive have been met.</p>

## Outline of the SA Process

1.14 As previously mentioned, the SA process should be fully integrated into the local development plan making process and for developing monitoring arrangements for the implementation of the plan. The SA process involves the following key stages:

### **Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.**

1.15 The Scoping Report forms part of the Council's duty to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) of its Local Development Plan (LDP) until 2035. The SA process began in 2016.

1.16 The Scoping Report is the first stage (Stage A) of the SA process and it involves collecting information on the social, economic and environmental characteristics as well as:

- Reviewing relevant plans, policies and programmes, and objectives relevant to the plan with information on synergies or inconsistencies;
- Collecting baseline information including the SEA 'topics' - biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter relationship between the above factors. Information on social and economic issues were also gathered and taken into consideration.
- Identifying the economic, social and environmental issues and objectives the Council proposes to address in helping to deliver sustainable development through the LDP. Consideration was given to the likely evolution of each issue if the LDP was not to be developed;
- Developing the proposed framework by which the strategic options and detailed policies and proposals of the LDP will be appraised; and,
- Consulting on the scope of the SA/SEA in accordance with the SEA Directive which has been transposed into Northern Ireland law by the 'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 EAPP (NI) Reg 11. The Consultation Body, NIEA (and HED) received the Scoping Report in November 2016 for review for a period of 5 weeks.

1.17 The Scoping Report was developed to enable statutory authorities and other interested bodies to make comments on the scope of the SA/SEA. Consideration of the objectives of the SA/SEA for carrying out the assessment and indeed their consistency with other plans and programmes can also be reviewed by consultees and interested bodies. Any significant gaps in the information gathered can be identified and steps taken to remedy these before the LDP is developed further.

1.18 A draft version of the SA Scoping Report was published for consultation between November and December 2016 with the Consultation Body, namely Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Historic Environment Division (HED). Appendix 1 of the full Interim SA Report lists the comments that were received during the consultation and describes how they have been addressed.



- 1.19 Several amendments have since been made in each section of the Scoping Report to reflect the suggestions and comments made by the Consultation Body.
- 1.20 The development of an assessment framework of objectives provides a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be predicted, described, analysed and compared in a consistent way. The SA/SEA objectives provide the basis for testing policy and site options associated with the emerging Belfast Local Development Plan. The SA Framework consists of 19 SA objectives along with a set of associated sub objectives which are shown in Table 2 in this Non-Technical Summary Report. Table 2 shows how all of the 'SEA Topics' have been covered by the SA Objectives.

Table 2: SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
<b>Social</b>	Population	1. Reduce deprivation and encourage an inclusive and equal society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce deprivation and social exclusion, in particular in those areas most affected</li> <li>To encourage an inclusive and equal society</li> <li>To promote regeneration, reducing disparity with surrounding areas</li> <li>To increase the ability of people to influence decisions</li> </ul>
	Population Human Health	2. Improve health and well being for an improved quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for sport and recreation</li> <li>To support the reduction of health inequalities</li> <li>To improve physical and mental health</li> <li>To reduce noise levels and concerns</li> <li>To contribute to improving air quality</li> <li>To contribute to improving water quality</li> </ul>
	Population	3. To provide opportunity for good quality housing and enable people to meet their housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase access to affordable housing</li> <li>To encourage a range of dwelling type, size and tenure</li> <li>To reduce homelessness</li> <li>To improve housing quality</li> <li>To ensure the housing needs of an ageing population are met</li> <li>To reduce the number of vacant properties</li> </ul>
	Population	4. Increase community safety by supporting the reduction of crime and antisocial behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support a reduction in the actual levels of crime</li> <li>To help to reduce the fear of crime</li> <li>To promote design out crime principles</li> </ul>
	Population	5. To improve skills and education of residents through providing high quality, accessible lifelong learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve access to high quality educational facilities</li> <li>To improve the level of investment in key community services</li> <li>To make access easier for those without access to a car</li> <li>To improve access to work experience, apprenticeships and training, especially young people</li> <li>To encourage affordable access</li> </ul>

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
	Population	6. Retain and enhance access to local services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage the level of investment in key community services</li> <li>To improve accessibility to key local services (schools, GP surgeries, hospitals, town, district and local centres) and employment opportunities</li> <li>To encourage affordable access</li> <li>To make access easier for those without access to a car</li> <li>To protect the shopping and community services function of local service centres</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b>	Population	7. To ensure local residents have access to employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help to reduce short and long-term local unemployment</li> <li>To encourage job opportunities for those most in need of employment particularly those in areas of high unemployment deprivation</li> </ul>
	Population	8. Support the economic development of Belfast as a competitive place and contribute to Belfast's roles as a regional economic driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage new business start-ups and opportunities for local people</li> <li>To encourage business development and enhance productivity</li> <li>To encourage the resilience of business and the local economy</li> <li>To promote growth in key sectors</li> <li>To promote growth in key clusters</li> <li>To enhance the image of the area as a business location</li> <li>To encourage indigenous business</li> <li>To encourage inward investment</li> <li>To make land and property available for business development</li> <li>To encourage tourism investment</li> <li>To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the City Centre</li> </ul>
	Population Air Climatic Factors	9. Promote an integrated transport system and encourage sustainable travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the reduction of traffic volumes and congestion</li> <li>To encourage the proportion of journeys using modes other than the car</li> </ul>

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage walking and cycling</li> <li>• To support the reduction of commuting</li> <li>• To improve accessibility to work by public transport; walking and cycling</li> <li>• To improve access between key employment areas and key transport interchanges</li> <li>• To encourage rail and water based freight movement</li> </ul>
	Climatic Factors	10. Support the transition to a Low Carbon Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage renewable energy production</li> <li>• To support the development of a Circular Economy</li> <li>• To support the digital economy</li> <li>• To help to reduce our energy consumption</li> </ul>
Environmental	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	11. Maintain and enhance biodiversity assets and protect habitats and species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To conserve and enhance habitats of international, regional and/or local importance and create habitats in areas of deficiency</li> <li>• To conserve and enhance species diversity; and in particular avoid harm to protected species</li> <li>• To conserve and enhance sites designated for their nature conservation interest at the regional or national level</li> <li>• To protect and enhance woodland cover and trees and promote their management</li> <li>• To improve access to and promote the educational value of sites of biodiversity value</li> <li>• To protect and enhance geodiversity</li> <li>• To enhance the wider ecological network and seek to minimise the fragmentation of nature corridors and networks</li> </ul>
	Soil	12. Protect and enhance soil quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To minimise development on Greenfield sites</li> <li>• To ensure that, where possible, new development occurs on derelict; vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings</li> <li>• To ensure contaminated land is remediated as appropriate</li> <li>• To minimise the loss of soils to development and maintain and enhance soil quality</li> </ul>

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce the risk of subsidence</li> <li>• To increase the amount of development on previously developed land</li> </ul>
	Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological) Material Assets	13. Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect and enhance Conservation Areas and other sites, features and areas of historical and cultural value</li> <li>• To protect listed buildings and their settings</li> <li>• To help preserve, enhance and record archaeological features and their settings</li> <li>• To help to protect and enhance historic buildings through sensitive adaptation and reuse</li> <li>• To enhance the quality of priority areas for townscape and public realm enhancements</li> <li>• To protect and enhance local distinctiveness and sense of place</li> <li>• To encourage and support the articulation of statutory requirements in relation to Scheduled Historic Monuments (i.e. requirement for consent)</li> <li>• To recognise and work to preserve and enhance the historic townscape</li> <li>• To foster Heritage Led Regeneration</li> <li>• To promote heritage based, sustainable tourism</li> </ul>
	Landscape	14. Protect, maintain and enhance the quality of Belfast's distinctive landscape and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the landscape character and visual amenity of open spaces</li> <li>• To protect and enhance sensitive landscapes</li> <li>• To minimise visual intrusion and protect views</li> </ul>
	Landscape	15. Protect and enhance open space and natural greenspace including Belfast's countryside asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure adequate access to public open space within a reasonable walking distance from people's homes</li> <li>• To promote access to green infrastructure and ecological networks</li> <li>• To create new areas of open space and natural greenspace</li> </ul>
Material Assets	16. Promote the sustainable management of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help to support the reduction of consumption of materials</li> </ul>	

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
		waste	and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage the reduction of household waste</li> <li>• To support the increase of waste recovery and recycling and improve access to facilities</li> <li>• To support the reduction hazardous waste</li> <li>• To support the reduction of waste in the construction industry</li> </ul>
	Water Material Assets	17. Promote the quality, efficient use of water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the improvement of the quality of surface and ground water</li> <li>• To encourage the reduction of water consumption and improve water efficiency</li> <li>• To encourage the efficient use and management of water</li> <li>• To incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) as part of the design where appropriate</li> <li>• To incorporate new green space and habitat creation helping to mitigate flood risk</li> </ul>
	Air	18. Reduce air pollution and ensure continued improvements to air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the improvement of air quality</li> <li>• To help achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Plan</li> <li>• To reduce emissions of key pollutants</li> </ul>
	Climatic Factors	19. Support the adaptation to Climate Change and effectively manage flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help reduce the impact of increased urban temperatures on people and property</li> <li>• To promote sustainable design and construction measures</li> <li>• To support development located outside areas of high flood risk</li> <li>• To help to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption and the need to travel</li> <li>• To support an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources</li> <li>• To support the reduction of emissions of ozone depleting substances</li> <li>• To support measures to minimise the risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses to people and property</li> </ul>

SA Theme	SEA Directive Topic	SA Objective	Sub Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support measures to reduce the risk of damage to property from storm events</li><li>• To support building designs and a green infrastructure that is adapted to climate change</li></ul>

**SA Stage A (2): Interim SA Report: consists of the SA Scoping Report, assessment of reasonable alternatives against agreed SA framework and undertaking public consultation along with the Preferred Options Paper.**

- 1.21 The Interim SA Report considers comments received from the Consultation Body on the Scoping Report (see Appendix 1). These comments have been fed into the Interim Report being presented in the Appendix 2: Plans, Policies and Programme Review and Appendix 3: Baseline Information for Belfast. The Plans, Policies and Programme Review and Baseline Information is also summarised in Chapter 3 of the Interim Report and further ahead in this Non-Technical Summary document.
- 1.22 Chapter 4 of the Interim Report undertakes an assessment of reasonable alternatives to the options contained in the Preferred Options Paper. A description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the information is required and this is set out in Chapter 2.
- 1.23 The appraisal of reasonable alternatives against the sustainability issues, as set out in Chapter 4 of the Interim Report, can help to determine the preferred option for the preparation of subsequent development plan documents. It also provides a sound evidence base to justify the decision-making process around the preferred options.

**SA Stage B: Developing and Refining the Alternatives and Assessing their Effects**

- 1.24 This stage of the SA process should be undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the draft development plan documents (Plan Strategy or Local Policies Plan), which forms the next stage of the LDP process, and builds upon existing SA information, taking account of comments received from the consultation process.
- 1.25 The appraisal for reasonable alternatives for the draft plan should follow the same methodology used for the appraisal of options in the POP. The difference at this stage is that the range of reasonable alternatives considered, should now be within the context of a council's preferred options and focus on the strategic options and policies for delivering the objectives of the Plan Strategy.

**SA Stage C: SA Report to document the appraisal process and findings;**

- 1.26 The Interim SA Report and this Non-Technical Summary describe the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the SA of Belfast's LDP, in particular the current stage of the Preferred Options Paper (POP). They set out the findings of the appraisal of options, highlighting any likely significant effects (both positive and negative, and taking into account the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term and permanent and temporary effects). The reasons for selecting the preferred options are also described.



**SA Stage D: Consultation with the public, environmental authorities and any EU member state affected on the sustainability appraisal report and draft plan;**

- 1.27 Belfast City Council is inviting comments on the Belfast LDP's Preferred Options Paper and the Interim SA Report and Non-Technical Summary. These documents are being published on the Council's website for consultation between 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 for a 12 week consultation period.

**SA Stage E: SA Statement to show how the SA and opinions / consultations have been taken into account, the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted and the proposed measures to monitor the plan.**

- 1.28 Consultation comments received in relation to the Interim SA Report will be considered during the next stage of the SA and will be addressed in the next iteration of the SA Report. This will include how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan, the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and the proposed measures to monitor the plan.

**SA Stage F: Monitoring: establishing arrangements to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the plan, to identify unforeseen adverse effects and undertake appropriate remedial action.**

- 1.29 Proposals for monitoring the sustainability effects of the LDP are set out in Chapter 7 of the Interim SA Report and are further described in this Non-Technical Summary.

**Policy Context**

- 1.30 The review of plans, programmes and strategies pertinent to the Belfast Local Development Plan has been carried out to establish a coherent policy context for the SA/SEA and to ensure the emerging LDP is cognisant of and complies with international, national and local policies. The LDP must also conform to environmental protection legislation and contribute to achieving the sustainability objectives established at the international and national levels.
- 1.31 At the international level, Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive') and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the 'Habitats Directive') are particularly significant as they require Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken in relation to the emerging Belfast Local Development Plan. These processes should be undertaken iteratively and integrated into the production of the LDP in order to ensure that any potential negative environmental effects (including on European level nature conservation designations) are identified and mitigated.
- 1.32 There are a wide range of other EU Directives relating to issues such as water quality, waste and air quality, most of which have been transposed into UK law through national-level policy; however, the relevant international directives have been included in Appendix 2 in the full Interim SA Report for completeness.
- 1.33 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) must be taken into account when preparing the LDP. The 2011 Act transfers responsibility for the preparation of LDPs from

the Department of Infrastructure (DfI) to councils and establishes a plan-led planning system which gives primacy to the plan in the determination of planning applications unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 1.34 LDPs guide the future use of land in their respective areas and inform developers, members of the general public, communities, government, public bodies, representative organisations, and other interests of the policy framework that is used to determine development proposals.
- 1.35 Within the wider context of spatial planning, LDPs allocate appropriate land for differing types of land use, and set out the main planning requirements to be met in respect of particular zoned sites. They also show particular designations, for example, Conservation areas, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.36 The LDP is a fundamental tool in the implementation of central government policies and strategic objectives particularly those set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035.
- 1.37 In preparing LDPs councils must take account of the RDS 2035, the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland, the SPPS and any other policies or advice in guidance issued by DfI such as landscape character assessments and conservation area design guides. In addition, other relevant matters may need to be considered, for example: land suggested as part of the 'Call for Sites' consultation process; Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) / Housing Market Analysis (HMA); neighbourhood action plans; regeneration projects, or a marine plan, where appropriate. Indeed, the need for interaction between the marine and terrestrial planning systems is recognised and the requirement to work effectively together to achieve harmonisation between the two interrelated planning systems is acknowledged in the UK Marine Policy Statement.
- 1.38 The LDP should fulfil the following functions:
  - provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of a council's district in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
  - facilitate sustainable growth by co-ordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the well-being of the community;
  - allocate sufficient land to meet society's needs;
  - provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within their local area should take place;
  - provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; and
  - deliver the spatial aspects of a council's current community plan.
- 1.39 There are a number of key local plans and programmes which provide further context for the emerging LDP, including the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy, Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy, Belfast Integrated Economic Strategy and Belfast Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2007 (currently being reviewed).

## Baseline Information and Key Sustainability Issues

- 1.40 The collection of baseline information is necessary to meet the requirements of Schedule 2 (2) and (3) of the EAPP (NI) Regulations. The requirements of the SA and SEA are similar. The evidence collection for the SA is wider as it considers not just the environmental information that is required specifically for the SEA but also the social and economic influences that may have potential impacts upon sustainability as a result of the plan adoption and implementation.
- 1.41 The baseline information provides the current state of the social, economic and physical environment and identifies trends to indicate whether the situation is better or worse or how far it is from reaching any established thresholds or targets. It identifies particularly sensitive or important elements of the social, economic and physical environment which are likely to be affected e.g. endangered species, vulnerable groups etc.
- 1.42 The baseline information provides the context for assessing the sustainability of the options set out in the Preferred Options Paper (POP) and it provides the basis for identifying trends, predicting the likely effects and monitoring its outcomes. The requirements of baseline data vary widely, but should cover pertinent issues relating to the social, economic and environmental issues, and should relate to records or data which are sufficient enough to identify trends.
- 1.43 Schedule 2 of the EAPP (NI) Regulations requires data to be gathered on a number of topics including biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter relationship between the above factors.
- 1.44 As an integrated SA and SEA is being carried out, baseline information relating to the sustainability topics has also been included for example housing, Social Inclusion and Deprivation, Segregation and Human Health under the 'Social topics', and Skills and Employability, Economic Growth, Transport, Waste, Tourism and Minerals. The baseline information is set out in appendix 3 in the full Interim SA Report and Table 3 below sets out the sustainability issues providing a summary of the environmental baseline.
- 1.45 The baseline information contributed to the identification of a set of key sustainability issues for Belfast, which in turn helped to develop a locally appropriate SA framework (i.e. a set of SA objectives) that would be used for appraising the emerging LDP preferred options. Table 3 sets out the key sustainability issues for Belfast which provides a summary of the environmental baseline. In line with the SEA requirements, consideration is also given to the likely evolution of the environment if the new LDP were not to be implemented.

Table 3: Likely evolution of key sustainability issues in Belfast without implementation of the LDP

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
<p><b>Population &amp; Human Health</b>            Around 45% of Belfast’s population live in the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) in NI. This represents 18% of the regional population.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce poverty and social exclusion by encouraging regeneration to deprived areas thus tackling spatially persistent social deprivation and inequalities.</li> <li>• Support urban and rural renaissance.</li> <li>• Connect deprived communities to employment opportunities and services.</li> </ul>	<p>Without a LDP and supporting evidence, it will not be possible for the Council to fully understand its spatial and development needs and to plan positively to address these.</p> <p>The Department of Communities ‘Neighbourhood Renewal’ scheme targets interventions in the most deprived 10% wards across NI. In the short/medium term this programme will continue to address deprivation and local issues.</p>
<p><b>Population &amp; Human Health</b>            Life expectancy in Belfast is lower than the NI average. People living in deprived areas of Belfast are expected to live up to 4.5 years less than more affluent areas.</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve access to community and health facilities to encourage the well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</li> <li>• safeguarding and facilitating quality open space and access to outdoor recreational and sporting facilities</li> <li>• provide secure age-friendly environments</li> <li>• better integration between land use planning and transport</li> </ul>	<p>Without a LDP, current trends could continue to worsen, however, regional and potentially local programmes are likely to be implemented which seek to address health disparities across the city. As well as this, without a LDP, there could be a lack of connection and integration of sustainable modes of transport within the land use development.</p>
<p><b>Population &amp; Human Health</b>            In Belfast, health inequalities exist between the most and least deprived areas</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate access to areas of open space, sport and recreation particularly via walking and cycling;</li> <li>• Provide adequate access to health care facilities</li> <li>• Use development management policies to manage the number and distribution of certain use types (e.g. hot food takeaways, betting shops) which could be contributing to negative health outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Without a LDP and supporting evidence, it will not be possible for the Council to fully understand its spatial and development needs and to plan positively to address these.</p> <p>The Open Space Strategy will continue to be developed but may lack spatial planning input and the disparity of open space across the city may not be adequately addressed.</p> <p>The Belfast Agenda identifies health as a priority for Belfast and could potentially coordinate programmes to address these inequalities.</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
<p><b>Population &amp; Human Health</b> Between 2010-14 Belfast had the highest rate of deaths due to obesity in NI. Childhood obesity in Belfast is 9 percentage points higher in comparison to the NI average. Within Belfast LGD, childhood obesity is 33% high in deprived areas.</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support broader government policy aimed at addressing obesity and other health and well being issues.</li> <li>• Influence the environment in a way that builds strong, healthy and vibrant communities</li> </ul>	<p>Without a LDP and supporting evidence, it will not be possible for the Council to fully understand its spatial and development needs and to plan positively to address these. That being said, there are likely to be programmes which seek to address specific health issues e.g. obesity.</p>
<p><b>Population &amp; Human Health</b> Segregation continues in parts of Belfast with 88<sup>1</sup> different security barriers and forms of defensible architecture, known as 'Peace walls' are still located within and between communities which could hamper potential development in terms of housing or open space.</p>	<p>The LDP has an important role to play in the delivery of good quality housing and spaces that supports the creation of more balanced communities. The LDP should take account of the Council's good relations policies.</p>	<p>Without the LDP, interventions would continue at NI Executive level and local Council and NIHE level. The NI Executive set ambitious targets to reduce and remove all interface barriers by 2023. Without the LDP, an updated evidence base and supporting policy would be absent to assist the removal of barriers to create shared spaces and maximise the accessibility of all areas within our communities. There would be a potential lack of collaborate approaches to integrated regeneration of the wider neighbourhood environments</p>
<p><b>Housing</b> A crucial factor in accommodating housing growth in Belfast will be the ability to provide suitable and affordable house types in the right locations to meet the needs of differing household compositions.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a sustainable level of population growth</li> <li>• Promote sustainable patterns of residential development – adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs of everyone</li> <li>• Prioritise the use of previously developed/ brownfield land</li> <li>• Tackling vacancy and dereliction – re-use of vacant buildings to accommodate housing needs</li> <li>• Affordability of housing</li> </ul>	<p>Without the implementation of the LDP, an up-to-date housing policy would be lacking to accommodate local growth, meet demand for the identified annual housing supply in the area, and satisfy local requirements for housing type including affordable housing. The location of suitable housing lands may not correlate to clear areas of housing stress.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Information received from BCC Good Relations Unit

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
<p><b>Housing</b> There is a shortage of programmed social housing schemes to meet social housing need. Welfare reforms are likely to increase the demand for smaller housing units.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate a reasonable mix and balance of housing tenures and types.</li> <li>• Take into consideration the NIHE Housing Needs Assessment in the allocation of land required to facilitate the right mix of housing tenures</li> </ul>	<p>Without the LDP and its associated evidence base in designing appropriate policies that will address the demands of population need including an aging population, could mean people are living in houses that do not address their particular need.</p>
<p><b>Crime</b> A third of NI's recorded crime offences in 2014 occurred in Belfast. Anti-social behaviour is higher in Belfast than any other Council area.</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhance the quality of life by encouraging safe and accessible environments</li> <li>• provide greater access to employment areas</li> <li>• encourage secure by design standards</li> <li>• improve quality of life by ensuring adequate access to employment opportunities and opportunity for regeneration</li> </ul>	<p>Trends would continue or worsen due to a lack of strategic direction in spatial terms. However, other policies and community safety initiatives from other statutory providers will continue to provide interventions to reduce crime. There is guidance within the SPPS in supporting good design and positive place making- "It can further sustainable development and encourage healthier living; promote accessibility and inclusivity; and contribute to how safe places are and feel".</p>
<p><b>Open Space</b> There is a disparity in the provision of open space across Belfast. There are low levels of open and green space in the city centre.</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect, enhance and make open space accessible for enjoyment of the natural, cultural and industrial environment.</li> <li>• Issues of accessibility of sport, leisure and open space in terms of its social participation, cohesion and inclusivity in Belfast</li> <li>• Identify additional areas of open space and ensure an adequate provision</li> <li>• Encourage developer contributions via Section 76 to offset the impacts caused by developments by contributing to and creating open space as per land use plans.</li> <li>• Create additional and well designed open space particular in areas lacking</li> </ul>	<p>SPPS and PPS 8 would still prevail which provides protection to open spaces. Without the LDP and the SPPS requirements for LDP's to undertake an Open Space Strategy, the uneven distribution of open space may not be adequately addressed and some areas across the city will have under provision of accessible open spaces and the City Centre would continue to have a significant lack of open space</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
	<p>in provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and promote green linkages throughout the city and to the surrounding hills</li> <li>• Encourage more open space provision along the rivers and the waterfront and link to seascape where appropriate</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Education</b> The 2011 census outlined that 41% of the adult population have no formal qualifications which decreases chances of employability.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adequate access to schools, colleges and universities in particular the relocation of the University of Ulster to the North end of the City Centre</li> <li>• Ensure community and educational facilities are in the right locations and are accessible and well connected</li> </ul>	<p>Without the LDP there may be insufficient economic and employment land to provide locations for entrepreneurs and attract inward investment which could displace Belfast as the regional economic driver as outlined in the RDS 2035. Other statutory providers will continue to invest in employability and skills of the population through interventions such as the Council's Skills and Employability Framework.</p>
<p><b>Employment</b> 30<sup>2</sup>% of Belfast's working age population are economically inactive who are not looking for work or not available for work. Notably, half of this cohort is claiming out of work or 'other' benefits.</p>	<p>Promote connectivity to employment lands (esp. in areas of employment deprivation) The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the need to sustain a more responsive, flexible and accessible system of higher education for the social and economic benefit of Belfast.</li> <li>• Large scale housing development should be planned close to existing education facilities with good infrastructural connectivity.</li> <li>• Review the Employment Lands Assessment in Belfast</li> </ul>	<p>The absence of a LDP to address local needs, could further disadvantage those on lower incomes in terms of access to places of work and local amenities. The LDP could help to better connect communities to places of work, zone land suitable for economic development and regeneration to the needs of the area.</p>

<sup>2</sup> Labour Force Survey



Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
<p><b>Tourism</b>            Whilst Belfast has a growing tourism economy, there are a number of weaknesses that could potentially inhibit growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel bed space is limited</li> <li>• Belfast has lower than average overnight trip length and spend per night which could hamper economic growth in this sector.</li> <li>• There are weaknesses in connectivity between key points of interest in the city.</li> </ul>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a City Centre Approach to new tourist based accommodation/ development where appropriate</li> <li>• Ensure an adequate supply of land for tourism uses especially in the City Centre</li> <li>• Retain the built and landscape character of Belfast</li> <li>• Ensure an integrated transportation approach to land use in order to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.</li> </ul>	<p>Without a LDP, the Council would be unable to facilitate sustainable tourism growth to adequately reflect the needs and assets unique to Belfast. For example, the potential to exploit the international trend towards city and business tourism as well as its capacity to become a destination for cultural tourism. The absence of the LDP could inhibit the potential to explore opportunities to expand water based tourism along the Lagan and canals.</p>
<p><b>Transportation</b>            Regionally, there is an overall dependency on travel by private car which has had an adverse impact on environmental quality. There is a need to integrate transportation and land use to maximise development around a quality sustainable transport network in order to reduce the need to travel and car dependency.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make land available to facilitate sustainable patterns of development and travel by more sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>• Integrate transportation and land use in order to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.</li> <li>• Support the growth of the economy whilst reducing the environmental impact of transport</li> </ul>	<p>The regional policy, particularly PPS13 may address this issue to some extent, however, the implementation of up-to-date LDP policies specifically relating to public transport in Belfast, would provide more certainty in relation to how public transport issues will be addressed locally. Particularly as the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) is currently being reviewed. Without the LDP it would be harder for transport strategies to be implemented in an integrated way.</p>
<p><b>Retail</b>            There are high levels of vacancy rates in Belfast which reduces the retail offer and economic potential of the city centre.</p>	<p>LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure City Centre first approach</li> <li>• Provide for sustainable mixed development centred around the potential for an anchor store</li> <li>• Robust retail core and frontage</li> <li>• Promote areas of office development</li> <li>• Promote sustainable re-</li> </ul>	<p>High levels of vacancy would continue which would be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the city centre. The SPPS and RDS identify the need to enhance the distinctive role of Belfast City Centre as the primary retail location in NI. Regional objectives also set a town centre first approach to new retail. Without the LDP, there could be a reliance of market</p>



Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
	<p>use of vacant lands and buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote areas of mixed use and/or retail and opportunity.</li> <li>• Promote compact development with good accessibility to facilities</li> </ul>	<p>led development which could take people out of the town centre. The LDP would provide an integrated framework for the regeneration and development of the city, particularly for supporting investment through the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity, Flora &amp; Fauna</b> Belfast has many designated sites protected for their biodiversity and conservation importance. New development, pollution and disturbance could pose a threat to vulnerable biodiversity sites resulting in habitat loss and fragmentation.</p>	<p>The LDP should seek to protect, conserve and enhance the hierarchy of natural heritage sites by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting and maintaining ecological networks, including priority species, biodiversity and habitats.</li> <li>• Protecting and integrating natural heritage features when zoning sites for development through key sites requirements.</li> <li>• Protecting and maintaining our sensitive landscapes from obtrusive development and explore opportunities for their enhancement.</li> <li>• Sensitive management through the promotion of additional green and blue infrastructure will add value to the provision and enhancement of the City as well as its connection to open space and habitats in and around settlements.</li> <li>• Greater emphasis on the protection of trees and woodlands and their positive contribution to the social, cultural and physical environment benefits i.e. habitats, flood protection and amenity value.</li> </ul>	<p>Policies within the SPPS and the suite of PPS's (in particular PPS2 Natural Heritage) provide some protection. BMAP 2015 provides policy for local designations. Therefore, even without the new Local Plan this issue is being addressed to some extent by planning policy. However, given the current pressures for growth and development within the district, an up-to-date Local Plan can help to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity by directing development away from sensitive locations and managing new development so that its design minimises effects on the natural environment and helps to create and connect habitats. Without the LDP to provide guidance on siting, scale and nature of development, it would destroy sites of nature conservation. The LDP could map and define the sites requiring protection that needs to be protected from obtrusive development. The LBAP is currently being updated by Council and sets Belfast's local priorities for action on habitats and species.</p>
<p><b>Air Quality</b> The heavy reliance on vehicular travel leads to road</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development which is suitably located</li> </ul>	<p>Policies and guidance set out in the SPPS (and the associated Planning Policy</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
<p>traffic congestion which is having an adverse effect on air quality and CO2 emissions in Belfast.</p>	<p>close to services, amenities and established transport corridors which should reduce reliance on private car journeys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of, development, and improvement of sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>• Take account of air quality management areas</li> <li>• Continue to protect and increase tree coverage across Belfast.</li> </ul>	<p>Statements) provide some protection to air quality particularly through the Environmental Impact Assessment screening. Existing legislation will seek to continue to manage air quality to acceptable thresholds. However, without action from the Local Plan to direct development to sustainable locations and increase provision of sustainable transport infrastructure, the trend for increasing car ownership and travel is likely to continue with associated emissions of air pollutants likely to increase.</p>
<p><b>Water</b> The LWWP outlined without major investment in waste water and sewage infrastructure in Greater Belfast, it may not be possible to permit any new connections that will impact significantly on an already stretched infrastructure. This will have an adverse effect on the economic growth strategy for Belfast. All water bodies within the River Lagan, tidal Lagan and inner Belfast Lough are currently failing to meet their WFD objectives, which is being addressed through the LWWP and the North-East River Basin Management Plan (NE RBMP)</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the infrastructure requirements for future land supply</li> <li>• Conduct an urban capacity study</li> <li>• Make provision for waste water and sewage infrastructure as required</li> <li>• Consider the spatial implications of other statutory plans</li> <li>• Increase green and blue infrastructure</li> <li>• Promote the use of SuDS</li> <li>• Meet the requirements of the NE RBMP</li> </ul>	<p>Without the development of the plan, the LWWP would still go ahead but there is the potential that development would be ad-hoc and piecemeal as it would be difficult to coordinate development and its supporting infrastructure. Utility providers may find it difficult to plan for growth and expansion in their networks with the absence of the LDP. The knock-on effects of this could result in delays and the inability to adequately address water quality which could contravene the WFD requirements.</p>
<p><b>Contaminated Soils</b> Belfast has significant areas of previously developed or brownfield land. Many of the existing brownfield sites have remained undeveloped or vacant for extended periods, highlighting concerns over potential viability of the land for housing development which could hinder the delivery of the LDP's growth</p>	<p>The LDP should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an urban capacity study</li> <li>• Identify re-uses of existing brownfield sites which should be prioritised for development</li> <li>• Exercise the precautionary principle to sites which may include priority habitats or are of special</li> </ul>	<p>The Council and NIEA as a statutory consultee to the Planning Service will continue to as much as possible regulate the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and will continue to assess and manage land contamination through the provisions of CLR11.</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
aspirations.	biodiversity interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify previously developed brownfield land in settlements outside the city for potential economic development use.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cultural &amp; Built Heritage</b>            Belfast has a rich cultural and built heritage which could potentially be under pressure from new development that is not in keeping with the character of the area. Alongside this, Belfast contains one fifth of NI's building and monuments recorded on the Built Heritage Risk Register.</p>	The Local Plan should seek to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the historic environment that will allow sympathetic development which preserves historic assets and their setting.</li> <li>• Look for opportunities bring derelict buildings back into positive use.</li> <li>• Respond to local needs, demands and development pressures on local heritage assets.</li> <li>• Develop a tall buildings policy to retain the environmental and cultural character of the city setting i.e. retaining views of the escarpment and Belfast Hills</li> <li>• Encourage the sensitive re-use of existing listed buildings</li> <li>• Recognise the character of townscape</li> <li>• Raise awareness for developers of potential areas where archaeological works will be required</li> </ul>	<p>The SPPS provide some protection particularly through PPS 6. Without a plan, sites that have not been formally designated such as those on a local list will have limited protection and could be at risk of inappropriate development. Potentially erosion of the historic character and townscape</p> <p>It may also be difficult to offer enhancements to assets on the heritage at risk register without the LDP to coordinate the protection and enhancement of these sites.</p> <p>The number of sites on the Built Heritage at Risk Register is likely to increase.</p> <p>The updated listed buildings register could provide additional protection to key buildings</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b>            The landscape of the area is subject to limited statutory landscape character and countryside designations which are under increasing pressure from development and the intrusion of urbanising elements.</p>	The LDP should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to conserve and enhance the landscape character of Belfast.</li> <li>• Consider the natural and cultural components of the landscape and promote opportunities for the enhancement or restoration of degraded landscapes.</li> <li>• Ensure that landscape characters are protected and development should take cognisance of the</li> </ul>	The SPPS provides some protection, particularly PPS2 and PPS21. The LDP will allow for local landscape types to be taken into account, to ensure the least sensitive landscapes are promoted through the plan. Without a plan, local sites unique to Belfast may have limited protection such as Geodiversity sites

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
	<p>landscape character and form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote an urban design guide</li> <li>• Strike a balance between renewable energy (wind development) and the Belfast Hills</li> <li>• Protect the landscape character, setting and local distinctiveness of the city</li> <li>• Identify and protect key views and vistas</li> <li>• Promote tree and woodland planting throughout the city</li> <li>• Promote high standards of design, maintenance and management</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Waste</b> There are challenges in managing and accounting for all waste streams. It is projected the Council may not achieve regional landfill obligations and there is increasing pressure to deliver the recycling targets set by the NI Executive and Europe.</p>	<p>The Local Development Plan should be prepared having regard to this new Council Waste Management Plan and its spatial implications. It also should facilitate the management of waste facilities as required and promote and support innovative ways to tackle waste</p>	<p>The plan may not have much impact on waste reduction or management as the Council have European and Regional targets set to incrementally reduce waste and encourage recycling in the City. The Council will still explore opportunities for further reducing waste including the feasibility of a circular economy approach to generate more value and jobs for the local economy through innovative waste solutions.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b> Rising greenhouse gas emissions are causing an increase in global temperatures which is giving rise to more intense rainfalls and rising sea levels. Consequently, this will lead to significant threat of flooding.</p>	<p>The LDP could encourage and support measures to address climate change by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoiding areas of highest flood risk when allocating sites for development.</li> <li>• Promote natural and man-made flood mitigation schemes which can fulfil flood management functions.</li> <li>• Encouraging sustainable transport</li> <li>• Adapting to climate change through encouraging sustainable building design and construction standards</li> </ul>	<p>The NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme will continue to provide the strategic objectives in relation to adaptation to climate change.</p> <p>The Climate Change Risk Assessment will continue as the statutory requirement of the UK Climate Change Act, published every 5 years.</p> <p>The Cross Departmental Working Group on Climate Change will continue to review cross departmental action on climate change on an annual</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Implications for the LDP	Likely evolution without the LDP
	<p>and protecting, enhancing and create new green space.</p>	<p>basis. The Group will ensure targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases, set out in the Programme for Government are met.</p> <p>Flood risk threat would continue under projected climate trends, and the magnitude and extent of the impact from flood risk is likely to increase, which requires positive management.</p> <p>A local response is required to allocate sites for development sequentially avoiding the highest risk areas as a first principle which is not taking a strategic approach.</p>
<p><b>Renewable Energy</b> Belfast is still reliant on fossil fuels which contribute to greenhouse gases and poor air quality. The lack of renewable energy interventions could pose a risk to energy security in Belfast and make us less competitive in the global market.</p>	<p>The LDP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the reduction of fossil fuel emissions</li> <li>• Support renewable and low carbon technologies</li> <li>• Implement the green and blue infrastructure to encourage more sustainable modes of transport and increased green infrastructure could absorb and reduce greenhouse gases</li> </ul>	<p>The existing PPS was formulated in 2009 and was a reactive policy. The existing policy requires minor changes to include decentralisation of renewable energy generation and encourage and promote district heating systems. The draft Programme for Government outline targets for renewable energy consumption (40% of energy from renewable source and 10% heat from renewable source) and without the LDP, a strategic framework to deliver these targets may be absent through the planning system.</p>

## Approach to the Appraisal of Reasonable Alternatives Methodology

- 1.46 The appraisal of reasonable alternatives against the Sustainability Objectives, presented in table 2, helped to determine the preferred options for the POP. The appraisal compares all reasonable alternatives including the preferred option and assesses these against the baseline environmental, economic and social characteristics of Belfast and the likely evolution without the LDP. Within the justification, the appraisal draws upon other policies, plans and programmes relevant to the plan, in particular, the SPPS and the RDS.
- 1.47 The reasonable alternatives (which includes the preferred option), have been appraised against the 19 SA objectives in the SA framework with scores attributed to each option to indicate its likely sustainability effects on each objective. Table 4 shows the methodology used to categorise and distinguish the significance of the options using symbols and colour coding.

Symbol	Likely Effect	Symbol	Likely Effect
++	Significant positive effect	--	Significant negative effect
+	Minor positive effect	-	Minor negative effect
0	No effect or relationship	?	Uncertain – effect unknown
+/-	Mixed Effects		

Table 4: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the Reasonable Alternatives Methodology

- 1.48 The likely effects of the reasonable alternatives need to be determined and their significance assessed, which inevitably requires a series of judgments to be made. The appraisal has attempted to differentiate between the most significant effects and other more minor effects and record these using the symbols shown in Table 4. The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (--) has been used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -) this is because the effect of a reasonable alternative on the SA objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective. However, scores are relative to the scale of proposals under consideration.
- 1.49 Chapter 4 of the Interim SA Report presents the appraisal of options carried out in parallel with the preparation of the Preferred Options Paper (POP), for delivering the objectives of the Belfast LDP, against the SA Framework as set out in the Scoping Report. An appraisal of the SA findings for the Preferred Options is thus presented in Chapter 4 of the Interim SA Report and the corresponding matrices along with the justification of scores can be found in Appendix 4 of the Interim SA Report.

## Difficulties Encountered

- 1.50 It is a requirement of the SEA Regulations that consideration is given to any data limitations or other difficulties encountered during the SA process. Since the POP aims to stimulate public comment and interest, the preferred options are strategic in their nature and at this stage do not apply policy, which at times made it difficult to identify other alternatives and their effects which are currently uncertain until detailed policy and site proposals are known. Due to the POP's strategic nature, many of the specific effects arising from the options are subjective and depend on individual interpretation. It is anticipated that effects will be better established during the next stage of the LDP process, draft Plan Strategy.
- 1.51 Due to Local Government Review and the alignment of the new Council boundaries, it was difficult to distinguish trends in data which related to the new Belfast City Council boundary.
- 1.52 In some instances, up to date data was difficult to retrieve and the best data available is used to reflect current conditions which may not provide an accurate picture of conditions in 2016. Other data was provided on a regional scale or at a specific plan level so localised data directly relating to Belfast LGD was not available. This was particularly true of data in relation to water. Belfast falls within the North-Eastern River Basin and some elements of data do not relate directly down to the Belfast Council Area. Similarly, it was difficult to obtain accurate or up to date datasets on natural heritage lists including the Priority Species List for Belfast.

## SA Findings for the Preferred Options

- 1.53 A total of 48 Preferred Options are presented in the Preferred Options Paper for public consultation in 2017. The likely effects of the Preferred Options on the SA Objectives are summarised below in table 5 with particular consideration given to the likely significant effects identified (both positive and negative), in line with the requirements of the SEA Regulations. Where relevant, effects are classified as short, medium or long term. Consideration is also given to the mitigation measures that could reduce or offset the negative effects identified, including mitigation that may be provided by policies in the emerging plan. The summary focuses on key messages coming out of the SA and identifies key issues of relevance to the Council's decision making regarding the Preferred Options chosen.
- 1.54 The SA scores for the Preferred Options are presented as a matrix in table 6 using the methodology for scoring in table 4. The detailed matrices are available in Appendix 2 of the Interim SA Report.

## Analysis Overview

- 1.55 The section presents the likely effects of the Preferred Options on the SA Objectives. Particular consideration is given to the likely significant positive and negative effects. The detailed matrices are available in Appendix 2 of the Interim SA report.
- 1.56 An assessment of the cumulative effects is required by SEA Regulations and consideration to ways in which the effects of the preferred options may be mitigated. Table 6 presents the matrix of the SA scores of the Preferred Options included within the Preferred Options Paper (POP) and the key issues arising from the matrix are summarised in table 5. This provides a basis to review the preferred options in its entirety to enable an assessment of



the likely significant effects as a whole against each of the SA objectives. In summary table 6 shows:

- Overall, the preferred options would have a generally positive effect on the SA objectives.
- Significant percentage of neutral effects in relation to the 'Liveable Place' theme preferred options against the SA objectives.
- Notable positive scoring of the preferred options for 'community cohesion' and 'new homes' options against the SA objectives which ties in with the high level aims of the RDS 2035.
- The mixed minor positive and negative effects identified for 'Supporting Economic Growth' and the 'Creating a Vibrant Economy' themes reinforces the need to ensure an appropriate balance between economic growth and safeguarding the environment as advocated in the SPPS.
- A number of mixed minor positive and negative effects identified for SA17 (Quality & efficient use of water resources) outlines the need to carefully manage water resources in bringing forward housing and economic growth over the Plan period.

### Cumulative Effects and Mitigation

1.57 Table 5 presents the SA findings of the Preferred Options and a summary of the likely significant effects including cumulative effects, and how negative effects can be reduced, or avoided.

Table 5: Summary of Likely Effects of the Preferred Options on the SA Objectives

SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
<p>1. Reduce deprivation and encourage an inclusive and equal society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our preferred option for growth targets brownfield lands and higher densities in central areas and seeks to support greater access to jobs and wealth opportunities which can act as a catalyst in regenerating deprived communities.</li> <li>• Whilst the preferred option proposes an ambitious level of growth, the LDP can ensure that infrastructure is in place to facilitate population growth, balanced with the need to retain and protect environmental assets.</li> <li>• The preferred options also encourage greater connectivity to green, open space and physical access by better transport links.</li> <li>• Specifically, the preferred option positively supports community cohesion which encompasses the ethos inclusive and equal society.</li> <li>• Improving wealth and economic opportunities provides, creates job creation.</li> <li>• Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on reducing deprivation and encouraging an inclusive and equal society.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Improve health and well being for an improved quality of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The projected population growth could increase pressure on existing healthcare facilities. The POP proposes to ensure there is adequate access to serve the population.</li> <li>• The POP encourages a modal shift towards sustainable transport and movement through increased walking and cycling.</li> <li>• The use of sustainable transport should reduce congestion and has the potential to improve air quality.</li> <li>• The safeguarding and enhancement of existing green spaces can help soften and provide refuge from the city's built form thus</li> </ul>



SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
	<p>increasing mental and physical wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<p>3. To provide opportunity for good quality housing and enable people to meet their housing needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The POP plans to deliver 37,000 new homes to support the population increase required to facilitate economic growth.</li> <li>The POP suggests better design for new homes which will ensure houses are built to good quality and meet the housing needs of the population.</li> <li>The POP plans to ensure there are adequate infrastructure to facilitate the plan level of good quality housing.</li> <li>Whilst the plan could encourage better design of new development incorporating sustainable waste management, it is inevitable that more waste will be created with additional development. New economic development could bring potentially new innovative ideas to managing waste whilst also providing jobs.</li> <li>The development of housing could potentially result in the redevelopment of brownfield land. Whilst the redevelopment of brownfield land could have a positive effect on soils by reducing contamination, some brownfield sites that have remained vacant for a long period of time may have elements of sites of Open Mosaic Habitats in Previously Development Land (note, not all brownfield sites support Open Mosaic Habitats).</li> <li>Increased level of growth will place pressure on land resources and could result in environmental impacts on landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage. However, the preferred option seeks to target brownfield land/sites, increase densities to mitigate these impacts. There is scope to positively reuse existing buildings including those of heritage value and those on the heritage risk register, into functional buildings. Also, mitigation through environmental policies in the draft plan could help to mitigate the effects of development.</li> <li>Due to the strategic nature of this stage of the LDP process, no sites have been allocated for housing, thus the uncertainty regarding compatibility with the proposed Tall Building option.</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on housing.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Increase community safety by supporting the reduction of crime and antisocial behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The POP will indirectly affect crime and community safety through encouragement of better design and incorporating secure by design ethos into policy.</li> <li>Due to the strategic nature of the POP, there are uncertainties are due to the lack of detail on the site locations particularly for Travellers Accommodation and Housing Mix.</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect with <b>uncertainties</b> on crime and community safety</li> </ul>
<p>5. To improve skills &amp; education of residents by providing high quality, accessible lifelong learning opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The projected population growth will increase the need for education facilities including schools. The POP seeks to encourage the protection of existing infrastructure and proposes that essential infrastructure is in place ahead of future development.</li> <li>Each preferred option has been assessed in relation to education</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
	<p>and lifelong learning and have found that sustainable use of transport has had a significant positive effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a number of neutral effects or no relationship has been identified.</li> <li>• Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative neutral</b> effect on access to education and lifelong learning opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>6. Retain and enhance access to local services and facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population growth could put pressure on existing local services and facilities. The POP seeks to ensure their protection and enhancement to address demand. Alongside this, encouraging appropriate improvement in infrastructure as well as sustainable transportation will provide improved access to services</li> <li>• The SPPS seeks to use a sequential approach by directing development to maximise existing infrastructure, services and facilities within the urban footprint. This should help strengthen existing neighbourhood centres and arterial routes with local services adding to local viability and viability.</li> <li>• Due to the strategic nature of the POP, there are uncertainties due to the lack of detail on the site locations particular with regards to affordable housing.</li> <li>• Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on access to local services and facilities</li> </ul>
<p>7. To ensure local residents have access to employment opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The preferred option helps to ensure projected population growth enables employment growth, therefore increasing access to employment opportunities.</li> <li>• The POP also seeks to reduce the need to travel with having the resident population closer to places of work and seeks to support the improvement of sustainable modes of transport which will ensure people (including those without a car) are able to access employment opportunities.</li> <li>• The development of housing could potentially result in the redevelopment of brownfield land. Whilst the redevelopment of brownfield land could have a positive effect on soils by reducing contamination, some brownfield sites that have remained vacant for a long period of time may have elements of sites of Open Mosaic Habitats in Previously Development Land (note, not all brownfield sites support Open Mosaic Habitats).</li> <li>• Increased level of growth will place pressure on land resources and could result in environmental impacts on landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage. However, the preferred option seeks to target brownfield land/sites, increase densities to mitigate these impacts. There is scope to positively reuse existing buildings including those of heritage value and those on the heritage risk register, into functional buildings. Also, mitigation through environmental policies in the draft plan could help to mitigate the effects of development.</li> <li>• Due to the strategic nature of the POP, there are uncertainties and mixed effects due to the lack of detail on the site locations for example on employment locations and housing.</li> <li>• Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on access to employment</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
	opportunities
<p>8. Support economic development of Belfast as a competitive place &amp; contribute to its role as a regional economic driver</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The likely cumulative effects of the preferred options are similar to those described above in relation to employment, particularly due to the correlation between both, employment development will make a significant contribution towards achieving economic growth in Belfast making it an attractive place work and live. Equally this could increase the demand for housing growth too.</li> <li>The preferred option also seeks to safeguard existing employment sites as well as ensuring access to educational opportunities.</li> <li>Protecting, enhancing and managing the built and historic environment could indirectly support economic growth making Belfast a more attractive place to invest in, to work in and to visit.</li> <li>As expected the vibrant economy approaches within the POP identify a significant positive cumulative effect on this SA objective.</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on the economic development of Belfast and its role as the regional economic driver</li> </ul>
<p>9. Promote an integrated transport system and encourage sustainable travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The POP seeks to facilitate sustainable transport use rather than accommodate private car use including promoting walking and cycling and better use of the public transport network as well as managing the road network and parking management within the city.</li> <li>Public transport and transit orientated development as part of a balanced approach is important in many ways as it provides increased mobility, reducing congestion, can generate jobs, enabling economic growth</li> <li>The RDS recognises the need to improve facilities for walking and cycling which will assist in making streets safer and more user friendly and will promote active travel networks which could have a significant positive effect by promoting health and well-being. It is recognised that increased physical activity can improve physical and mental health. This could also contribute towards minimising vehicle emissions.</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on sustainable transport and sustainable travel.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Support the transition to a Low Carbon Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The model for growth concentrates on the existing urban area and encourages people to live closer to jobs. The POP seeks to reduce the need to travel and support the use of sustainable modes of transport including promoting walking and cycling and better use of the public transport network</li> <li>The POP provides support and encourages the use of appropriate renewable energy development which could encourage actions to mitigate climate change.</li> <li>The POP encourages the creation of opportunities for decentralising energy and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. It encourages renewable energy schemes whilst setting out safeguards to ensure they have no or minimal impact on quality of life.</li> <li>The POP encourages a circular economy approach and the</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
	<p>benefits associated with innovative ways in reducing, reusing and recycling waste, the economic benefits and job opportunities arising of the approach as well as the environmental benefits from reducing the need to landfill and in climate emissions associated with raw materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on low carbon economy</li> </ul>
<p>11. Maintain and enhance biodiversity assets, protect habitats and species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The preferred options have been assessed for their likely effects on biodiversity. While a number of options have been identified as having potential negative effects, it is difficult to assess at this strategic level. It may be possible to implement mitigation measures at site allocation stage so to reduce or avoid these effects.</li> <li>• A Habitats Regulation Assessment, which is being undertaken separately through SES, will also help inform mitigation measures.</li> <li>• All potential negative effects are uncertain at this strategic level of assessment as they will depend largely on the integration of green and blue infrastructure and the direction of the mitigation measures of the draft Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan.</li> <li>• The preferred options seek to retain areas of open space which will help to provide habitats and retain ecological networks.</li> <li>• Whilst new development could enhance economic activity, it may put pressure on open space and greenfield sites which harbour biodiversity. However, mitigation measures can be implemented to offset any adverse effects by encouraging the development or enhancement of open and green space which is particularly lacking in the City Centre.</li> <li>• It is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative</b> effect on biodiversity although this is currently <b>uncertain</b> until detailed policy and site proposals are known.</li> </ul>
<p>12. Protect and enhance soil quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development of housing could potentially result in the redevelopment of brownfield land. The redevelopment of brownfield land could have a positive effect on soils by reducing contamination.</li> <li>• Mixed effects have been identified in employment locations due to potential by-products and pollution from new industry.</li> <li>• Uncertain effects have been identified for improvements to the road network due to uncertainties of location.</li> <li>• It is considered to have a <b>cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative</b> effect on soil quality.</li> </ul>
<p>13. Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All potential negatives are uncertain at this stage due to the strategic level of the POP. The LDP aims to achieve good quality design and be sympathetic to the built and historic environment promoting sustainable reuse to foster local distinctiveness. However, new high quality development in keeping with the landscape and townscape can have positive effects on heritage assets improving their surroundings and appearance.</li> <li>• The LDP's proposed growth scenario may adversely impact on the historic environment and it is less easy to retrofit these buildings to meet high standards on energy efficiency.</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative</b> effect on the built and historic environment.</li> </ul>
<p>14. Protect, maintain &amp; enhance the quality of Belfast's distinctive landscape &amp; geodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With the proposed population projections and the encouragement of further development on sites for employment, economic development and housing, greenfield sites and sites close to sensitive areas could potentially be impacted. In the next stage of the LDP, draft Plan Strategy, sites will be prioritised for allocation following an assessment of likely effects on landscape and geodiversity.</li> <li>All potential negative effects at this strategic stage are uncertain as they will depend on the proposed development. Incorporating environmental screening will be imperative for mitigation.</li> <li>Uncertain effects have been identified for improvements to the road network due to uncertainties of location</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative minor positive or neutral</b> effect on landscape and geodiversity but this is <b>uncertain</b> until detailed policies and sites are allocated in the Draft Plan Strategy. There could be potential to include appropriate design measures into policy at this stage.</li> </ul>
<p>15. Protect and enhance open space and natural greenspace including Belfast's countryside asset</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The POP makes significant reference for the safeguarding and enhancement of open space and places of outdoor recreation and sport in taking forward policy.</li> <li>The preferred options can have benefits in terms of recreation, access to community greenways, walking and cycling networks including the expanding Belfast Bikes network in the city centre.</li> <li>Minor negative effects have been identified for economic growth and employment land supply. With the proposed population projections and the encouragement of further development on sites for employment, economic development and housing, greenfield sites and sites close to sensitive areas could potentially be impacted. In the next stage of the LDP, draft Plan Strategy; sites will be prioritised for allocation following an assessment of likely effects on natural greenspace including Belfast's countryside asset.</li> <li>Mixed effects have been identified as it recognises that the City Centres boundary requires defining to reflect projected development which necessities reviewing open space requirements for example to reflect increases in residential populations.</li> <li>Uncertain effect has been identified for improvements to the road network due to uncertainties of location.</li> <li>Overall, the preferred option is therefore considered to have a <b>cumulative positive</b> effect on open space and Belfast's countryside asset.</li> </ul>
<p>16. Promote the sustainable management of waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst the plan could encourage better design of new development incorporating sustainable waste management, it is inevitable that more waste will be created with additional development. New economic development could bring potentially new innovative ideas to managing waste whilst also providing jobs.</li> <li>It is considered to have <b>neutral</b> effects on waste overall.</li> </ul>



SA Objective	Summary of Likely Effects.
<p>17. Promote the quality and efficient use of water resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The POP seeks to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to support new development. The Strategic Drainage Infrastructure Plan through the Living with Water Programme will seek to support economic growth, protect the environment and address flood risk.</li> <li>• Whilst the provision of new development could put additional pressure on water sources including water waste treatment works, housing development will be provided on a phased approach. Measures to mitigate water stress could be planned for with the appropriate statutory body.</li> <li>• It is considered to have <b>cumulative mixed (minor positive and minor negative)</b> effects on water.</li> </ul>
<p>18. Reduce air pollution and ensure continued improvements to air quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposals for population, economic and housing growth could result in increased air pollution from increased vehicular traffic, emissions associated from economic growth. The preferred options also include various options and measures seeking to reduce private car use and provide improved access and opportunities for walking, cycling and sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>• New economic development could bring potentially new innovative ideas to managing air pollution whilst also providing jobs such as new Cleantech Technologies and the circular economy</li> <li>• It is considered to have <b>cumulative minor positive</b> effects on air quality.</li> </ul>
<p>19. Support the adaptation to Climate Change and effectively manage flood risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is potential of an overall increase in greenhouse gas emissions from vehicular traffic, commercial activity and housing. The inclusion of sustainable modes of transport, energy efficient design, clean technology and proposals of increased opportunities to walking and cycling are expected to minimise emissions.</li> <li>• The POP provides support for appropriate renewable energy development which could encourage actions to mitigate climate change.</li> <li>• Minor negatives have been identified for employment land supply and locations given that existing locations are located within flood risk areas.</li> <li>• It is considered to have a <b>cumulative mixed (minor positive and minor negative)</b> effect on climate change.</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: SA Compatibility Matrix of the Growth and Shaping a Liveable Place Preferred Options

Table 6.1		SUMMARY MATRIX			SOCIAL					ECONOMIC			ENVIRONMENTAL										
Strategic Aim	Ref	Topic	Preferred Option No.	SA1 (Deprivation / Inclusivity)	SA2 (Health & Wellbeing)	SA3 (Quality Housing)	SA4 (Community safety, crime, ASB)	SA5 (Improve skills & education through lifelong learning)	SA6 (Access to local services & facilities)	SA7 (Access to employment)	SA8 (Regional economic driver / competitive place)	SA9 (Integrated transport & sustainable travel)	SA10 (Low carbon economy)	SA11 (Biodiversity assets / habitats & species)	SA12 (Protect & enhance soil quality)	SA13 (Built & historic environment)	SA14 (Protect, maintain & enhance landscape & geodiversity)	SA15 (Protect & enhance open space, green space & countryside)	SA16 (Sustainable management of waste)	SA17 (Quality & efficient use of water resources)	SA18 (Reduce air pollution / improve air quality)	SA19 (Adaptation to climate change and managing flood risk)	
<b>GROWTH</b>	GR1	Supporting Economic Growth	2	++	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	++	+	-	+	+/-	+	+	
<b>SHAPING A LIVEABLE PLACE</b>	LP1	New Homes	4	++	++	++	++	0	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	+/-	++	+	++	+/-	++	++	
	LP2	Affordable Housing	3	+	+	++	+	?	?	?	+	?	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LP3	Housing Mix	3	+	+	+	?	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+
	LP4	Accomm. For older people	4	++	++	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LP5	Traveller Accomm.	2	+	+	++	?	0	+	?	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+
	LP6	Shared Housing	2	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	++	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LP7	Quality Design in Res. Dev's	N/A	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	++
	LP8	Health & well-being	2	+	++	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+
	LP9	Community Infrastructure	N/A	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
	LP10	Community Cohesion	3	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	++	++
	LP11	Urban Design	N/A	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	++
	LP12	Arterial Route / Gateways Design	2	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	+
	LP13	Promoting Greater Connectivity	2	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+
	LP14	Tall Buildings	2	+	0	?	0	0	+	+	+	++	++	++	0	0	++	+	+	0	0	+	+
	LP15	Archaeology & Built Heritage	3	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	0
	LP16	Local Distinctiveness	2	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LP17	Energy Efficient Design	2	++	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	+	+	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+

Table 6.2: SA Compatibility Matrix of Creating a Vibrant Economy Preferred Options

Table 6.2		SUMMARY MATRIX			SOCIAL					ECONOMIC			ENVIRONMENTAL									
Strategic Aim	Ref	Topic	Preferred Option No.	SA1 (Deprivation / Inclusivity)	SA2 (Health & Wellbeing)	SA3 (Quality Housing)	SA4 (Community safety, crime, ASB)	SA5 (Improve skills & education through lifelong learning)	SA6 (Access to local services & facilities)	SA7 (Access to employment)	SA8 (Regional economic driver / competitive place)	SA9 (Integrated transport & sustainable travel)	SA10 (Low carbon economy)	SA11 (Biodiversity assets / habitats & species)	SA12 (Protect & enhance soil quality)	SA13 (Built & historic environment)	SA14 (Protect, maintain & enhance landscape & geodiversity)	SA15 (Protect & enhance open space, green space & countryside)	SA16 (Sustainable management of waste)	SA17 (Quality & efficient use of water resources)	SA18 (Reduce air pollution / improve air quality)	SA19 (Adaptation to climate change and managing flood risk)
CREATING A VIBRANT ECONOMY	VE1	Employment land Supply	2	++	+	++	0	++	++	++	++	++	+	-	+	++	+	-	+	+/-	-	-
	VE2	Strategic Employment Locations	1	++	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	0	+/-	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	-
	VE3	Flexible approach to Existing Employment Locations	1	++	++	+	+	+	+	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	+	+
	VE4	Supporting Development Needs of Higher Educational Institutions	1	+	++	++	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+/-	+	+
	VE5	Network and Hierarchy of Centres	1	++	++	0	+	0	++	+	++	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+/-	+	+/-
	VE6	Centre Boundaries	1	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+/-	+	+
	VE7	Vitality & Viability of Centres	1	+	+	0	+	0	++	+	++	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+/-	+	+
	VE8	City Centre Boundary	1	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	++	++	+	?	+	+/-	0	+/-	0	+/-	++	+
	VE9	City Centre Primary Retail Area	1	+	+	0	+	0	+	++	++	+	+	0	+	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	+	+/-
	VE10	Leisure & Tourism in the City Centre	1	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	+/-	+	+
	VE11	City Centre Living	1	+	+	++	+	0	+	++	++	++	++	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	++	+
	VE12	Shared Space in the City Centre	N/A	++	++	+	++	0	+	++	++	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	0	+/-	+	+
	VE13	City Centre Development Opportunities	1	++	++	++	+	0	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	+	+	+/-	+	+



Table 6.3: SA Compatibility Matrix of Smart Connected Resilient Place Preferred Options

Table 6.3		SUMMARY MATRIX			SOCIAL					ECONOMIC			ENVIRONMENTAL									
Strategic Aim	Ref	Topic	Preferred Option No.	SA1 (Deprivation / Inclusivity)	SA2 (Health & Wellbeing)	SA3 (Quality Housing)	SA4 (Community safety, crime, ASB)	SA5 (Improve skills & education through lifelong learning)	SA6 (Access to local services & facilities)	SA7 (Access to employment)	SA8 (Regional economic driver / competitive place)	SA9 (Integrated transport & sustainable travel)	SA10 (Low carbon economy)	SA11 (Biodiversity assets / habitats & species)	SA12 (Protect & enhance soil quality)	SA13 (Built & historic environment)	SA14 (Protect, maintain & enhance landscape & geodiversity)	SA15 (Protect & enhance open space, green space & countryside)	SA16 (Sustainable management of waste)	SA17 (Quality & efficient use of water resources)	SA18 (Reduce air pollution / improve air quality)	SA19 (Adaptation to climate change and managing flood risk)
SMART CONNECTED RESILIENT PLACE	SCR1	Telecommunications	2	+	+	0	0	+	+	++	++	0	+	++	++	++	++	++	0	0	+	+
	SCR2	Water & Sewerage	2	+	+	++	0	+	+	++	++	0	++	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	++
	SCR3	Electricity & Gas	2	++	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
	SCR4	Walking, Cycling & Sustainable Modes of Transport	1	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	++	0	0	0	+	++	++
	SCR5	Public Transport Network	N/A	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	++	++
	SCR6	Road Network	1	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	?	?	0	?	?	0	?	+	+
	SCR7	Parking Demand Management	N/A	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	++	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	++	++
	SCR8	Environmental Quality	1	++	++	++	++	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
	SCR9	Mitigating Environmental Change	N/A	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	SCR10	Renewable Energy	1	++	++	++	0	0	0	0	++	0	++	+	+	+/-	+	+	++	0	+	+
	SCR11	Adapting to Environmental Change	N/A	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	0	+	0	+
	SCR12	Flood Risk	1	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+
	SCR13	Waste Infrastructure	N/A	0	++	+/-	0	0	++	++	++	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	++

Table 6.4: SA Compatibility Matrix of Green and Active Preferred Options

Table 6.4		SUMMARY MATRIX		SOCIAL					ECONOMIC			ENVIRONMENTAL										
Strategic Aim	Ref	Topic	Preferred Option No.	SA1 (Deprivation / Inclusivity)	SA2 (Health & Wellbeing)	SA3 (Quality Housing)	SA4 (Community safety, crime, ASB)	SA5 (Improve skills & education through lifelong learning)	SA6 (Access to local services & facilities)	SA7 (Access to employment)	SA8 (Regional economic driver / competitive place)	SA9 (Integrated transport & sustainable travel)	SA10 (Low carbon economy)	SA11 (Biodiversity assets / habitats & species)	SA12 (Protect & enhance soil quality)	SA13 (Built & historic environment)	SA14 (Protect, maintain & enhance landscape & geodiversity)	SA15 (Protect & enhance open space, green space & countryside)	SA16 (Sustainable management of waste)	SA17 (Quality & efficient use of water resources)	SA18 (Reduce air pollution / improve air quality)	SA19 (Adaptation to climate change and managing flood risk)
GREEN & ACTIVE PLACE	GA1	Open Space, Sport & Outdoor Recreation	1	++	++	++	++	0	+	+	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	+	++
	GA2	New Open Space & Green Corridors	1	++	++	++	++	0	+	+	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	++
	GA3	Natural Heritage	1	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+
	GA4	Trees	1	+	++	++	0	0	0	0	++	0	++	++	++	++	+	++	0	0	++	++

## Monitoring

- 1.58 Regulation 17 of EAPP (NI) Regulations sets out the requirements for monitoring the implementation of the plan. It states,
- “The responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action”<sup>3</sup>.*
- 1.59 Therefore, monitoring should help identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and implement the necessary remedial action. Monitoring should focus upon the likely significant effects identified by the SA and the mitigation measures proposed to offset or reduce significant adverse effects.
- 1.60 Monitoring measures should be clearly linked to the SA process, with particular reference to the sustainability objectives and issues identified during the preparation of the SA Report. Monitoring allows the actual significant effects of the implementing the plan to be tested against those predicted in the SA.
- 1.61 Because of the early stages of the Belfast LDP, and the uncertainty attached to many of the potential effects identified, monitoring measures have been proposed in Table 9 of Chapter 6 of the Interim SA Report in relation to all the SA objectives in the SA Framework. As the LDP progresses and the likely significant effects are identified with more certainty, it may be appropriate to narrow down the monitoring framework to focus on a smaller number of SA objectives relevant to Belfast’s LDP. It is important to note that the sub-objectives outlined in the SA Framework in Table 2 are likely to change during the course of the LDP process.
- 1.62 The ‘Potential Indicators’ in the SA Framework include a potential source of data to be used for monitoring, most of which will be provided by external bodies. During the course of the LDP process, the Council will continue to work with statutory bodies to finalise and agree the relevant sustainability effects to be monitored.
- 1.63 As the council will be required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report, this may also include the findings of monitoring any likely significant effects as a result of implementing the plan.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/pdfs/ukxi\\_20041633\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/pdfs/ukxi_20041633_en.pdf)

## Next Steps

- 1.64 The Reasonable Alternatives and the Preferred Options have been appraised by the SA objectives (Table 2). The Interim SA Report will be published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Paper (POP) for the LDP.
- 1.65 It is intended that the POP and the Interim SA Report will provide the basis for consulting with the public and stakeholders on a series of options for dealing with key issues in the plan area. It aims to stimulate public comment and help interested parties to become involved in a more meaningful way at this earliest stage of plan preparation<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.66 The Interim SA Report and the POP will be available for Public Consultation on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 for a period of 12 weeks, until the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 as set out in the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.67 Following this consultation, the responses will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate and will be taken into account by Belfast City Council as it prepares the Plan Strategy. Any representations made regarding site specific issues will be held over and considered as part of the Local Plan Policies. The SA will then be updated to reflect any changes and further consideration will be given to potential mitigation measures as well as finalising the approach to the monitoring framework.
- 1.68 As part of the process, a Public Consultation Report will be published following the consultation period.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/dp\\_practice\\_note\\_5\\_pop.pdf](http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/dp_practice_note_5_pop.pdf)