

Executive Summary

This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Strategic Framework and the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policy T10 for the Kirklees Strategic Economic Zone (KSEZ) is the first to be completed by Kirklees Council under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It builds on an earlier non-statutory internal appraisal and the related Scoping Document, published for consultation on 1st November. Comments received on the latter have been taken into account in this appraisal.

This appraisal began at the same time as the KSEZ was nearing completion and at a time when the Council's approach to SA was being applied for the first time. Some difficulties were experienced due to tight timescales, difficulties in obtaining baseline and other data, unfamiliarity with the process, and the retrospective nature of the appraisal.

However, the appraisal has raised issues that have resulted in modifications to the proposals, a clearer statement of reasons behind some of the choices made has emerged and further work and action have been identified in order to make the plans more sustainable.

The appraisal summarises the KSEZ proposals and objectives and the appraisal methodology used (based on Government guidance). Other policy documents and programmes to which the KSEZ is linked are reviewed, a baseline described and key sustainability issues identified which the KSEZ proposals can help to address. The KSEZ and SPD's objectives were tested for compatibility with the Council's SA Framework resulting in a change to both the KSEZ and SPD objectives. A commentary on the identified incompatibilities is included.

An analysis in terms of frequency and significance of the predicted impacts for each KSEZ and SPD objective against a baseline position was undertaken. Mitigating actions were then identified for the most serious negative impacts. The appraisal concludes with an indication of the intentions for considering consultation responses and monitoring the actual impact of the policy and proposals if and when implemented.

This Appraisal is therefore now made available for comment as part of the consultation on the KSEZ documents, namely the Strategic Framework and the SPD. Comments received by the Council will be considered by its Cabinet on 12 April 2006 when the SPD, modified if appropriate as a result of those comments, will be considered for approval as planning policy.