

**Essex Replacement Minerals Local Plan: Pre-Submission Draft**

**Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment**

**Environmental Report: Annex H – Quality Assurance Checklist**

**November 2012**



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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

Essex County Council commissioned the Strategic Environmental Assessment Team of Essex County Council's Spatial Planning Group to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, on the proposed Replacement Mineral Local Plan: Pre-Submission Draft.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Team are acting as consultants for this work, therefore the content of the Sustainability Appraisal should not be interpreted or otherwise represented as the formal view of Essex County Council.

This document is Annex H to the Environmental Report which sets out the Quality Assurance Checklist for the SA/SEA Environmental Report.

## **1.2 Quality Assurance Checklist**

A quality assurance checklist is an important tool which allows the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) to be reviewed to ensure that the requirements of the SEA Directive<sup>1</sup> have been met. It also shows how effectively the appraisal has integrated sustainability considerations into the plan making process.

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<sup>1</sup> EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

## 2 Quality Assurance checklist

The following table shows the checklist carried out after completion of the Environmental Report. It has been produced in the same structured detailed in Local Development Frameworks – Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal (PAS, 2007) and has been divided into the different stages of the SA process.

**Table 1: Quality Assurance Checklist**

Does the final report ...	
<b>Describe the emerging plan and summarise the Scoping Report</b>	
Account for the recommendations included in the review of the scoping report?	In Preferred Approach SA/SEA and carried forward.
Adequately summarise the scoping report?	✓ Section 2 'Sustainability Context, Baseline and Objectives' and Annexes A, B and C.
<b>Describe findings of stage b1 of the SA process</b>	
Test the compatibility of the plan objectives with the SA objectives?	✓ Section 3.3 'Aims and Strategic Objectives'
<b>Include reasonable options/alternatives in line with stage b2 of the SA process</b>	
Document the reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives of the plan?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Alternatives Considered & the Reasons for Their Rejection / Selection'
Include an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Alternatives Considered & the Reasons for Their Rejection / Selection'
<b>Describe the findings of stage b3-b5 of the SA process</b>	
Ensure that all significant effects on the economy, community and environment are considered including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological	✓ Sections 4-8 'Significant Effects'

heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors?	
Predict effects in terms of their magnitude, geographical scale, the time period over which they will occur, whether they are permanent or temporary, positive or negative, probable or improbable, frequent or rare and whether or not there are secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Temporal Effects' and 'Secondary, Cumulative & Synergistic Effects'
Quantify predictions and evaluations of significance where possible, taking care to avoid false precision?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Impact on SA/SEA Objectives'
Ensure that qualitative judgement of predictions and evaluation of significance is supported by baseline evidence such as likely effects on specific indicators, trends, targets or other evidence?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Impacts on Indicators'
Highlight where a number of small, less significant effects may act in a cumulative or synergistic fashion to result in a significant effect?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Temporal Effects' and 'Secondary, Cumulative & Synergistic Effects'
Compare options against sustainability criteria and each other and possibly a business-as-usual option?	✓ Sections 4-8 'Alternatives Considered' and 'Progress Through the SA/SEA Process'
Consider and document ways of mitigating significant adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects?	✓ Sections 4-8 ' Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations'
Document any uncertainties or limitations in the information underlying both quantitative and qualitative predictions and evaluations of significance?	✓ Section 2.3.17 ' Date Limitations'
<b>Document stage b6 of the SA guidance</b>	
Include a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring?	✓ Section 10.1 'Monitoring' and Annex C
<b>Other</b>	
Contain a non-technical summary that is written in a way most likely to engage prospective readers?	✓ Non-Technical Summary (separate

	document)
Use simple, clear language and avoids or explains technical terms?	✓
Is clear and concise in its layout and presentation?	✓
Use maps and other illustrations where appropriate?	✓
Set out what happens next in the SA process?	✓ Section 10.2 ' Next Steps'



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