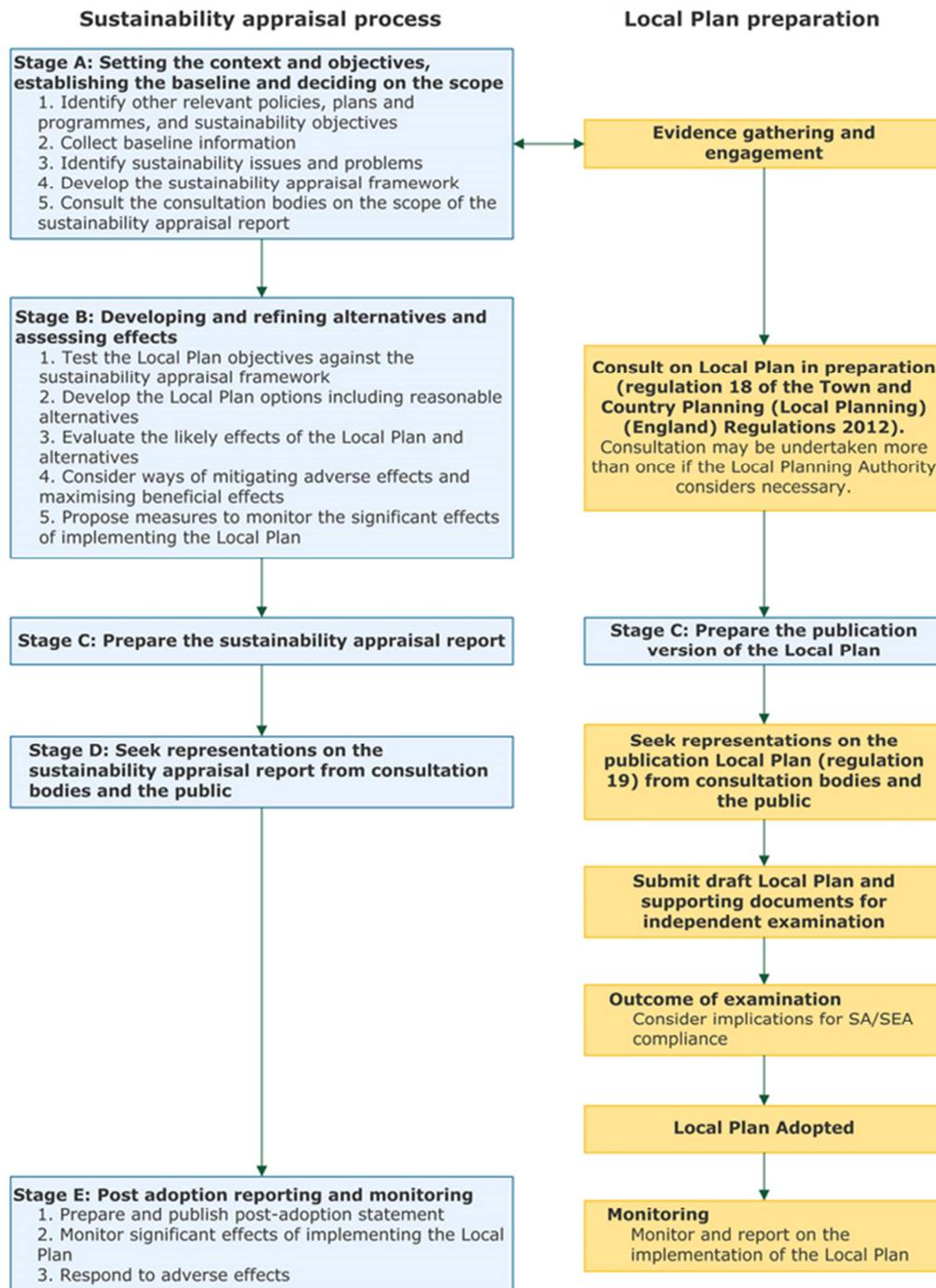


## **Integrated Assessment (including SA/SEA) of the Joint Local Plan – Interim Position Statement (Feb 2017)**

During the preparation of the Joint Local Plan, the three Councils have been ensuring that sustainability has been factored into the policies and proposals which have been included within the Joint Local Plan. This work has been undertaken through an Integrated Assessment Process which has assessed the Plan for the purposes of Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) The draft report setting out this process will be published alongside the publication version of the plan for consultation during March.

The purpose of the assessment process is to ensure that sustainable development is incorporated into the policies and proposals of the Joint Local Plan, and this is carried out by assessing the extent to which the plan achieves relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.

There is no current guidance setting out the process for SA/SEA, the Councils have drawn on National Planning Practice Guidance and the information on the Planning Advisory Service Website on how to carry out SA/SEA, this process set out below in the flow chart has been followed, this is currently recognised as good practice.



The flow chart above illustrates that the first stage of preparing the IA is the preparation of the scoping report. The purpose of the scoping report is to review the baseline information and identify sustainability issues, challenges and opportunities within the JLP Area. This information is then used to create the sustainability framework that appraises emerging policies and proposals against a number of objectives. The scoping report was set out under the following topics

- Air Quality
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
- Climate Change
- Community Wellbeing

- Economy
- Equality and Inclusion
- Environmental Quality
- Health and well being
- Historic Environment
- Housing
- Landscape
- Transport
- Waste
- Water

For each topic the following information was set out

- Key policies, plans, programmes, Strategies and Initiatives (PPPSIs): A list of relevant documents from international, European, national, regional and local level (IA Scoping stage A1)
- Relevant aims and objectives from the PPPSIs – Summary of the main objectives and sustainability issues and implications that are relevant locally (IA Scoping Stage A1)
- Baseline – sets out the quantitative and qualitative information for the local area (IA Scoping Report stage A2)
- Sustainability Issues and Problems – the main issues arising from the assessment that should be addressed through the plan making process (IA Scoping Stage A3)
- Monitoring indicators – to assess the effects of the plan once it is implemented

Following the scoping of the relevant information, the Councils set out a number of objectives which they would use to assess the impacts of the Joint Local Plan. This Integrated Assessment (IA) Framework comprised of 17 objectives that look to address the key issues for the JLP area identified under a review of each topic. To aid the assessment process the IA Framework sets out a number of issues to consider when testing policies and proposals against the assessment criteria. The assessment will not seek to answer these question only to consider the possible impacts of policies and ensure that the policies include measures to help mitigate for any adverse impact.

This Framework is set out below

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
Population	1	To promote community vitality and resilience by improving health and reducing inequalities.	Does it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a sustainable mix of uses which are compatible to their surroundings?</li> <li>• Promote the retention and development of community services and facilities?</li> <li>• Facilitate flexible working practices which enable people to live near their place of work?</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for communities to respond to unforeseen events and circumstances?</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion?</li> <li>• Promote healthier lifestyles through access to leisure opportunities (e.g. walking/Cycling)</li> <li>• Promote access to health and social care facilities, and to green and open space?</li> <li>• Ensure that land contamination or pollution do not pose unacceptable risks to human health.</li> <li>• Meet the noise standards required by law for specific land uses?</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	2	<p>To improve the health and wellbeing of communities including reducing crime and fear of crime</p> <p>Incorporating HIA. For any health impacts identified during the assessment...</p> <p><b>Will the health impacts affect the whole population or will there be differential impacts within the population?</b></p> <p><b>Will the health impacts be difficult to remedy or have an irreversible impact?</b></p> <p><b>Will the health impacts be medium to long term?</b></p> <p><b>Are the health impacts likely to generate public concern?</b></p> <p><b>Are the health impacts likely to generate cumulative and/or synergistic impacts?</b></p> <p><b>Combining the answers, on balance will the health impacts</b></p>	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the health of the community and encourage healthy lifestyles?</li> <li>• Have direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</li> <li>• Have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</li> <li>• Affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</li> <li>• Lead to a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</li> <li>• Encourage social interaction in public spaces?</li> <li>• Improve access to open space and sports, leisure and recreation facilities?</li> <li>• Improve the walking and cycling provision</li> <li>• Help people remain independent</li> <li>• Promote a safe environment through designing out crime and fear of crime</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
		<p><b>have an important positive or negative impact on health.</b></p> <p>Can the policy be improved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage anti-social behaviour?</li> </ul>
Population and Human health	3	To help provide access to a suitable mix of good quality housing	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the mix and quality of housing stock, including open market and affordable housing to meet a range of needs?</li> <li>Increase needed provision for specific sectors of the community eg the elderly, disadvantaged, gypsies and travellers,</li> <li>Promote improvement to the existing and future housing stock?</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	4	To improve access to a range of basic services and amenities	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the access to key services (education, shops, employment, recreation, health, community services and cultural assets)?</li> <li>Provide physical access for those with disabilities?</li> <li>Improve and/or sustain public transport or other sustainable transport modes</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	5	To provide access to opportunities for education and skills development.	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the provision of education and training facilities that meet local needs and that are accessible to all</li> <li>Support skills and training development in the local community and will it contribute to meeting identified skills shortages</li> <li>Will it support collaboration between educational establishments, businesses and industry?</li> </ul>
Population and Material	6	To support the growth potential of business sectors to provide jobs	Does it

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
Assets		and encourage sustainable economic growth and prosperity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for the needs of the economy, particularly local businesses (such as choice of premises, services, infrastructure, skilled workforce)?</li> <li>• Support the growth of existing businesses and business and business sectors?</li> <li>• Improve efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy</li> <li>• Encourage investment -in businesses, people and infrastructure long term?</li> <li>• Encourage the provision of jobs which are accessible to all</li> <li>• Sustain and active and working countryside, including rural diversification?</li> <li>• Promote competitive town centres which enhance customer choice, retail offer and the individuality and vitality of the town centre?</li> <li>• Improve access to high quality communications infrastructure</li> <li>• Facilitate the creation of, or sustain local supply chains and retention of spending in the local economy.</li> </ul>
Material Assets and Climatic Factors	7	To help develop a low carbon economy which will help to prepare the area for climate change for example by reducing energy demand and promoting energy generation for renewable sources.	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to protect the community from changing weather patterns and environmental conditions and adapt to climate change?</li> <li>• Will it minimise the demand for energy?</li> <li>• Will it encourage efficiency in the use of energy?</li> <li>• increase the ability of the community to be more self-sufficient?</li> <li>• reduce the need for energy use and/or reduce fuel</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
			<p>poverty?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support decentralised low carbon and renewable energy generation?</li> <li>• facilitate the generation and use of renewable energy?</li> <li>• support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions?</li> <li>• Promote the production of community owned energy?</li> <li>• Enable increased local retention of the benefits of energy generation?</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	8	To reduce the need to travel, encourage alternatives to the car, and make best use of existing transport infrastructure	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve transport of goods/people by more sustainable means?</li> <li>• Encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport?</li> <li>• Help to reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety?</li> <li>• Reduce the need to travel, especially by car?</li> <li>• Help provide walking/cycling/public transport infrastructure?</li> <li>• Integrate well or improve the existing public transport infrastructure?</li> </ul>
Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	9	To protect, conserve and enhance biological and geological diversity.	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance species, habitats, soils and geologically important sites?</li> <li>• Enhance and improve connectivity of green infrastructure and the natural environment?</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for habitat creation or restoration and link existing habitats as part of the development process?</li> <li>• Ensure the sustainable management of natural habitats</li> <li>• Help address any identified</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
			recreational impacts on biological and geological diversity
Landscape	10	To conserve and enhance the distinctive character and special qualities and features of green and blue spaces	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and where possible enhance landscape character?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of protected landscapes and their settings in particular the AONB and Dartmoor National Park?</li> <li>• Maintain the character of the undeveloped coast?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance natural networks, the living networks of green spaces (including parks, nature reserves, woodlands and allotments) and blue spaces (including rivers, streams, the coast and sea) throughout the area?</li> <li>• Will it improve access to public open space?</li> </ul>
Cultural Heritage	11	To protect and enhance the cultural and historic environment	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to protect and or enhance historical, archaeological and cultural assets and their settings?</li> <li>• Make a positive contribution to existing landscape, townscape and villages and their settings?</li> <li>• Promote or enhance local culture?</li> <li>• Protect or enhance designated or non-designated heritage assets (including landscapes) and their settings including the World Heritage Site?</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	12	To respect, maintain and strengthen local distinctiveness and sense of place by providing high standards of design.	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the quality and character of places?</li> <li>• Promote good design including density and site layout appropriate to the character of the location?</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the use of local materials?</li> <li>• Minimise pollution from light and noise?</li> </ul>
Water and Climatic Factors	13	To avoid development in areas of high flood risk and reduce vulnerability to flooding	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help to manage and minimise the risk of flooding and coastal erosion to existing and new development and infrastructure?</li> <li>• Help to discourage inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding and coastal erosion.</li> <li>• Reduce the risk of flooding to the development and surrounding areas?</li> <li>• Help reduce the rate of run off?</li> <li>• Promote sustainable flood risk management</li> <li>• Encourage sustainable drainage</li> </ul>
Soil and Water	14	To minimise resource use including greenfield land, minerals and water and to maintain and improve land quality	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the most efficient use of land including previously developed land where appropriate?</li> <li>• Help remediate contaminated sites?</li> <li>• Minimise the loss of good quality agricultural land?</li> <li>• Safeguard mineral resources and encourage their efficient use?</li> <li>• Increase efficiency in the use of raw materials and promote recycling?</li> <li>• Conserve water resources and quality?</li> <li>• Improve the quality of rivers, the sea and groundwater's?</li> <li>• Protect and improve freshwater and estuarine quality?</li> <li>• Provide adequate utilities infrastructure that does not</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Objective		Issues to consider
			<p>adversely impact on the environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect soils of high environmental quality</li> <li>• Provide appropriate soil management and storage</li> </ul>
Material assets, water, soil, Human Health and Population	15	To minimise the production of waste and encourage the sustainable use of resources	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the use of primary resources and promote the use of recycled materials?</li> <li>• Encourage the use of local products and services?</li> </ul>
Air, Climatic Factors, Human Health	16	To protect and improve air quality	<p>Does it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help improve air quality</li> <li>• Support specific actions in designated AQMAs?</li> <li>• Help reduce pollution from traffic?</li> <li>• Minimise atmospheric pollution and enhance air quality?</li> </ul>
Equality Objectives			
Equality and Diversity	17	To promote equality of opportunities and eliminate discrimination	<p>Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure equality of opportunity and equal access to facilities and infrastructure for all?</li> <li>• Ensure no discrimination based on the 'protected characteristics' defined in the Equality Act 2010?</li> </ul>

The draft scoping report including the suggested assessment framework (set out above) was sent for consultation to three statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) for 5 weeks during Summer 2016. The consultation responses endorsed the approach but suggested some changes to clarify the process and in particular the relationship between previous processes which had been used to assess the Plymouth Plan and the emerging work on the development plans for West Devon and South Hams prior to work beginning on the Joint Local Plan.

This process has been informed by the most up to date information and data available and professional judgement. However, deficiencies in information do exist and it is not always possible to have sufficient knowledge available to identify and predict all of the effects of implementing the plan. For example, the precise implications of a specific site on environmental assets or traffic levels

will not be known until the appropriate detailed site specific survey work has been carried out, usually during the planning application stage. Furthermore, climate change impacts are difficult to predict as they are most likely to result from cumulative impacts at a local, regional and national level. Therefore, the assessment will only pick up on any clearly identified impacts and will help to ensure that the Joint Local Plan has the right levels of mitigation in place to ensure that the policies and proposals bring the best outcomes for the Joint Local Plan Area.

Following the publication of the Scoping Report, work has been progressing on stage B (as shown on the flow chart) of the assessment process alongside the plan preparation. The effect of policies on the assessment criteria were tested and where appropriate opportunities to amend policies and proposals to ensure they considered sustainability positively were made. This has been an iterative process with policies being amended as they were written to ensure the best policy wording possible.

It is considered that the Joint Local Plan process has carefully considered the options available to the Local Authorities to deliver growth within the Joint Local Plan Area and that all reasonable options have been explored. A consultation was undertaken during November which Set out this process. The Councils have fully recognised within the plan the special characteristics of the plan area and have carefully considered the location and levels of growth which can be accommodated. This has all been undertaken to ensure that the Government's drive to boost the supply of housing and employment opportunities within the plan area is sensitively balanced against the need to ensure that development is located sensitively and that any possible impacts are mitigated for within the policies and proposals of the plan.

Regulations set out that the assessment report must be published in a draft format for consultation alongside the Publication Version of the Joint Local Plan.(the Regulation 19 Version of the Plan) This assessment report is currently being finalised following the 'Full Council Version' of the Joint Local Plan being published for 'decision making' purposes and will be placed on the Councils supporting evidence page as soon as it is available.

It should be noted that any further changes to the plan or the publication of further evidence could subsequently lead to further changes to this document prior to the start of the Regulation 19 Consultation on the Publication Version of the Joint Local Plan.

For further information about this document please contact Jo Perry ([jo.perry@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:jo.perry@plymouth.gov.uk))