BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL CORE STRATEGY

SOUNDNESS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

January 2011

Key Question	Supporting Evidence
Justified	
Participation	
1. Has the consultation process allowed for effective engagement of all interested parties?	The Statement of Consultation Report (Regulation 30 (1)(d)) and Statement of Representations Made and Summary of Main Issues (Regulation 30 (1)(e)) Report set out the consultation process undertaken throughout the development of the Core Strategy demonstrating the effective engagement of all interested parties.
Research/fact finding	
2. Is the content of the development plan document justified by the evidence? 3. What is the source of the evidence? 4. How up to date and convincing is it?	A comprehensive evidence base has been established, using either extant data, commissioned research or in-house assessment. Appendix 2 of the Submission Core Strategy contains a summary of these background documents, which can all be regarded as up to date (the vast majority having been completed in the last 18 months). Much of the evidence base has been produced in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure that it is as robust as possible.
5. What assumptions had to be made in preparing the development plan document? 6. Are the assumptions reasonable and justified?	Assumptions have been made about the continuing robustness of the Regional Spatial Strategy's evidence base, particularly with regard to the establishment of District housing growth targets. It has been assumed that the required level of infrastructure needed to support growth will be delivered. No other assumptions were made in the development of the Core Strategy. Instead the evidence base was used to determine the scope of policy.
Alternatives	
7. Can it be shown that the council's chosen approach is the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives? 8. Have realistic alternatives been considered and is there a clear audit trail showing how and why the preferred strategy/approach was arrived at? 9. Where a balance had to be struck in taking decisions between competing alternatives is it clear how and why	The Sustainability Appraisal Report, and the reports prepared throughout the consultation process, clearly shows the comparison of different alternatives. The Regulation 30 (1) d and 30 (1) e statements, which include the Reports of the Issues & Options and Preferred Options consultations, show how the community and other stakeholders were involved in the consideration of options and selection of preferred options. The Preferred Options document shows in more detail how consultation responses were taken into account in the formulation and adoption of subsequent policy options.

these decisions were made?	
10. Does the sustainability appraisal show how the different options perform and is it clear that sustainability considerations informed the content of the development plan document from the start?	The SA Scoping Report identifies the issues for sustainable development in Bassetlaw, which informed the policies that have been developed, and the SA Report compares the sustainability effects of each option. Policies have also been developed having regard for the SA Objectives and refined through the appraisal process (SA Report Section 5).
11. Does the development plan document adequately expand upon regional guidance rather than simply duplicate it? 12. Does the strategy take forward the regional context reflecting the local issues and objectives?	The Issues & Options and Preferred Options documents both make regular reference, in the introductions to each policy area, to the Regional Plan context and interpret it for Bassetlaw. The representation from East Midlands Councils in response to the Publication Core Strategy states that the Core Strategy is in general conformity with the Regional Plan.
Deliverable	
13. Has the council clearly identified what the issues are that the development plan document is seeking to address? 14. Have priorities been set so that it is clear what the development plan document is seeking to achieve?	The SA Scoping Report sets out key sustainability issues for Bassetlaw. The Issues and Options document and subsequent consultation report (See 30 (1) d Statement) clearly identify key issues. Section 1 of the Submission Core Strategy sets out how it has been developed and the factors that have informed its development. It also references the Bassetlaw and Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategies and their priorities. Appendix 3 shows how the Core Strategy objectives meet these priorities and the Vision and Objectives in the Submission Core Strategy (Section 3) build upon these priorities. The representation from the Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership (Rep. No. 27) on the Publication Core Strategy is fully supportive of its content and ambition. Section 2 of the Submission Core Strategy sets out the key issues that this DPD must address, in the form of a Spatial Portrait.
15. Are there any cross-boundary issues that should be addressed	The East Midlands RSS Northern Sub-Regional Strategy sets out the roles of Worksop and Retford in relation to the wider area, defining them as a 'Sub-

and, if so, have they been adequately addressed?	Regional Centre', and 'other urban area' respectively. It does not identify any specific cross boundary issues.
	Bassetlaw is part of the East Midlands Northern Sub-Region Housing Market and prepared a joint Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment with Bolsover DC, Chesterfield BC and North East Derbyshire DC. A joint Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment methodology has also been prepared with these authorities.
	As part of the East Midlands Northern Sub-Region, Bassetlaw has produced a joint Employment Land Review with Ashfield District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Mansfield District Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council.
	Bassetlaw shares its border with seven other Local Planning Authorities (Doncaster, Rotherham, Bolsover, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood, West Lindsey, North Lincolnshire) and held discussions with them, and Lincolnshire County Council, throughout the Core Strategy development process. They were also consulted at all formal stages. With the exception of Bolsover's minor concern about the setting of Cresswell Crags (see Rep. No. 63), none have objected to the Publication Core Strategy. A list of meetings held is at Appendix A.
16. Does the development plan document contain clear objectives?	Section 2 of the Submission Core Strategy sets out the Spatial portrait and flags up key issues. Section 3 of the Submission Core Strategy sets out the Vision and Strategic Objectives, which seek to address these issues.
17. Are the objectives specific to the place; as opposed to being general and applicable to anywhere? 18. Is there a direct relationship between the identified issues and the objectives?	The Core Strategy's Strategic Objectives specifically relate to the key sustainability issues that are prominent across the District and relate, where appropriate to specific settlements. The Local Strategic Partnership (Rep. No. 27) confirms that the Core Strategy's ambitions for the future of the District, and its understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the District, correspond with those of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
19. Is it clear how the policies will meet the objectives? 20. Are there any obvious gaps in the policies, with regard to the objectives of the development plan	Each policy contained in the Submission Core Strategy (Sections 4 and 5) is cross-referenced to show how it relates to the plan's Strategic Objectives. This is expanded upon further in Section 6: Monitoring & Implementation, which sets out how the policies will meet the objectives and how they will be monitored for effectiveness.

	document?
	A range of technical evidence base studies has been undertaken and provide recommendations that have given a basis for policy development. These are referred in the introduction and throughout the Core Strategy document. These can be viewed on the Planning Policy pages of the Council's website.

The Local Strategic Partnership (Rep. No. 27) confirms that the Core Strategy's assessment of Bassetlaw's relative strengths and challenges and the areas for future development correspond with those of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Where matters are to be referred to in other Development Plan Documents (DPDs), this is clearly stated within the document. |
| 21. Are there realistic timescales related to the objectives? | The Core Strategy covers the period to 2026 and policies are, therefore, formulated in order to fit in with this timescale.

The Infrastructure Capacity Study, which involved consultation with a wide range of providers, has demonstrated that all necessary infrastructure is deliverable in the plan period.

The Local Strategic Partnership letter (Rep. No. 27) clearly supports the Council's approach taken to service planning and is clear that this has not resulted in any concerns about future location or delivery of development. Similarly, no representations have been received from utilities providers, following extensive work on the Infrastructure Capacity Study, suggesting that they cannot deliver in the plan period. |
| 22. Are the policies internally consistent? | Section 1 of the Submission Core Strategy identifies how Policies should be used, that they are interrelated and should not be read in isolation. Throughout the DPD cross-references ensure clarity and demonstrate that policies should be read in conjunction with each other. The Core Strategy follows a clear and logical order. Approaches proposed in the objectives are set out in the Spatial Polices and taken forward and reflected elsewhere in the document.

The SA demonstrates that the Core Strategy policies are consistent and complement each other and broadly mitigate any potential negative impacts that may arise. |
| 23. Does the development plan document contain material which: | The Local Development Scheme sets out the scope and content of the Core Strategy and other DPDs. In addition, reference is made throughout the Core Strategy to other DPDs or SPDs which will address |

• is already in another plan? • should be logically be in a different plan? • should not be in a plan at all?	Strategy to other DPDs or SPDs which will address matters in further detail as appropriate. No representation has been received by the Government Office on the Publication Core strategy to suggest that it contains inappropriate material. The representations of the statutory bodies (e.g. Natural England; English Heritage; Environment Agency) with a direct interest in local planning policy and its correct formulation have raised no objections. Where representations have suggested that material is inappropriate, these have been addressed through the Schedule of Proposed Minor Changes as appropriate.
24. Does the development plan document explain how its key policy objectives will be achieved?	The Monitoring and Implementation framework of the Core Strategy (section 6) identifies mechanisms to facilitate the delivery of the Core Strategy policies and objectives. Representations received from infrastructure providers have not raised any problems with the delivery of the infrastructure needed to achieve the aims of the Core Strategy (and its objectives).
25. If there are development management policies, are they supportive of the strategy and objectives?	Links are made between each Development Management policy and the Strategic Objective(s) it helps to deliver. This is set out in more detail in the Monitoring & Implementation Framework (Section 6).
26. Have the infrastructure implications of the strategy/policies clearly been identified?	Development Management Policies DM11, DM12 and DM13 recognise and require infrastructure improvements as part of new developments. The Transport Study and Water Cycle Study both provide supporting evidence on infrastructure implications, which is drawn together in the wider ranging Infrastructure Study. The Regulation 30 (d) Statement of Consultation summarises the representations received at various stages of the Core Strategy's production. The Regulation 30 (1) (e) Statement summaries the responses made to the Publication Core Strategy. No representations have been received that raise concerns about the delivery of supporting infrastructure. Emails and minutes of meetings with infrastructure providers can be provided on request.
27. Are the delivery mechanisms and timescales for implementation of the	The Transport Study and Water Cycle Study both provide supporting evidence on infrastructure implications, which is drawn together in the wider ranging Infrastructure Study.

policies clearly identified?	Emails and minutes of meetings with infrastructure providers, reflecting their views on the deliverability of local infrastructure, can be provided on request.
28. Is it clear who is going to deliver the required infrastructure and does the timing of the provision complement the timescale of the strategy/policies?	Infrastructure Study demonstrates that the timing and delivery of necessary infrastructure is satisfactory. The Regulation 30 (d) Statement of Consultation summarises the representations received at various stages of the Core Strategy's production. The Regulation 30 (1) (e) Statement summaries the responses made to the Publication Core Strategy. No representations have been received that raise concerns about the delivery of supporting infrastructure over the period of the Core Strategy. Emails and minutes of meetings with infrastructure providers can be provided on request.
29. Is it clear who is intended to implement each part of the strategy/ development plan document? 30. Where actions required to implement policy are outside the direct control of the council, is there evidence of commitment from the relevant organisation to implement the policies?	Monitoring & Implementation Framework (Section 6). The Regulation 30 (d) Statement of Consultation summarises the representations received at various stages of the Core Strategy's production. The Regulation 30 (1) (e) Statement summaries the responses made to the Publication Core Strategy.
31. Does the development plan document reflect the concept of spatial planning? 32. Does it go beyond traditional land use planning by bringing together – and integrating – policies for development, and the use of land, with other policies and programmes from a variety of organisations that influence the nature of places and how they function?	The identification of a clear vision and objectives, as well as area based policies for specific parts of the District and the provision of area based policies, encapsulates the concept of spatial planning. The document as a whole contains policies and strategies which are of far wider scope than traditional land use policies; they are designed to influence the nature of places and how they function. There is also reference to the plans / strategies of other bodies throughout the document e.g. Sustainable Community Strategy; Local Transport Plan; Sherwood Forest Regional Park; North Notts College. The SA Scoping Report identifies the range of plans and programmes that relate to this DPD. The Local Strategic Partnership letter (Rep. No. 27) clearly states that 'the partners within the BLSP will play their part to realise the achievement of its [the

	Core Strategy's] ambitions'.
	The Regulation 30 (d) Statement of Consultation summarises the representations received at various stages of the Core Strategy's production.
	The Regulation 30 (1) (e) Statement summaries the responses made to the Publication Core Strategy.
33. Does the development plan document take into account matters which may be imposed by circumstance, notwithstanding the council's views about the matter?	Section 6 of the Submission Core Strategy recognises the need for effective monitoring so that if necessary, a review or revision of policies to adapt to changing national, regional or local circumstances can be undertaken.
Flexible	
34. Is the development plan document flexible enough to respond to a variety of, or unexpected changes in, circumstances?	The Submission Core Strategy Section 6 concerns the Monitoring of the DPD. Monitoring and reviewing of the policies will indicate what impact the policies are having and whether they need reviewing because they are not working as intended or require amendment in light of changed circumstances. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be the main mechanism for assessing the Core Strategy's performance and effects. The AMR 2009/10 already incorporates the proposed indicators and has shown them to be workable. It sets out the following types of indicators to assess the effectiveness of the proposed policies: • Contextual Indicators – which provide baseline information on social, economic and environmental circumstances in Bassetlaw • Core Output Indicators – which measure quantifiable physical activities, directly related to, are a consequence of, the implementation of planning policies. These are set by the Government as mandatory indicators • Local Output Indicators – which are indicators specific to Bassetlaw in order to aid in the development of future LDF policies. A wide range of information is already obtained from organisations to inform the AMR. The response of organisations to earlier consultations does not raise concerns in regard to providing information for monitoring.
35. Is the development plan document sufficiently flexible to deal with any	The evidence base (available on the Planning Policy pages of the Council's website) shows that there is more than enough land potentially available, both in

changes to, for example, housing figures from an emerging regional spatial strategy?	terms of location and type, in the District to accommodate changes in economic circumstance or the need to increase housing or employment land targets.

Policy CS1 (with proposed minor changes) is designed to ensure that sites can be released across the District in accordance with the settlement hierarchy should the need arise.

Policies CS2-CS7 purposely set out target %, rather than firm numbers to ensure flexibility of deliverability in the event of e.g. housing need rising. |
| 36. Does the development plan document include the remedial actions that will be taken if the strategies/policies are failing? | The Submission Core Strategy Section 6 concerns the Monitoring of the DPD. Monitoring and reviewing of the policies will indicate what impact the policies are having and whether they need reviewing because they are not working as intended or require amendment in light of changed circumstances. |
| **Monitoring** | |
| 37. Does the development plan document contain targets and milestones that relate to the delivery of the policies, including housing trajectories where the plan contains housing allocations? | The Core Strategy Monitoring and Implementation Framework set the targets and milestones relating to the delivery of the Core Strategy Policies.

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be the main mechanism for assessing the Core Strategy's performance and effects and details the District's housing trajectory. |
| 38. Is it clear how these are to be measured and are these linked to the production of the annual monitoring report? | The AMR 2009/10 already incorporates the proposed indicators (including those of the Sustainability Appraisal) and has shown them to be workable. |
| 39. Are suitable targets and indicators present (by when, how and by whom)? | The Monitoring and Implementation Framework in the Core Strategy (Section 6) sets out a range of indicators and targets for their delivery over the lifespan of the DPD.
The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be the main mechanism for assessing the Core Strategy's performance and effects |
| **National policy** | |
| 40. Does the development plan document contain any policies or proposals that are not consistent with national planning policy?
41. If yes, is there a local justification? | There are no elements of the Core Strategy which seek to justify why proposals are not consistent with national policy.

No representation has been received by the Government Office on the Publication Core strategy to suggest that it is inconsistent with national planning policy.

Where representations have suggested that |

	inconsistencies exist, these have been addressed through the Schedule of Proposed Minor Changes as appropriate.
	All evidence base studies maintain conformity with national planning policy.
42. Does the development plan document contain policies that do not add anything to existing national guidance? 43. If so, why have they been included?	No representation has been received by the Government Office on the Publication Core strategy to suggest that it replicates national planning policy. The representations of the statutory bodies (e.g. Natural England; English Heritage; Environment Agency) with a direct interest in local planning policy and its correct formulation have raised no objections in terms of replication of national guidance. Where representations have suggested that replications exist, these have been addressed through the Schedule of Proposed Minor Changes as appropriate.

APPENDIX A: Schedule of Cross Boundary Meetings

DATE	NAME OF AUTHORITY
23/9/09	Bolsover DC
7/1/10	Newark & Sherwood DC
12/1/10	Doncaster MBC North Lincolnshire Council
13/1/10	Bolsover DC
10/2/10	Newark & Sherwood DC Lincolnshire CC Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit
20/4/10	Rotherham MBC Doncaster MBC
21/4/10	Mansfield DC
19/5/10	Nottinghamshire CC