

Salford City Council

**Core Strategy
Development Plan Document**

**Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
July 2007**

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT

JULY 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Core Strategy

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the city council to bring forward a Local Development Framework (LDF), which sets out the main local planning policies for Salford. The LDF consists of several different documents, one of which is the Core Strategy.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy will set out the overarching planning strategy for the city up to the year 2026. It will identify the overall level and broad distribution of different types of development, although the allocation of land for specific uses will take place in a separate document (the Allocations Development Plan Document). It will also set out strategic policies and proposals that address a range of economic, social and environmental issues. Government guidance requires that it should be a “spatial plan”, integrating policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes that influence the nature of places and how they function.
- 1.3 The Core Strategy will form part of Salford’s “development plan”. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that: “If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”. The development plan currently consists of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS), and the City of Salford Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The Core Strategy will replace large parts of the UDP. The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with the RSS, and all other documents in the LDF must be consistent with the Core Strategy.

Sustainable development

- 1.4 Section 39 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places the concept of “sustainable development” at the heart of the planning system. The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is:

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs¹

- 1.5 The Government has identified five guiding principles for sustainable development²:

¹ World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987

- i) *Living within environmental limits*
Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations
- ii) *Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society: meeting the diverse needs of all people*
Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all
- iii) *Achieving a sustainable economy*
Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised
- iv) *Promoting good governance*
Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity
- v) *Using sound science responsibly*
Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values

1.6 It has also identified four priority areas for immediate action across the UK³:

- *Sustainable consumption and production* – achieving more with less
- *Climate change and energy* – both mitigation and adaptation
- *Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement* – living within environmental limits
- *Sustainable communities* – embodying the principles of sustainable development at the local level

² HM Government (2005) "Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy", p.16

³ HM Government (2005) "Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy", p.17

Sustainability appraisal

- 1.7 Under Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, the Core Strategy must be subject to a sustainability appraisal throughout its production, ensuring that it is fully consistent with and helps to implement the principles of sustainable development.
- 1.8 The completion of an appropriate sustainability appraisal is one of the “tests of soundness” by which the Core Strategy will be judged when it is subject to an independent public examination later in the production process.

Strategic environmental assessment

- 1.9 The city council is required to determine whether or not certain types of plans, programmes and modifications is likely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore whether it must be subject to a strategic environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive)⁴.
- 1.10 The city council's initial view is that the Core Strategy is likely to have significant environmental effects. However, it is required to consult certain bodies before making a formal determination (see section 8 below). Therefore, it is proposed that the sustainability appraisal should incorporate a strategic environmental assessment.

Sustainability appraisal process

- 1.11 The sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy will be an iterative process, and will follow Government guidance. The stages of Core Strategy production and its sustainability appraisal are summarised in the table below.

⁴ In accordance with Regulation 9(1) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Table 1: Sustainability appraisal process

Core Strategy stage	Appraisal stage	Main outputs
Pre-production and evidence gathering	Set the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
Informal pre-submission consultation examining the issues and broad options ⁵	Initial consideration of the potential significant sustainability effects of the emerging options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Issues and Options Report • Sustainability appraisal commentary
Formal pre-submission participation on a narrowed down range of preferred options ⁶	Prepare a full report assessing the effects of the proposed options, identifying opportunities for mitigation, and setting out monitoring proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Preferred Options Report • Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal Report
Submission of a full draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State, and associated consultation ⁷	Update the draft sustainability appraisal report in light of the option that is being taken forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission Draft Core Strategy • Full Sustainability Appraisal Report
Public examination into the Core Strategy	Evidence proposing alternatives to Core Strategy policies and proposals to include an assessment of their relative sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statements to the examination • Inspector's Report identifying how the Core Strategy should be amended
Adoption of the Core Strategy	Ensure any changes to the Core Strategy required by the Inspector's Report have been properly appraised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted Core Strategy • Final Sustainability Appraisal Report

⁵ In accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

⁶ In accordance with Regulation 26 of the of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

⁷ In accordance with Regulation 28 of the of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Core Strategy stage	Appraisal stage	Main outputs
Monitoring the implementation of the Core Strategy	Monitor the sustainability effects of the Core Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (published each December)

Scoping stage of the sustainability appraisal

1.12 The scoping stage of the sustainability appraisal, which is the subject of this report, broadly consists of five stages:

- Stage 1 Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives
- Stage 2 Collecting baseline information
- Stage 3 Identifying sustainability issues and problems
- Stage 4 Developing the sustainability appraisal framework
- Stage 5 Consulting on the scope of the sustainability appraisal

1.13 Each of these stages is described in more detail in the following sections of this report.

2. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

Introduction

- 2.1 The SEA Directive specifically requires environmental objectives established at international, European Community or national levels to be taken into account in developing the Core Strategy. However, in order to maximise its effectiveness and sustainability, it will be important to consider how the Core Strategy can support the full range of other plans, policies and programmes that already exist, taking into account their economic and social as well as environmental objectives.
- 2.2 This section summarises the key objectives of the relevant plans, policies and programmes, and identifies the potential synergies and inconsistencies with the Core Strategy. A more detailed summary of those various objectives is contained in Appendix 2 of this report.

Key objectives of other plans, policies and programmes

- 2.3 The table below identifies the key conclusions from the review of other plans, policies and programmes, and identifies the implications for the Core Strategy and its sustainability appraisal.

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
General principles	
Ensure sustainable development is the central policy objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure the spatial vision and strategic objectives of the Core Strategy reflect all aspects of sustainable development • Need to integrate the sustainability appraisal throughout the Core Strategy production process • Need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change
Develop high quality sustainable communities that meet a variety of needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that the Core Strategy integrates consideration of all issues, rather than focusing on one or two priorities in isolation
Secure the efficient use of previously developed land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to direct development towards vacant land and buildings, and put in place measures to support this • Need to ensure that this does not result in inefficient and less sustainable patterns of land use

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
Promote mixed-use developments that minimise the need to travel and enhance local character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify appropriate locations for mixed-use development • Need to recognise that a mix of uses can potentially conflict with other objectives such as minimising noise pollution and protecting amenity
Spatial strategy	
Develop the Manchester City Region as a world class city region distinguished by its quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that the Core Strategy is set in the context of the wider sub-region • Need to ensure good performance on all aspects of life to help improve international competitiveness
Maximise the economic growth opportunities of the Manchester City Region to help reduce regional disparities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that the economic growth of the sub-region as well as the city is supported • Need to ensure this is balanced against environmental and social objectives to ensure economic growth can be sustained in the long-term
The Regional Centre is the main focus for growth, driving forward the sub-regional economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure sufficient land is available within the Regional Centre, and an appropriate mix of uses comes forward to enhance its strength • Need to maximise accessibility to the opportunities provided in the Regional Centre, helping to reduce the need to travel
The inner areas surrounding the Regional Centre are the priority for regeneration and new housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to focus investment towards Central Salford to support regeneration • Need to maximise the sustainability benefits of such close proximity to the Regional Centre
Increase Salford's population and attract more families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to provide conditions that will attract people, particularly families, back to the city such as high quality housing, schools, jobs and environments • Need to ensure that the potentially negative impacts of more people are minimised
Housing	
Provide an appropriate mix of housing in terms of type, tenure and affordability to meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure clear identification of housing needs and what an ideal "mix" should be, which may not be the same

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
identified needs and secure mixed and integrated communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to take into account issues of function, form and character of neighbourhoods, and so different areas may need different mixes • May be competing housing needs for limited land resources
Minimise the amount of land required for new housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reconcile the aim of more efficient use of land with those of securing a mix of accommodation types and meeting the aspirations of households
Improve the condition of the existing housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support the Housing Market Renewal and Decent Homes programmes, ensuring the Core Strategy focuses on existing as well as new development • Need to balance additional material assets required by replacement dwellings with potential for securing more energy and water efficient homes with lower flood risk
Employment	
Promote a strong, stable and sustainable economy and provide for choice, flexibility and competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to provide the sites, infrastructure and conditions to promote business enterprise and attract investment • Need to ensure that short-term imperatives do not undermine long-term growth prospects of the city and sub-region
Support the economic growth sectors, the expansion of key clusters and increases in productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that employment land and premises meet modern needs, which may require some restructuring of land uses • Need to ensure that targeting growth sectors does not unbalance the economy, and diversity needs to be retained to promote a more stable economy
Promote business start-ups, entrepreneurialism and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that appropriate and affordable premises are available • Supporting innovation and competition may require minimising the micromanagement of the economy
Deliver sites for strategic business investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support the development of the Barton strategic site and consider the potential for further strategic sites • Need to ensure that such sites are sustainably located whilst remaining competitive and meeting business needs

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
Reduce worklessness and increase prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to promote access to employment as well as the generation of employment opportunities • Need to focus on the quality as well as the quantity of employment opportunities • Need to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared by all
Retail and town centres	
Develop a hierarchy of complementary centres that meet the needs of their catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify the role of Salford's centres within a constantly evolving sub-region, ensuring that all residents have good access to a range of facilities • Need to ensure that the hierarchy reduces the need to travel
Focus new retail, leisure and office development within existing centres, promoting their vitality and viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that sufficient sites are available and that the role of each centre is clear • May be a need for new centres to ensure appropriate levels of accessibility and to accommodate development needs
Education	
Provide accessible and inclusive education opportunities in high quality learning environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support the ongoing renewal of Salford's primary and secondary schools • Need to ensure that the sustainability benefits of new schools are maximised, in terms of location, construction, etc
Increase the skill levels of all sections of the community, so as to support economic growth and social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support the development of the University and colleges, and promote access to them
Tourism	
Improve the quality and quantity of the tourism offer of the North West so that it becomes the best destination in Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support tourism development and identify the main opportunities for it • Need to balance against other objectives given that tourism may be based on sensitive assets such as heritage and the countryside
Transport	
Reduce the need to travel,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that new development is

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
especially by car	<p>located in the most accessible locations and linked trips are promoted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to take into account the sustainability implications if new development were located outside Salford, in potentially less accessible locations
Improve access by sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that new development is integrated with sustainable transport systems rather than viewed in isolation • Need to promote integrated transport networks rather than individual routes • Need to promote the more sustainable movement of freight, by rail and water
Ensure that transport infrastructure investment supports new development and economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to plan for major transport infrastructure investment, co-ordinating it with new development • May be potential conflicts with other sustainability objectives if new infrastructure has a significant land take, and need to ensure it does not simply promote additional travel without wider benefits
Major investment proposed for Greater Manchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to take into account the £3 billion package of transport investment potentially being proposed through the Transport Innovation Fund bid
Climate change	
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to secure a pattern and form of development that minimise emissions from transport, business and housing • Need to find innovative ways of achieving this whilst retaining competitiveness and recognising modern aspirations in terms of material possessions, mobility, etc • Need to identify potential carbon sinks • Need to improve construction supply chains
Adapt to the likely impacts of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify what the impacts are, given the science available, and determine the extent to which a precautionary approach is required • Need to integrate throughout all aspects of the Core Strategy, for example in terms of the impacts on wildlife, flood risk,

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
	environmental quality, agriculture, etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to exploit changing employment patterns, e.g. tourism opportunities
Countryside and landscape	
Strengthen the links between town and country, and promote a range of uses in the countryside and urban fringe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to find an appropriate balance between the various functions of the urban fringe in terms of landscape value, agriculture, biodiversity and recreation • May need to prioritise different objectives in different parts of the urban fringe
Protect and enhance the quality and character of the countryside, preserving the things that make it special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify what makes Salford's countryside special, and plan for its protection • Different elements of its character may potentially be in conflict, and therefore some prioritisation may be necessary
Recreation and open space	
Ensure that all households are within an appropriate distance of a full range of greenspaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify appropriate and realistic standards, which may require prioritisation where land resources are scarce • Need to ensure that the wider benefits of greenspaces are maximised in terms of health, biodiversity, environmental quality, flood storage, etc
Develop a Croal-Irwell Regional Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support the proposed Regional Park and clarify its role within the city • Need to maximise the multi-functional benefits of the Regional Park, and access to it
Waste management	
Secure more sustainable waste management (in order of priority, reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, energy from waste, and final disposal as a last resort)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that more sustainable waste management facilities are positively planned for • Need to integrate waste management and resource efficiency considerations into all aspects of the Core Strategy
Communities should take more responsibility for managing their own waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need to accept more waste developments within the city in order to minimise the movement of waste

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
Water and flood risk	
Policy-making needs to recognise the impacts on water use and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that water pollution is minimised, both direct (discharges) and indirect (run-off) • Need to plan for more water-efficient developments • May need to plan for improved water treatment works and supply infrastructure, particularly if large-scale development is planned
Reduce the risk of flooding and the severity of flood events on people, businesses, property and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to locate new development and infrastructure outside the areas at risk of flooding wherever practicable, although this may need to be balanced against regeneration objectives • Need to ensure new development is designed to minimise the risk and impacts of flooding, both on itself and others • Need to explore the potential for improving flood defences and promoting sustainable drainage systems • Need to take a coordinated approach at the river basin level
Air quality	
Need to address the reasons for the designation of an Air Quality Management Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to take a coordinated approach to improving air quality, including reducing the need to travel, promoting more sustainable forms of transport, and targeting cleaner economic sectors
Need to minimise the impacts of poor air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to carefully consider the location and design of new developments, particularly sensitive uses such as housing, hospitals, schools, etc • This may create challenges in terms of other sustainability objectives given that such locations are often the most accessible
Biodiversity	
Promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of biological diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify and protect key habitats within the city, such as the degraded lowland raised bog within Chat Moss • Need to maximise the biodiversity benefits

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
	<p>of open spaces and new developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multifunctional nature of many open spaces means that biodiversity considerations may need to be balanced against other objectives
Minerals	
Secure an adequate and steady supply of minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to safeguard mineral resources from being sterilised by new development • Need to identify where and the circumstances in which mineral development may be acceptable, and how this can take place in the most sustainable manner • May need to assess the relative impacts of mineral extraction in Salford compared to alternative sources
Prioritise a reduction of use and promotion of secondary resources over primary extraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to promote the reuse and recycling of materials, including through waste transfer stations • Need to promote waste minimisation
Land and soil quality	
Restore and remediate derelict, unstable and contaminated sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to direct development towards previously developed land • Need to ensure the risks to human health are minimised
Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to direct development towards land with poorer agricultural quality • The multifunctional nature of the urban fringe means that agricultural land quality will need to be balanced with other objectives such as nature conservation and recreation
Heritage	
Preserve and enhance the historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify the key heritage assets that need to be protected, and how this can be achieved whilst promoting new development • Need to explore the potential of the city's heritage for supporting the economy (e.g, through tourism) and enhancing local pride

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
Energy	
Encourage the use of more environment-friendly forms of energy systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify and promote opportunities for renewable energy production • Need to promote reductions in energy use, for example through more efficient buildings and reducing the need to travel
Ensure energy security and eliminate fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to promote more energy-efficient buildings to reduce energy expenditure • Need to promote more localised energy generation to minimise potential disruption to supplies • Need to deliver energy infrastructure to support new development
Crime	
Residents identified crime as the most important issue in their local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reduce opportunities for crime through the design and location of new development • Need to ensure that this does not compromise environmental quality (e.g. through hostile barriers) or accessibility (e.g. by reducing the ease with which people can move through the city by foot and cycle)
Health	
Reduce health inequalities, and deliver safe, healthy and attractive places to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to promote access to high quality health facilities, both in terms of primary and secondary care • Need to promote healthy lifestyles, in terms of access to recreation facilities, safe environments, access to fresh food, reductions in pollution, and encouraging walking and cycling
Minimise the risk and implications of major incidents involving hazardous substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that installations producing or storing such substances are appropriately located • Need to minimise development adjacent to such installations, although this may need to be balanced against other objectives such as the efficient use of land and the location of development on accessible sites
Design and construction	

Key conclusions from review of plans, policies and programmes	Implications for the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal
New development should demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify how the character of Salford and its neighbourhoods will be protected and enhanced through the design of new development • Need to identify the key elements of that character (including views and landmarks) • Need to identify the locations where tall buildings are appropriate
Need to promote more sustainable design and construction, helping to support inclusive environments and reduce climate change emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify how more adaptable and accessible buildings will be secured • Need to identify how development can minimise resource use in both construction and occupation
Infrastructure	
Need to take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure when planning for new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify existing and potential infrastructure constraints, and how they can be addressed in coordination with new development • Need to consider the potential for designing and locating new development in a way that minimises the need for new infrastructure, whilst balancing this against other objectives
Noise	
Minimise the severity and impact of noise pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify opportunities for noise reduction • Need to identify noisy areas where sensitive uses should be avoided, although this may create challenges in terms of other sustainability objectives given that such locations are often the most accessible
Tranquil zones should be identified and protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify whether there are any existing tranquil areas within the city, or the potential for them to be created • Need to balance against promoting public access to and the recreation use of the city's countryside and urban fringe, which has health and quality of life benefits in particular

3. BASELINE INFORMATION

Introduction

- 3.1 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the effects of the Core Strategy and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. This section sets out the main statistics that are relevant to the sustainability appraisal and the development of the Core Strategy more generally. More detailed information is contained in Appendix 3 of this report.
- 3.2 The use of a strong evidence base is one of the “tests of soundness” that will be used at the independent public examination to determine whether the Core Strategy is robust and if/how it should be amended. As a result, a large amount of evidence will need to be collected and this will continue throughout the Core Strategy production process, ensuring that it is as up-to-date as possible. Therefore, the baseline information identified in this report will evolve over time, and future sustainability appraisal reports will reflect this.

Summary of key baseline information

- 3.3 The following key facts can be identified from the baseline review:

Population

- The city has seen a very significant decline in population over the last century (by 37% from its peak in 1921), although the population has stabilised over the last few years
- The city has a disproportionately high number of single person households and single parent households
- The city has a relatively high proportion of 16-29 year olds, and slightly below average numbers aged 60 and over

Health

- Life expectancy remains below the national average
- Some neighbourhoods within Central Salford have mortality rates twice the national average

Crime

- Crime levels are significant below the sub-regional and regional averages, although vehicle crime is double the national average
- The highest crime levels are in the most deprived areas

Accessibility

- More people in Salford access work via the most sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport than the national average
- This may reflect both lower incomes and the high accessibility of the city

Community cohesion

- Slightly more than half of residents feel that their local area is a place where people get on well together

Housing

- Compared to the national average, the city has a very high proportion of social-rented housing and a low proportion of owner-occupied dwellings
- The city has a very low proportion of detached dwellings, and above average numbers of semi-detached, terraced and flatted accommodation
- The scale of new housing development has increased very significantly over the last five years, as has the supply of planning permissions, but these are heavily skewed towards apartments
- The average ratio of house prices to incomes has increased over recent years, and the number of people on the housing register waiting for social-rented accommodation has increased significantly
- Vacancy rates are significantly above the national average, although there has been a notable fall in 2005/6, with the highest rates within Central Salford reflecting low demand in some areas and large numbers of investment purchases in others

Education

- The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs grade A* to C has increased significantly over the last few years, but remains below the national average. Attainment is generally lowest in the more deprived wards
- There are low levels of post-compulsory education
- Fewer people in Salford have higher qualifications than the national average, and more people have no formal qualifications

Economic health

- Unemployment has declined significantly over the last decade, but remains above the national and sub-regional averages, with some areas more than double the city average
- Total productivity and productivity per capita within Greater Manchester South (which consists of Salford, Manchester, Trafford, Stockport and Tameside) have increased faster than the national average over the period 1995-2003, with the per capita average now significantly above the national average

- Despite this, Greater Manchester South has gross disposable household income levels below the national average and the gap is widening
- Salford's economy is now heavily reliant on distribution/hotels/catering, banking/finance and general services, with manufacturing declining very significantly over the last 25 years to below the national average

Prosperity

- Over the period 2000-2005, the growth in VAT registered businesses was significantly above the sub-regional and regional averages
- The gap between gross disposable household income and the national average is widening

Biodiversity

- The city's priority habitats are dominated by readily restorable lowland raised bog

Soil and land

- More than 90% of new residential development is located on previously-developed land
- The city has a significant supply of high grade agricultural land

Water and flood risk

- The quality of monitored watercourses is improving, with more than three-quarters now fair or better
- Approximately 10,000 (or 10%) of dwellings are subject to a high risk of flooding, with two-thirds of these in the River Irwell floodplain

Air quality

- One-third of the city is within an Air Quality Management Area

Climatic factors

- The city's "carbon footprint" per capita is very similar to the national average

Waste

- Recycling rates for municipal waste are significantly below the sub-regional, regional and national averages

Cultural heritage

- Salford has a diverse heritage, particularly related to its industrial past, with only one listed building at risk

Light and noise

- Complaints have increased over recent years

4. SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

Introduction

- 4.1 The assessment of other plans, policies and programmes, together with an analysis of the relevant baseline information, has enabled the identification of the main sustainability issues and problems that need to be taken into account in developing the Core Strategy. These issues and problems are identified below and cover a variety of scales, with some not just affecting Salford but also the region, the country, and the world as a whole.

Population

- The major loss of population over the last century has reduced the sustainability of the city, and particularly its inner city communities where there are insufficient numbers of people to maintain a full range of high quality facilities and services
- There is concern that the city, and particularly its inner areas, is not sufficiently attractive to families, and the large proportion of single person households reflects this. However, this may partly reflect the attractiveness of the Regional Centre to younger, single people

Health

- The population of Salford generally suffers from poor health, and there are very significant health inequalities within the city
- Consequently, improving health is a major priority in Salford's Community Strategy

Crime

- In 2004, residents identified crime as the most important issue that needed to be tackled in their local area, and it clearly has a significant negative impact on quality of life. It would seem likely that it is also detrimental to physical and mental health
- Although crime has reduced, it remains above the national average and the issue continues to have negatively affect perceptions of the city. This will need to be tackled if the city is to become more attractive to potential residents, particularly families, and investment is to be maximised, particularly within the most deprived neighbourhoods where crime is at its highest

Accessibility

- Salford is a very accessible city, particularly within and around the Regional Centre, and is therefore well-placed to contribute to the sustainable location of new development
- Public transport along radial routes into Manchester City Centre is generally very good, although congested at peak times

- Orbital routes are much less well-developed, and consequently accessibility to key employment and leisure opportunities such as within and around Trafford Park and the Trafford Centre could be improved significantly
- The role of the city's existing town and neighbourhood centres needs to be developed to ensure that residents can easily meet their daily needs, and the scale of household growth envisaged in the Regional Spatial Strategy may prompt the need for additional centres, helping to promote social inclusion

Housing

- There is a lack of diversity in residential accommodation in some parts of the city, particularly within several Central Salford neighbourhoods where social-rented and terraced accommodation dominate. However, the city council has entered into a number of development partnerships which are beginning to transform these areas and diversify their housing offer
- The Regional Centre has seen an enormous increase in housing activity, with thousands of new apartments recently completed or under construction, and many more thousands with planning permission. However, a significant proportion of these appear to be vacant, and there are increasing trends towards smaller apartments, both of which have raised some concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the housing market within that part of the city
- The trend towards apartment development and investment purchases appears to be expanding into other parts of the city, and there is evidence that the development of houses is being priced out by the higher land values that can be generated by apartments
- For the first time in many years, affordability is now a significant problem across the city, reflecting both increasing house prices and low household incomes

Education

- Educational attainment is improving amongst Salford pupils, but the overall skill levels amongst the population are still relatively low. This has a negative impact on social inclusion and contributes to deprivation, as it reduces the ability of residents to access many of the employment opportunities within the sub-region
- The increasing emphasis in the economy on knowledge-based industries will only heighten the importance of improving skill levels within the city, particularly as the number of unskilled jobs is anticipated to reduce significantly over the next few decades. If skill levels are not improved then the already significant problems of worklessness and deprivation may increase further

Economic health

- High and increasing productivity levels and reductions in unemployment are encouraging, but household incomes remain relatively low and significant hotspots of unemployment mean that the city's average rate remains above the national average
- The city has done well in capturing new employment from the growth sectors, but there are question marks over how accessible the jobs are to local residents and the city's economy being overly reliant on just a few sectors and therefore more prone to a major downturn
- The city's economy is increasingly dominated by a small number of sectors, and although it will be important to target the growth sectors it will also be vital to ensure economic diversity to make the economy more robust to changing circumstances and provide more diverse employment opportunities to meet the varied needs and skills of residents

Prosperity

- The high growth in VAT registered businesses is encouraging, but this will need to be maintained if the economic growth objectives of other plans and strategies are to be achieved
- It needs to be ensured that new employment opportunities provide a decent wage, and support is required to enable people to move from benefits to employment, in order to help close the gap between local and national disposable incomes

Biodiversity

- The city has a large area of readily restorable degraded lowland raised bog, which is a UK/EU priority habitat, offering the potential to make a major contribution to national biodiversity objectives
- The large scale of development proposed for the city in the Regional Spatial Strategy may put pressures on biodiversity resources, but also offers opportunities to integrate biodiversity considerations more effectively into neighbourhoods

Soil and land

- The city's supply of high grade agricultural land is likely to become increasingly important as global climate change and population increases place pressure on food resources and security of supply, but this will need to be balanced against other priorities for such land including biodiversity and recreational access
- More than 90% of new dwellings are being provided on previously-developed land, and there remains a significant supply of vacant/underused land in the city to continue this performance in the future, but pressures for more family houses and new

employment sites that better meet modern business requirements may increase demands for greenfield land release

Water and flood risk

- Significant parts of the city are at risk of flooding, but those areas also include neighbourhoods in need of regeneration and thousands of households living in accommodation with inadequate flood protection, so it will be important to identify policy interventions that minimise risk whilst supporting community regeneration and recognising the increased potential for major flood events associated with climate change
- The scale of new development proposed in the Regional Spatial Strategy may present challenges for water supply and wastewater treatment, which could in turn affect recent improvements in water quality

Air quality

- Poor air quality affects large parts of the city, particularly associated with large traffic flows on the strategic highway network, which in turn impacts on health and quality of life

Climatic factors

- The large scale of development proposed in the city through the Regional Spatial Strategy offers the potential to significantly reduce the average per capita carbon footprint through the careful location and design of development, but reducing emissions from existing development will also be important though challenging
- A very low proportion of the city's energy requirements are met from renewable sources, which raises issues for the security of supply as well as carbon dioxide emissions
- Successful adaptation to climate change will be fundamental to achieving other objectives, for example relating to quality of life (e.g. increased urban heat island effect), flood risk and biodiversity

Material resources

- The city has a low recycling rate for municipal waste, and Greater Manchester generally exports a significant proportion of its waste
- The large scale of development proposed will place major demands on material resources

Landscape

- More than a third of the city is Green Belt, and there are other significant open spaces, all of which have competing functional demands for example in terms of recreation, agriculture, biodiversity, flood water storage and landscape value

Cultural heritage

- The city has a rich cultural heritage, which is an important source of local pride and identity, and has been well protected

Light and noise

- Increasing complaints over recent years indicate the need to carefully locate and design new development, and may increase the importance of retaining some areas of relative tranquillity

5. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

- 5.1 The sustainability appraisal framework will provide the tools for describing, analysing and comparing the sustainability effects of the various Core Strategy options. The framework consists of three main elements:
- a) A series of sustainability objectives, which the Core Strategy should seek to further as far as practicable
 - b) A number of questions related to each objective, which will assist in determining the impact of the Core Strategy on those objectives
 - c) A range of indicators, which will enable sustainability effects to be monitored, covering the full spectrum of objectives
- 5.2 The sustainability appraisal framework has been developed by analysing the full range of sustainability issues that the Core Strategy could potentially have an impact on, informed by the above sections of this report.
- 5.3 The objectives have been designed to be fully comprehensive, whilst minimising any overlap between individual objectives that could potentially cause confusion and skew the results of any appraisal. All of the objectives are considered to be “primary” objectives, which are desirable in and of themselves in securing more sustainable outcomes, and purely “secondary” objectives that only help to achieve primary objectives have been excluded. For example, it will be important to maximise the use of more sustainable means of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. However, it is not a primary objective but rather a secondary objective that helps to achieve a range of primary objectives such as reducing contributions to climate change, improving air quality, improving physical and mental health, and protecting and enhancing amenity. Similarly, although reducing greenhouse gas emissions has its own objective, there is not a separate objective on adaptation to climate change as it is covered by other objectives, for example relating to biodiversity, flood risk, health etc. Each objective is inevitably broad in its scope given the wide-ranging nature of the Core Strategy and its potential sustainability implications.
- 5.4 The indicators have been chosen to strike a balance between providing a comprehensive assessment of sustainability effects and being manageable in terms of their number and data requirements. The emphasis is on direct, primary outcomes rather than inputs, outputs or indirect outcomes that affect the primary outcomes, although proxy

indicators may sometimes be required. They are intended to be “headline” indicators, and as a result there are not indicators relating to all of the questions listed (with many of the questions relating to indirect outcomes or outputs). It is therefore inevitable that other information will need to be collected in order to supplement the sustainability indicators and inform future policy development. The interconnectedness of the sustainability objectives means that some of the indicators potentially relate to several different objectives, but they have been grouped under individual indicators for ease of use.

The framework

- 5.5 The table below sets out the sustainability appraisal framework that will be used to assess the sustainability of the Core Strategy and its options. The objectives, questions and indicators have been grouped under broad topic headings to assist in identifying the primary issues that they will address. The first ten headings reflect the requirements of point (f) of Annex I of the SEA Directive.
- 5.6 Appendix 4 provides more details on the definition and data sources for the indicators.

Table 2: Sustainability appraisal framework

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
Population	1) To secure a self-sustaining and balanced population sufficient to support a full range of local services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it secure a balanced population and communities? • Will it secure a self-sustaining population? • Will this be the case for all neighbourhoods? • Will the population be large enough to support a full range of services? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Resident population ii) Age profile of population iii) Household composition
Health	2) To improve physical and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce death rates? • Will it reduce health inequalities? • Will it promote healthy lifestyles? • Will it improve access to healthcare facilities? • Will it reduce isolation for vulnerable people? • Will it reduce exposure to pollutants? • Will it reduce accidents and the risk of accidents? • Will it improve access to healthy, affordable food? • Will it reduce fuel poverty and other negative health impacts of housing? • Will it promote good mental health? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv) Standardised mortality rate (all causes) v) Life expectancy
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	3) To protect and enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and enhance existing flora, fauna and priority habitats? • Will it provide opportunities for new habitat creation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vi) Area of UK priority habitats by type vii) Area of locally designated sites

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it minimise fragmentation of habitats and increase links? • Will it take into account the potential impacts of climate change on biodiversity? 	
Soil and land	4) To protect and improve soil and land resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect the agricultural quality of soil resources? • Will it reduce land instability? • Will it reduce land contamination? • Will it reduce the amount of derelict and/or degraded land? • Will it minimise the net loss of greenfield land? 	<p>viii) Area of high grade agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a)</p> <p>ix) Average net loss of greenfield land per annum</p>
Water	5) To protect and enhance water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and enhance the quality of waterways and groundwater? • Will it ensure an adequate supply of water to homes and businesses? • Will it reduce per capita water consumption? 	x) Proportion of waterways classified of “Fair” or better
	6) To minimise the risk and impacts of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce the number of people and properties at risk of flooding? • Will it reduce the impacts of any flooding? • Will it increase the use of sustainable drainage systems? 	xi) Number of dwellings at risk of flooding more often than once every 100 years
Air	7) To improve air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce the emission of airborne pollutants? • Will it maximise the removal of air 	xii) Area of the city that complies with national air quality standards

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
		pollutants (e.g. by trees)?	
Climatic factors	8) To reduce contributions to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide and methane? • Will it increase energy efficiency? • Will it increase the use of renewable energy? • Will it reduce traffic levels and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use? 	xiii) Carbon dioxide emissions by sector xiv) Renewable energy capacity
Material assets	9) To minimise the use of non-renewable resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce waste generation? • Will it maximise the use of waste as a resource, and minimise the amount of residual waste going to landfill? • Will it minimise the use of primary minerals? • Will it increase the use of building materials from sustainable sources? • Will it maximise the reuse of existing buildings? • Will it minimise the use of fossil fuels? 	xv) Total amount of waste xvi) Amount of waste going to landfill
Cultural heritage	10) To protect and enable the appreciation of the city's heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it minimise the loss of, and damage to, places, landscapes and structures of historic, cultural and/or archaeological value? • Will it protect the setting and views of such assets? 	xvii) Number of nationally designated heritage assets

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it help to secure a positive and sensitive use for such assets? • Will it improve access to the city's heritage? • Will it help to increase recognition of the value of the city's heritage? 	
Landscape and townscape	11) To maintain and enhance the quality and character of landscape and townscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve the quality of urban, architectural and landscape design? • Will it protect notable landscape features and open spaces? • Will it secure good maintenance of landscape and townscape? • Will it improve public access to quality landscapes and townscapes? • Will it protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness? 	xviii) Proportion of people who are happy with their neighbourhood
Amenity	12) To protect and enhance amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve neighbourhood quality? • Will it minimise light and noise pollution? • Will it ensure that occupiers of buildings and spaces have sufficient natural light and appropriate levels of privacy? • Will it ensure that public spaces are sufficiently well lit? • Will it maintain tranquil areas? • Will it mitigate the negative impacts 	xix) Number of noise complaints xx) Number of light pollution complaints

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
		of climate change on microclimates?	
Crime	13) To reduce crime and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce actual levels of crime? • Will it reduce the fear of crime? • Will it reduce antisocial behaviour and disorder? 	xxi) Incidences of crime per 1,000 population xxiii) Proportion of people who feel unsafe in their neighbourhood
Economic health	14) To maximise economic growth that can be sustained in the long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it support a diverse and robust economy? • Will it support key growth sectors that drive economic growth? • Will it enhance productivity levels? • Will it encourage inward investment? • Will it support existing businesses? • Will it support innovation and business development? • Will it increase the quantity and quality of employment opportunities? • Will it promote security of energy supply and other resources? 	xxiv) Number of jobs xxv) Number of VAT registered businesses
Prosperity	15) To enhance economic inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it meet the employment needs of local people? • Will it increase economic activity levels? • Will it improve physical accessibility to jobs? • Will it support higher income levels for local residents? 	xxvi) Worklessness rate xxvii) Average household income xxviii) Proportion of the population living in the 10% most deprived areas in the country

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve economic performance in disadvantaged areas? 	
Education	16) To improve the city's knowledge base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase the skills of local people? • Will it improve the qualifications of local people? • Will it increase the levels of participation in education? • Will it help to develop and maintain a healthy labour market? 	xxix) Proportion of pupils remaining in full-time education beyond the age of 16 xxx) Proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C
Housing	17) To ensure that everyone has access to a good home that meets their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide an appropriate mix of housing to enable all needs to be met? • Will it enable people to meet their needs within their existing communities? • Will it reduce homelessness? • Will it reduce the number of unfit dwellings? • Will it reduce the number of vacant dwellings? • Will it increase the stability of the housing market? • Will it ensure that people can afford their housing? • Will it reduce overcrowding? 	xxxi) Number of households in identified need xxxii) Number of non-decent homes
Accessibility	18) To improve accessibility to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve transport systems and services that provide access to 	xxxiii) Proportion of people that are within 30 minutes

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
	facilities and opportunities	<p>facilities and opportunities for employment and leisure?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve the range and quality of facilities within the city? • Will it protect existing town and neighbourhood centres where such facilities are focused? 	public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, areas of employment, and major retail centres
	19) To reduce the need to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce the distance people need to travel to access jobs, facilities and services? • Will it encourage linked trips? • Will it reduce the distance freight is moved? • Will it improve access to high quality information and communication technology? 	See above
Community cohesion	20) To improve community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it create a sense of belonging and identity? • Will it improve relations between different groups? • Will it reduce prejudice? • Will it support community development? • Will it promote equality? 	xxxiv) Proportion of people who feel that there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in their neighbourhoods
Decision-making	21) To increase involvement in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enable people to influence decision-making? • Will it keep people informed? • Will it involve people in the implementation of decisions? 	xxxv) Proportion of people who believe they can be involved and influence local decision-making

Topic	Objective	Questions	Indicators
Image	22) To improve perceptions of the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it engage hard to reach groups? • Will it support an increase in visitor numbers? • Will it provide a more positive image for the city? • Will it secure positive publicity? 	xxxvi) Number of tourism visits to the city

Internal compatibility of the sustainability objectives

- 5.7 The sustainability objectives have been assessed for their internal compatibility. This will help to identify where there are potential synergies that could be maximised through the Core Strategy, as well as where there are potential conflicts that the Core Strategy will need to manage and mitigate.
- 5.8 None of the sustainability objectives are considered to be inherently incompatible. However, there are some objectives that could potentially be incompatible depending on the proposals that come forward through the Core Strategy, and these are identified below:
- A self-sustaining increase in the population (objective 1) could potentially have a negative impact at the local level on many of the other objectives unless the per capita impacts of human activity are reduced. However, this needs to be balanced against the implications at a regional, national and international level were that population to be located outside Salford. For example, locating people within Salford rather than elsewhere could potentially help to minimise negative impacts, for example by enabling more people to live closer to the main concentrations of employment in the region.
 - Maximising economic growth (objective 14) could also potentially have a negative impact on many of the other objectives, as economic development has historically led to compromises in environmental conditions in particular but also many social objectives such as good health. However, the links between economic growth and environmental/social degradation are not automatic, and the challenge for the Core Strategy will be to ensure that the form of economic growth minimises the negative impacts and maximises the positive effects such as increasing prosperity and investment in infrastructure that has wider social benefits.
 - Achieving the objective of ensuring that everyone has access to a good home that meets their needs (objective 17) could potentially require the demolition of existing buildings, some of which may be considered to make a positive contribution to the heritage and townscape character of the city (objectives 10 and 11). In these circumstances, it will be particularly important to ensure that any replacement buildings have at least the same positive impact on the quality and distinctiveness of the local area.
 - Increasing involvement in decision-making (objective 21) has the potential to compromise the achievement of many of the objectives given that most people have a limited amount of time available to engage in the development of the Core Strategy, and therefore may not be able to take all of the various sustainability considerations into account when seeking to influence the document. This

emphasises the importance of ensuring that appropriate information is available for the public, and is written in plain English.

- 5.9 Many of the sustainability objectives are mutually reinforcing. However, there are some synergies that are particularly important.
- Although the Core Strategy can only have a minor impact in the global context, reducing contributions to climate change (objective 8) will be essential in supporting many of the other objectives. For example, climate change could potentially have a negative impact on health (through higher temperatures and more extreme weather events) (objective 2), biodiversity (with the climate changing faster than ecosystems can adapt) (objective 3), soil quality (with longer dry periods potentially leading to dust bowls) (objective 4), water resources (by requiring greater water usage) (objective 5), risk of flooding (by increasing the severity of rain events and therefore peak river flows) (objective 6), air quality (with higher temperatures increasing incidences of photochemical smog) (objective 7), amenity (with higher temperatures making urban areas less comfortable to live in) (objective 12), and subsequent impacts on economic growth (objective 14).
 - Although a primary objective itself, improving physical and mental health can be influenced by many of the other objectives. For example, access to wildlife and quality landscapes and townscapes can promote good mental health (objectives 3 and 11), reducing contamination of land minimises health risks (objective 4), improving air quality helps to reduce respiratory diseases (objective 7), protecting amenity, community cohesion and involvement in decision-making reduces stress levels (objectives 12, 20 and 21), reducing crime helps to protect health (objective 13), enhancing economic inclusion and improving access to facilities enable people to maintain healthier lifestyles (objectives 15 and 18), and reducing the number of people living in poor housing also reduces health impacts (objective 17).
 - Securing good educational standards (objective 16) also has important links with other objectives, particularly helping to promote economic growth by ensuring a quality labour supply (objective 14), assisting local residents to share in the benefits of economic growth (objective 15), and enabling people to become more fully involved in decision-making (objective 21).

6. APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Introduction

- 6.1 The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) requires that an “appropriate assessment” is undertaken of land use plans such as the Core Strategy to ensure that the integrity of nature conservation sites of European importance is protected. Such sites are known as Natura 2000 sites, and include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs), Special Areas of Protection (SPAs), candidate Special Areas of Protection (cSPAs), and Offshore Marine Sites (OMSs).
- 6.2 Government guidance identifies three stages for an appropriate assessment:
- 1) **Screening**, to determine whether the plan, in combination with other proposals, is likely to have a significant impact on any European site
 - 2) **Assessment**, to determine the scale and nature of the impacts on the integrity of any European site
 - 3) **Mitigation**, to determine whether alternative solutions are available, or, if not, how the impacts can be minimised

Screening for appropriate assessment

- 6.3 The table below identifies the European sites that it is considered the Core Strategy could theoretically have an impact on, depending on its policies and proposals. This includes all sites within approximately 20km of the city, as well as the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area because of the hydrological connections.
- 6.4 The options for the Core Strategy have yet to be developed, and therefore only a very broad estimate of its likely impacts, in combination with other proposals, on European sites can be made at this time. This means that the screening will need to be repeated at later stages in the production of the Core Strategy. However, at this time, given the existing policy context (as seen in the analysis of plans, policies and programmes in section 2 of this report) and the strong emphasis on sustainable development that will need to run through the whole of the Core Strategy, there is no evidence to indicate that it is likely to have any significant effects on a European site. Climate change could potentially have an impact on all European sites. Salford’s greenhouse gas emissions are negligible in this global

context, and the Core Strategy is likely to have a positive impact in reducing emissions compared to the “no plan” option.

Table 3: European sites

Name	Status	Location	Reason for selection	Potential impacts	Likelihood of impact
Manchester Mosses	SAC	Warrington and Wigan (Risley Moss, Astley and Bedford Mosses, and Holcroft Moss)	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration. Whilst past drainage has produced dominant purple moor grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>), bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>) and birch (<i>Betula</i> spp.) scrub or woodland, wetter pockets have enable the peat-forming species to survive.	The sites would be affected by changes in hydrology that reduce the moisture content of the mosses and/or their level of alkalinity (the mosses being dependent on acidic conditions). Scrub invasion has been identified as a problem, although is being controlled. Reductions in air quality could potentially have an impact on Sphagnum regeneration.	Salford is also pursuing the protection and restoration of degraded raised bogs (see UDP Policy EN11 and emerging Chat Moss Vision), which should positively complement the SAC (the nearest European site to Salford). Any proposals for changes in water alkalinity, drainage, water abstraction, mineral extraction or landfill would need to be carefully controlled, but no evidence of any likely negative impacts from the Core Strategy at present.
Rixton Clay Pits	SAC	Warrington	Great crested newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) are known to occur in at least 20 ponds across the site. The site also supports species-rich calcareous grassland, scrub and mature secondary woodland.	Major impacts are only likely to occur from localised activity that would disrupt the grassland and ponds. On-site ranger management minimises this potential, and the great crested newt population is increasing.	Very unlikely that activity in Salford could directly impact on the grassland or ponds. Increases in air pollution would need to be very significant to affect the site, and even in the worst case the Core Strategy could only have a marginal impact in this regard.

Name	Status	Location	Reason for selection	Potential impacts	Likelihood of impact
Mersey Estuary	SPA	Cheshire, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton, Liverpool, Vale Royal, Wirral	Internationally important numbers of migratory species and waterfowl, with large areas of intertidal sand and mudflats as well as reclaimed marshland, salt-marshes, brackish marshes and boulder clay cliffs with freshwater seepages. Particularly important for pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>), teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>), shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>), and wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>).	Receives drainage from a large catchment encompassing the conurbations of Liverpool and Manchester. It is therefore at risk from water pollution, although the Mersey Basin Campaign has improved water quality over the last 20 years. Most sources of heavy metal and organic pollution have been addressed, although there are historic impacts in terms of sediments. The principal freshwater input in the inner estuary is the Manchester Ship Canal. The estuary reportedly still receives an elevated nutrient load.	The Manchester Ship Canal provides a direct link to the SPA, and therefore any impact on water quality could affect the site's integrity. Water quality has been improving and there is no evidence to suggest that the Core Strategy will reverse this trend, even with increased use of the Manchester Ship Canal by freight traffic. Any impacts are therefore likely to be negligible and capable of mitigation at or close to source.
Rochdale Canal	SAC	Rochdale and Tameside	Supports a significant population of floating water-plantain (<i>Luronium natans</i>), representative of the formerly more widespread canal	The canal has predominantly mesotrophic water, and therefore impacts on nutrient and pollution could affect the reason for selection. Increased	Highly unlikely given the very limited systemic connections between Salford and the Rochdale Canal that could affect its conditions. An increase in Salford's population could

Name	Status	Location	Reason for selection	Potential impacts	Likelihood of impact
			populations of NW England.	boat movements could also impact if restoration proposals for full navigation proceed.	theoretically increase demand for water-based recreation, but the impact is likely to be negligible.
South Pennine Moors	SAC	Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Kirklees, Lancashire, Leeds, North Yorkshire, Oldham, Rochdale, Sheffield, Staffordshire, Tameside	The priority feature is the blanket bog in the south Pennines, which is the most south-easterly occurrence of the habitat in Europe. The site is also representative of upland dry heath at the southern end of the Pennine range, the habitat's most south-easterly upland location in the UK. The moors support a rich invertebrate fauna, especially moths, and important bird assemblages. Around the fringes of the upland heath and bog are blocks of old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum, usually on	Large numbers of people use the area for recreational activities, and access management has been a key issue. Accidental fires can cause extensive damage to vegetation, as can overgrazing by sheep. Atmospheric pollution over the last few hundred years has depleted the lichen and bryophyte flora and may be affecting dwarf-shrubs, with the impact arguably greatest on blanket bog, wet heath and transition mire. Combined with historical overgrazing, burning, drainage and local trampling, large areas of blanket bog have become de-vegetated and eroded. The former extensive	The majority of the existing and potential impacts on the SAC are strongly localised, and therefore any effects resulting from the Core Strategy are likely to be negligible. The main exception to this is air pollution, where activity across the sub-region could potentially impact on the site. However, the primary impacts are still likely to be from within the local area, and the impact of air pollution generated in Salford is again likely to be negligible. Concentrating development in Salford could potentially reduce the need for further development closer to the SAC that could have a more significant impact. An increase in Salford's population could theoretically increase

Name	Status	Location	Reason for selection	Potential impacts	Likelihood of impact
			slopes. Although not primary reasons for selection, the site also contains Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix and transition mires and quaking bogs.	cover of woodland has declined over many centuries, and open grazing restricts tree regeneration. Rhododendron has invaded some areas, choking out native flora. It is also affected by air pollution.	recreation demand in the South Pennine Moors, but impacts are likely to be negligible.

7. PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Introduction

- 7.1 The strategic and all-embracing nature of the Core Strategy means that the scope of the sustainability appraisal will also need to be broad, giving full consideration to all sustainability issues. The sustainability appraisal framework has been developed accordingly, and there is the potential for the Core Strategy to have a significant impact on each of the objectives depending on the policies and proposals that are taken forward.

Methodology

- 7.2 The sustainability appraisal process, and its relationship with the Core Strategy production process, was summarised in section 1 of this report (see Table 1). Further details are provided below. The emphasis is on an iterative process, with the level of detail of the appraising increasing as the Core Strategy options are gradually narrowed down.

Pre-production and evidence gathering

- 7.3 This Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report represents the main output of the appraisal process from the initial stages of the Core Strategy production process. It has set out the identified other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives, set out the key baseline information, identified sustainability issues and problems, and established a sustainability appraisal framework with objectives and indicators. This section sets out the scope of the sustainability appraisal, and the next section identifies the arrangements for consulting on this report, thereby complying with all aspects of Government guidance on appraisals.

Informal pre-submission consultation examining the issues and broad options

- 7.4 The key output from the Core Strategy production process at this stage will be an Issues and Options Report, which will form the focus for initial consultation (although other consultation will also take place). It is intended that the Issues and Options Report will summarise the baseline evidence, provide a spatial portrait of Salford, identify the main issues that the Core Strategy will need to consider, set out a draft spatial vision and objectives, and identify initial broad options that could potentially help to achieve the vision and objectives.
- 7.5 It is envisaged that an “interim” sustainability appraisal report will be produced at this stage, which will:
- a) Test the plan objectives for compatibility with the sustainability appraisal objectives identified in this report

- b) Provide an initial commentary on the sustainability of the emerging options
- c) Identify general mitigation measures for improving the sustainability of the emerging options

7.6 Given the early stage in the production process, it is not considered appropriate to produce a full sustainability appraisal report or to test each of the emerging options against each of the sustainability appraisal objectives. This approach is consistent with Government guidance⁸.

Formal pre-submission participation on a narrowed down range of preferred options

7.7 The focus of this stage is the production of, and consultation on, a Core Strategy Preferred Options Report. This will narrow down the options contained in the Issues and Options Report, potentially introducing new or combined options depending on the results of public consultation, and will add more detail to those options. However, it is unlikely that there will be any draft policies at this stage.

7.8 The most appropriate form for the sustainability appraisal to take at this stage will partly depend on the way in which the Preferred Options are expressed, which at this stage is not known. The following table gives an indication of the type of matrix that may be used to appraise the Preferred Options (and the “do nothing” option), with the effect of each option being measured against each sustainability objective, and an overall summary of the sustainability of each option being provided. In determining the effect, regard will be had to its potential magnitude, timescale, geographical scale, permanence, and relationship with other impacts. Consideration will be given to potential mitigation of impacts throughout this stage of the appraisal.

Objective	Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4	
	Effect	Comments/ mitigation	Effect	Comments/ Mitigation	Effect	Comments/ mitigation	Effect	Comments/ mitigation
1								
2								
3								
etc								
Sustainability summary								
Key for effects ++ major positive; + minor positive; 0 neutral; - minor negative; - - major negative; ? uncertain								

⁸ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (April 2005) “Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Interim advice on frequently asked questions”

7.9 A Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced, setting out the appraisal to that stage.

Submission of a full draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State

7.10 A full draft Core Strategy is produced at this stage (the Submission Core Strategy), including detailed policies. It has to be submitted to the Secretary of State for an independent public examination, and is subject to a statutory six week consultation period.

7.11 The draft Core Strategy could potentially be a combination of options considered at the previous Preferred Options stage rather than taking forward a single option, and therefore it will be important to subject the Submission Core Strategy to further appraisal. In order to maximise the potential for identifying mitigation measures, and to ensure that all sustainability impacts are taken into account in the final document, it is envisaged that the appraisal at this stage will be more detailed and will utilise a matrix similar to that below.

Objective	Timescale			Nature of effect				Comments	Mitigation
	0-3 years	3-10 years	10+ years	Certainty	Scale	Permanence	Secondary, cumulative, synergistic		
1									
2									
3									
etc									
Sustainability summary									
Key for effects ++ major positive; + minor positive; 0 neutral; - minor negative; - - major negative; ? uncertain									

7.12 A full Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced at this stage. It will meet all of the requirements of Annex I of the SEA Directive. It is envisaged that it may follow a structure similar to the following:

Non-technical executive summary

Background

- Description of the purpose, scope and objectives of the Core Strategy
- Explanation of the need for and purpose of the sustainability appraisal
- Details of how to comment on the sustainability appraisal report

Methodology

- Summary of the process and methodology of the sustainability appraisal, including who carried out the appraisal and any potential deficiencies such as data gaps
- Details of consultation undertaken on the previous stages of the sustainability appraisal

Context and sustainability appraisal framework

- Identification of other relevant policies, plans and programmes
- Summary of baseline information, including the characteristics of the area and how they would be likely to evolve without the plan
- Identification of sustainability issues and problems
- Description of the sustainability appraisal framework, with sustainability objectives and indicators
- Analysis of the compatibility of the Core Strategy objectives and the sustainability objectives

Issues and Options commentary

- Description of how this part of the sustainability appraisal was undertaken
- Details of the results of this part of the appraisal

Preferred Options stage

- Description of how this part of the sustainability appraisal was undertaken
- Explanation of the options that were considered and the reasons for choosing them (including reasons why any other options identified at the previous stage were dropped), including how the sustainability commentary informed such decisions
- Details of the results of this part of the appraisal, potentially including the completed matrices as an appendix

Appraisal of the Submission Core Strategy

- Description of how this part of the sustainability appraisal was undertaken
- Explanation of why the other options were not selected and how the sustainability appraisal informed such decisions
- Details of the results of this part of the appraisal, including the completed matrices as an appendix
- Summary of the sustainability of the Submission Core Strategy
- Details of mitigation measures
- Identification of uncertainties and risks

Implementation

- Identification of sustainability issues that need to be taken into account in implementing the Core Strategy
- Details of links to other plans, programmes and projects

Monitoring

- Explanation of how the sustainability impacts of the Core Strategy will be monitored
- Identification for how any significant adverse impacts may be responded to

Appendices

- Table identifying those elements of the Sustainability Appraisal Report that meet the requirements of the SEA Directive
- Other background tables and information

Public examination

7.13 If the city council proposes any changes to the Core Strategy through the public examination process, for example in response to public consultation on the Submission document, then this will be accompanied by a brief appraisal of the sustainability implications of those changes. This will help to ensure that the Inspector overseeing the public examination has sufficient information on which to base a recommendation.

7.14 It will be important that objectors seeking changes to the Core Strategy take a similar approach for the same reasons. In the absence of any consideration of the sustainability implications of the changes they seek, the Inspector may be reluctant to view them favourably because the impact on the sustainability of the Core Strategy will be unclear.

Adoption of the Core Strategy

7.15 Following the public examination, the Inspector will produce a report setting out if/how the Core Strategy should be amended, which will be binding on the city council. Depending on the recommendations of the Inspector, it may be necessary to update the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Equality impact assessment

7.16 All parts of Salford's Local Development Framework, including the Core Strategy, will be subject to an equality impact assessment. In order to avoid overcomplicating the sustainability appraisal, the equality impact assessment will be conducted and reported separately. However, its results will help to inform the assessment of the Core Strategy against sustainability indicator 20 (To improve community cohesion).

8. CONSULTATION ON THE SCOPING REPORT

Strategic environmental assessment requirements

- 8.1 There is a statutory requirement for the following four bodies to be consulted on whether the Core Strategy should be subject to a strategic environmental assessment:
- The Countryside Agency (now part of Natural England)
 - The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage)
 - English Nature (now part of Natural England)
 - The Environment Agency
- 8.2 Following that consultation, the city council must make a formal determination and publish details of it within 28 days of the decision⁹.
- 8.3 Where it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is required, as with the Core Strategy, the city council must consult the aforementioned bodies for a period of 5 weeks on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the assessment report¹⁰. The consultation on this scoping report is considered to meet these consultation requirements.
- 8.4 There are no specific regulatory requirements relating to consulting on sustainability appraisal scoping reports beyond those detailed above relating to strategic environmental assessments. However, Government guidance recommends consulting bodies concerned with social, environmental and economic issues¹¹.
- 8.5 Consequently, the following organisations are being consulted on this sustainability appraisal scoping report:
- Environment Agency
 - English Nature (now part of Natural England)
 - Countryside Agency (now part of Natural England)
 - English Heritage
 - Government Office for the North West
 - North West Development Agency
 - North West Regional Assembly

⁹ In accordance with Regulation 11 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

¹⁰ In accordance with Regulations 12(5) and 12(6) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

¹¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (November 2005) "Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents"

- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
- Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
- Greater Manchester Geological Unit
- Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive
- Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company
- Bolton MBC
- Bury MBC
- Manchester City Council
- Oldham MBC
- Rochdale MBC
- Stockport MBC
- Tameside MBC
- Trafford MBC
- Warrington BC
- Wigan MBC