

Bury Council

**Integrated Assessment of the
Bury Local Plan**

Integrated Assessment of the
Policy Directions Document
Non-Technical Summary

Bury Policy Direction_IA

Final Report | 16 October 2018

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 263711-00

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ARUP

Introduction

Bury Council is preparing a Local Plan which will set out policies, designations and site allocations that will guide and control future development in Bury. The Bury Local Plan will form part of the wider Development Plan, which will also include the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals and Waste Plans.

As part of the development of the Bury Local Plan, an Integrated Assessment (IA) is being undertaken which incorporates the requirements of:

- Sustainability Appraisal (SA): mandatory under section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): mandatory under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which transpose the European Directive 2001/42/EC into English law).
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): required to be undertaken for plans, policies and strategies by the Equality Act 2010.
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA): there is no statutory requirement to undertake HIA, however it has been included to add value and depth to the assessment process.

At this early stage of preparing the Local Plan, Bury Council has prepared 'policy directions' for the Local Plan. These policy directions set out the proposed scope and direction of each policy and the broad options that have been considered for each policy. It is acknowledged that there may be further options to consider as policies are further refined.

This non-technical summary is provided to clearly and concisely explain the methodology and findings of the IA of the Policy Directions. The IA of the Policy Directions is available to view alongside this report.

Integrated Assessment

The Bury Local Plan Policy Directions document has been assessed with regard to four assessments.

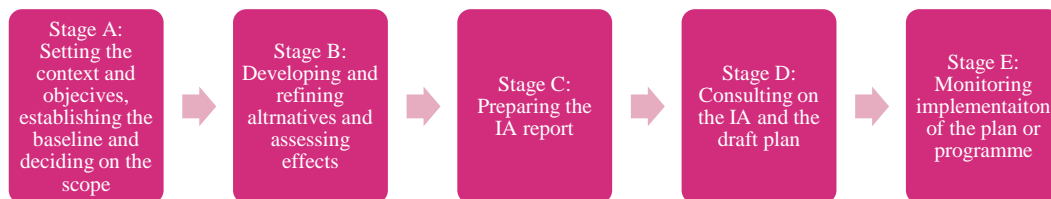
Methodology

The approaches to SA, SEA, EqIA and HIA use similar assessment steps. Broadly speaking these are:

- screening (i.e. deciding if the assessment is needed)
- setting the baseline context
- identifying where there are impacts on defined relevant topics areas (e.g. flora and fauna, the determinants of health, or the impact on certain groups of people in society)
- understanding impacts of that which is being assessed, and
- making recommendations for mitigation where necessary in order to offset any potential negative effects.

The IA is based around these steps. However, as the Bury Local Plan Policy Directions Document is a high-level document in regard to its considerations, this is reflected in the IA. Therefore, further options will be considered at the next stage. The diagram below demonstrates the process that has been carried out.

IA Process



The IA Framework

The IA Framework is used to identify the likely social, economic and environmental effects and guide mitigation and policy development. The IA framework is made up of a number of objectives and assessment criteria which have been developed specifically for the Bury Local Plan.

| Ref | Objective | Assessment criteria, Will the Local Plan: |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Provide a sustainable supply of | Ensure an appropriate quantity of housing land? |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | housing including an appropriate mix of types and tenures to reflect needs | <p>Supply an appropriate mix of types and tenures of properties in relation to the respective level of demand?</p> <p>Supply sufficient affordable homes?</p> <p>Support improvements in the energy efficiency of housing stock?</p> <p>Meet the identified needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?</p> |
| 2 | Promote sustainable economic growth and job creation | <p>Provide or contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment sites?</p> <p>Maintain and enhance the viability of the Borough's six towns?</p> <p>Improve business development, nurture business growth and enhance competitiveness?</p> <p>Encourage inward investment?</p> <p>Encourage tourism development?</p> <p>Reduce unemployment levels, particularly in areas of high employment deprivation?</p> <p>Help to improve earnings?</p> |
| 3 | Ensure that there is sufficient coverage and capacity of transport and utilities to support growth and development | <p>Reduce traffic volumes/miles travelled by motor vehicles?</p> <p>Increase the proportion of journeys using modes other than the car?</p> <p>Ensure that the transport network can support and enable the anticipated scale and spatial distribution of development?</p> <p>Improve transport connectivity?</p> <p>Ensure that utilities/digital infrastructure can support and enable the anticipated scale and spatial distribution of development?</p> |
| 4 | Reduce levels of deprivation, disparity, crime and the fear of crime | <p>Reduce the proportion of people living in deprivation?</p> <p>Reduce the potential for crime?</p> <p>Promote design that discourages crime?</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 5 | Promote equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination | <p>Foster good relations between different people?</p> <p>Ensure equality of opportunity and equal access to facilities/infrastructure for all?</p> <p>Ensure no discrimination based on 'protected characteristics', as defined in the Equality Act 2010?</p> <p>Note that this assessment will be supported by an EqlA screening assessment, accompanying the IA Report.</p> |
| 6 | Support improved health and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities | <p>Improve access to high quality health facilities</p> <p>Support healthier lifestyles e.g. provide more opportunities for physical activity, reduce car dependency and encourage walking and cycling?</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities within the Borough?</p> |
| 7 | Support improved educational attainment and skill level for all | <p>Improve education levels of children in the area, regardless of their background?</p> <p>Improve educational and skill levels of the population of working age?</p> <p>Will it provide access to work experience, apprenticeships and training, especially for young people?</p> <p>Ensure sufficient access to educational facilities for all children?</p> |
| 8 | Promote sustainable modes of transport | <p>Reduce the need to travel and promote efficient patterns of movement?</p> <p>Promote a safe and sustainable public transport network that reduces reliance on private motor vehicles?</p> <p>Support the provision and use of sustainable and active modes of transport?</p> |
| 9 | Improve air quality | <p>Improve air quality within the Borough, particularly, in the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)?</p> <p>Will it reduce the number of journeys made by private car in order to reduce the high levels of</p> |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| | | nitrogen dioxide in areas of traffic congestion in the Borough? |
| 10 | Protect and enhance current levels of biodiversity and geodiversity. | <p>Protect designated wildlife sites, wildlife corridors, protected species and their habitats, aiming for no net loss in biodiversity?</p> <p>Provide opportunities to develop or enhance new and existing wildlife sites?</p> <p>Avoid destruction of important or unique geological features?</p> <p>Maintain and improve provision of green infrastructure?</p> |
| 11 | Ensure communities, developments and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of expected climate change | <p>Ensure that communities, existing and new developments and infrastructure systems are resilient to the predicted effects of climate change across GM including through the creation of green infrastructure?</p> <p>Support the take up of renewable/ low carbon technologies?</p> <p>Encourage reduction in energy use and increased energy efficiency?</p> <p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions?</p> |
| 12 | Reduce the risk of flooding to people and property | <p>Restrict the development of property in areas of flood risk?</p> <p>Ensure adequate measures are in place to manage existing flood risk?</p> <p>Ensure that development does not increase flood risk due to increased run off rates?</p> <p>Encourage sustainable urban drainage systems are incorporated into the design of new development?</p> <p>Ensure development is appropriately future proofed to accommodate future levels of flood risk?</p> <p>Encourage the inclusion of new green spaces and habitat creation to help mitigate flood risk?</p> |
| 13 | Protect and improve the | Encourage compliance with the WFD? |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | quality and availability of water resources | Promote management practices that will protect water features from pollution? |
| 14 | Protect and make accessible for enjoyment the Borough's landscape, townscape cultural heritage and historic environment. | <p>Improve the landscape quality and the character of open spaces and the public realm?</p> <p>Conserve and enhance heritage and cultural assets in both urban and rural areas?</p> <p>Respect, maintain and strengthen local character and distinctiveness in both urban and rural areas.</p> |
| 15 | Ensure access to and protection and enhancement of high quality public open space and natural green space. | <p>Ensure that all people have access to public open space within reasonable walking distance from where they live?</p> <p>Will it promote access to green infrastructure such as natural greenspace?</p> <p>Will it create new areas of open space and natural greenspace?</p> |
| 16 | Improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and buildings whilst reducing land contamination | <p>Focus development on previously developed land?</p> <p>Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land/soil resources from inappropriate development?</p> <p>Encourage the redevelopment of derelict land and properties, returning them to appropriate uses?</p> <p>Support reductions in land contamination through the use of previously developed land?</p> |
| 17 | Promote sustainable consumption of resources and support the implementation of the waste hierarchy. | <p>Support the sustainable use of physical resources?</p> <p>Promote movement up the waste hierarchy?</p> <p>Promote reduced waste generation rates?</p> |

The policy directions have been compared against the IA objectives. This is set out in a series of assessment tables and the following scoring is applied:

| | |
|----|----------------------|
| ++ | Very positive effect |
| + | Positive effect |
| ? | Uncertain |
| - | Negative effect |
| -- | Very negative effect |
| O | Neutral / no effect |

The assessment focuses on effects, which is set out through the SEA directive. Combined symbols are sometimes used in the assessment (e.g. '+/ ?' or '- / ?'). Where this occurs, it is because there is a strong likelihood of positive/negative effects but that there is insufficient information to achieve certainty at this stage. Alternatively, there may be a combination of positive or negative effects, depending on how the option under consideration is eventually delivered.

Equalities and Health Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment has been included within the IA, to ensure the assessment is rounded and has sustainability at its core. The topics are embed within the IA framework to ensure that these are assessed as part of the process, and the considerations are made at each stage of the assessment and the IA process.

Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and a screening report has been appended to the main report. The assessment found the policies will generally have a neutral effect, with some policies having a positive effect.

A Health Impact Assessment aims to ensure that plans and policies minimise the negative impacts and maximise the positive health impacts. This is a non-statutory assessment however it enables the Local Plan to consider the health impacts throughout. This has been embedded within the IA framework and therefore has been completed as part of the IA.

Social Value

Social value is becoming increasingly important and it is important for the Bury Local Plan to consider this throughout its development. The IA framework has been reviewed in terms of social value as social inclusion and social integration are vital parts to a successful Local Plan. The review highlighted that social value was included within a number of the objectives, and is therefore embedded within the IA framework. This will enable every policy to be assessed in terms of its social value and will be a factor in each stage of the IA.

Compatibility of the Local Plan Vision and Objectives

The vision and objectives for the Bury Local Plan were assessed against their compatibility to the IA objectives, which relates to stage B1 of the SEA process. This stage requires the objectives of the plan to be tested with the IA objectives to identify where there are synergies and any potential inconsistencies between the Local Plan vision and objectives and the IA objectives.

Vision

The vision for the Bury Local Plan is:

By 2037 the Borough will have embraced sustainable growth in a managed way and become a well-connected place with:

- a strong and competitive local economy;
- strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
- a high quality natural and built environment that is resilient to the effects of climate change.

The compatibility analysis of the vision highlighted that the vision is compatible with the majority of the IA objectives. There were no incompatibilities however there were a number of uncertainties. These related to education, sustainable transport, air quality, flooding, water resources, landscape, townscape and heritage, previously developed land and resources. The vision could therefore be strengthened if further reference was made to these.

Objectives

The objectives for the Bury Local Plan are:

The Vision will be delivered through the pursuit of a number of broad Objectives, namely to:

- Deliver sustainable development;
- Promote health and wellbeing within the Borough's communities;
- Reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and ensure that the Borough is resilient and adaptive to the effects of climate change;
- Manage flood risk from all sources;
- Make efficient use of land including prioritising the redevelopment of brownfield land;
- Ensuring that all new development incorporates high standards of design and layout;
- Safeguard amenity;
- Deliver an appropriate supply of well-designed housing to meet needs;
- Deliver a competitive and diverse local economy and high quality jobs;
- Support a hierarchy of vital and viable town, district, local and neighbourhood centres;
- Safeguard existing and promoting new tourism and cultural development in appropriate locations;
- Ensure that the Borough's residents have access to a sufficient amount of good quality open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- Ensure that the Borough's residents have adequate access to community facilities;
- Encourage sustainable transport choices and reduce the number and length of journeys, particularly by private motor vehicles;
- Protect and enhance the Borough's natural environment;
- Protect and manage Green Belt;
- Protect and enhance the Borough's built heritage; and
- Ensure and that new and existing development is supported by appropriate infrastructure.

The objectives set out in the Bury Local Plan Policy Directions Document are also compatible with the majority of the IA objectives. There were no incompatibilities identified, however there were some uncertainties. There were strong compatibilities relation to housing, economic growth, transport, health, climate change and flooding. The uncertainties related primarily to deprivation, discrimination, education, water resources and resources as these are not explicitly referenced in the objectives.

It is recommended that additional objectives are included that explicitly reference the topics of deprivation, discrimination and education. Other objectives could be added which related to the topics that have uncertain compatibility however these will be dealt within in the local plan policies as there is a policy direction for these less strategic topics.

Integrated Assessment of the Local Plan Policy Directions Document

The IA framework has been used to assess each of the policy directions. The Bury Local Plan Policy Directions Document also sets out the broad options that were considered for each policy direction.

The policy directions are split into several chapters and cover the following:

Overarching Principles

- Sustainable Development
- Health and Wellbeing
- Climate Change
- Air Quality and Pollution Control
- Flood Risk Management
- Efficient Use of Land
- Design and Layout of New Development
- Amenity
- Planning Conditions and Obligations

Housing

- Housing Land Provision
- Windfall Housing Development
- Housing Needs
- Affordable Housing Provision
- Special Needs Housing
- Self-build and Custom Housebuilding
- Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- The Form and Layout of New Housing Development
- Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties
- Residential Conversions

Economy and Employment

- Employment Land Provision
- New Business, Industrial and Warehousing Development
- Employment Generating Areas
- Employment Sites Outside Employment Generating Areas

Town Centres and Main Town Centre Uses

- Hierarchy and Role of Centres
- Town Centre Development Opportunities
- Managing the Location and Scale of Main Town Centre Uses
- Primary Shopping Areas
- Local and Neighbourhood Centres
- Local Shops and Services
- Upper Floors in Centres

Tourism and Culture

- Tourism and Cultural Assets

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision
- New Housing Development and the Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Recreation Routes

Community Facilities

- Community Facilities
- New Housing Development and the Education Provision

Accessibility

- Connectivity and Accessibility
- Transport Requirements in New Development

Natural Environment

- Green Infrastructure
- Biodiversity
- Geology and Geodiversity
- Water Resources
- Soils
- Landscape Character
- Contaminated and Unstable Land
- Minerals Development
- Waste Development

Green Belt

- Development in the Green Belt
- Beneficial Use of the Green Belt
- Conversion and Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt
- Village Settlements in the Green Belt
- Agricultural, Forestry and Other Occupational Dwellings in the Green Belt
- Agricultural Diversification in the Green Belt
- Equestrian Development in the Green Belt

Built Heritage

- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks
- Archaeological Features
- Local Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Infrastructure

- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure
- Shale Gas Extraction (Fracking)
- Digital and Communications Infrastructure
- Public Utilities Infrastructure

Each policy direction, as well as the alternative options, has been assessed against the IA Framework. All have compatibility with some IA objectives. Due to the topic-based approach adopted in the assessment, there are often several objectives for each direction that have neutral effects anticipated as the IA objectives are not relevant to the policies. In the majority of cases, the assessment concluded that the chosen policy direction has more positive compatibilities than the other options considered. The option of having no policy or a broader policy on the topic is not usually preferred as it would prevent any clear direction from the Local Plan.

As the Local Plan progresses, the policies that are prepared will be more detailed than the 'policy directions'. The draft policies will be assessed comprehensively using the IA and mitigation suggested. At the policy direction stage, there is insufficient detail to complete these but the iterative process of the IA will enable this to be completed throughout the subsequent stages.

Next Steps

The IA report will be made public alongside the Bury Local Plan Policy Directions Document. The recommendations that have been identified within the IA will be considered during the next stage of the Local Plan, along with the consultation comments received during the consultation.