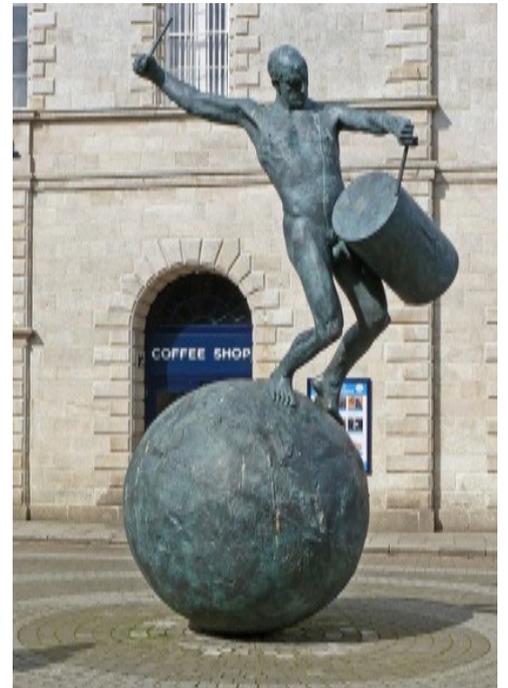


**Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the
Truro and Kenwyn
Neighbourhood Plan**



**SA Report to accompany
Regulation 14 Consultation:
Non-Technical Summary**

December 2014

Revision schedule					
Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	December 2014	Non-Technical Summary for the SA Report submitted alongside the Regulation 14 consultation version of the Truro and Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan	Nick Chisholm-Batten Principal Consultant	Stuart Woodin Technical Director	Stuart Woodin Technical Director

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What is Sustainability Appraisal?

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been carried out to inform the Truro and Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan. This has incorporated a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process as required by the SEA Directive. Neighbourhood Groups use SA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the appraisal is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of Truro and Kenwyn and the quality of life of residents through the Neighbourhood Plan.

What is the Truro and Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan?

The Truro and Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan (TKNP) sets out a plan for Truro City and Kenwyn Parish in the period to 2030. Prepared to be in conformity with the emerging Cornwall Local Plan 2030, the TKNP sets out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the Truro and Kenwyn area. The relates to a range of topics, including, but not limited to, the environment, housing, the economy, open space, education, health and transport.

The Vision for the TKNP is as follows:

'Our vision is for Truro to be a successful and vibrant city, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive economically, culturally and socially; a safe city, aware of its history and confident of its future; that promotes and achieves learning, innovation, activity, health and sustainable development. Truro will be a diverse community that provides for and values all of its people, ensuring that developments benefit communities.'

It is currently anticipated that the TKNP will undergo a referendum in 2015.

Purpose and content of this SA Report

This SA Report, which accompanies the current consultation version of the TKNP, is the second document to be produced as part of the SA process. The first document was the SA Scoping Report, which includes information about Truro and Kenwyn's environment and communities.

The purpose of the SA Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the TKNP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for statutory consultees, interested parties and the public to offer views on any aspect of the SA process which has been carried out to date.

The SA Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the TKNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and key sustainability issues;

- The SA Framework of objectives and appraisal questions against which the TKNP has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the TKNP;
- The likely significant effects of the TKNP in environmental terms;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the TKNP; and
- The next steps for the TKNP and accompanying SA process.

Assessment of alternative approaches for the TKNP

A key requirement of the SEA Directive is to appraise ‘reasonable alternatives’ for the TKNP. To address this requirement a number of alternative approaches have been considered in relation to the scale and form of new development to be taken forward in the Neighbourhood Area for housing and employment provision.

Two sets of options for housing and employment were considered, as follows:

Housing options

- **Housing Option 1:** Delivery of the emerging Cornwall Local Plan’s housing allocation for the Neighbourhood Area through a smaller number of larger sites (of over c.100 dwellings); and
- **Housing Option 2:** Delivery of the emerging Cornwall Local Plan’s housing allocation for the Neighbourhood Area through a larger number of smaller sites (of under c.100 dwellings), which are likely to be dispersed across the plan area.

Employment options

- **Employment Option 1:** Focus new employment uses within the existing employment clusters of Truro city centre, Newham industrial estate, the Port of Truro. Threemilestone industrial estate and Treliske employment area.
- **Employment Option 2:** Promote the development of employment uses across the plan area, utilising a non-locational approach.

Following the appraisal of these options, the Steering Group for the TKNP viewed that there are some clear advantages in taking an approach which 1) limited the size of new housing allocations in Truro and Kenwyn and 2) focussed employment uses at existing employment clusters. The TKNP also promotes a ‘brownfield first’ approach, reflecting the provisions of national policy promoted through the National Planning Policy Framework and the aims of the emerging Cornwall Local Plan.

Appraisal of the current version of the TKNP

Utilising the SA Framework of objectives and appraisal questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SA, the SA process has appraised the 28 policies put forward through the current version of the TKNP. The SA Report has presented the findings of the appraisal through ten sustainability themes, as follows:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Historic environment and landscape
- Land and soil resources
- Water resources and flood risk
- Population and communities
- Health and wellbeing
- Transportation
- Economy and enterprise

The appraisal has concluded that the current version of the TKNP is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in terms of the ‘Population and Communities’, ‘Health and Wellbeing’, ‘Transportation’ and ‘Economy and Enterprise’ sustainability themes. These benefits largely relate to the carefully targeted policy approaches proposed by the TKNP, including related to sustainable transport provision, green infrastructure and open space improvements, enhancements to the public realm and the TKNP’s focus on improving the quality of life of residents in Truro and Kenwyn.

In terms of potential negative effects, there are likely to be inevitable effects on landscape quality from new areas of development in the Neighbourhood Area. To help address this, the current version of the TKNP presents a range of policy interventions which will help limit potential effects and achieve enhancements where possible. This will help limit significant negative effects from new development areas on landscape quality.

Whilst the approach presented by the current version of the TKNP will help initiate a range of beneficial approaches in relation to the ‘Air Quality’, ‘Biodiversity’, ‘Climate Change’, ‘Historic Environment and Landscape’ and ‘Water Resources and Flood Risk’ themes these are not considered as significant positive effects as the delivery of new development through the TKNP will inevitably lead to some adverse effects in relation to these sustainability topics. For these topics therefore, the current version of the TKNP presents a range of policy interventions which will help 1) limit the potential magnitude of adverse effects linked to the delivery of housing and employment allocations in the Neighbourhood Area and 2) secure enhancements.

In relation to the ‘Biodiversity’ topic, whilst a range of beneficial approaches are put forward through the TKNP, there is further potential for the TKNP to set out a more targeted approach to the protection and enhancement of the internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites present in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Area.

Recommendations for the next stages of development for the TKNP

The SA Report presents one main set of recommendations for improving the environmental performance of the TKNP.

In this context it recommends that the TKNP policies for the Port of Truro and the Newham employment area include reference to the need for development proposals at these locations to be sensitive to, and support the nature conservation value of the Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Malpas Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Therefore, the

key elements of these sites which have the potential to be affected by new development at these locations, and the types of avoidance and mitigation measures required, should be highlighted by the TKNP.

More widely, there is potential for the TKNP to more closely acknowledge the presence of the European and nationally designated nature conservation sites located in the vicinity of the Truro and Kenwyn area. These sites include: the Fal and Helford SAC; the Carrine Common SAC; the Malpas Estuary SSSI; the Carrick Heaths SSSI; and the Carrine Common and Penwethers SSSI. This includes through explicitly stating the requirement for new development to avoid and mitigate potential effects on these key sites of biodiversity importance and the need for consultation with the appropriate stakeholders, including Natural England. There is also potential for the TKNP to highlight the broad locations of Truro and Kenwyn located within the SSSI 'Impact Risk Zones' present in the area.

To support this, it is recommended that appropriate policy wordings for the TKNP relating to these elements are developed through discussions with Natural England.

Next steps

Subsequent to the current consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, the TKNP will be updated to reflect comments received. The SA Report will be updated to reflect the changes made to the plan.

The TKNP and the updated SA Report will then be submitted to Cornwall Council for its consideration. In particular Cornwall Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the TKNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Cornwall Local Plan.

If the subsequent Independent Examination is favourable, the TKNP will be subject to a referendum, organised by Cornwall Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Cornwall Council with a request it is adopted. Once adopted, the TKNP will become part of the Development Plan for Truro and Kenwyn.