

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Towards a Strategy for the Development of the Region

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL REPORT:

**A SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT REGIONAL
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

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SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT REGIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Government is committed to achieving a strong spatially balanced economy, a healthy environment and an inclusive society which tackles inequalities relating to health, education and living standards. The promotion of sustainable development is a key objective, along with social and economic cohesion, and the Government is committed to putting the environment at the heart of all its policies. The Draft Regional Strategic Framework¹ acknowledges the importance of developing a strong regional economy, as a basis for meeting the key challenge of providing a high quality of life for all its citizens, and for generating the resources required to protect and enhance the environment.

1.2 The Regional Strategic Framework will affect Northern Ireland's environment, the quality of life of its current and future residents, and equity between those residents. A core guiding principle of the draft Strategy is to move towards a sustainable approach to development based on:-

- social progress meeting the needs of everyone;
- effective protection of the environment;
- prudent use of natural resources; and
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

A sustainability assessment has been carried out on the Draft Regional Strategic Framework to ensure that its effects are as beneficial as possible and that any negative effects are minimised. This document explains:

- what sustainability assessment is;
- how the sustainability assessment for Northern Ireland's Regional Strategic Framework was carried out and how it influenced the Regional Strategic Framework;
- what the proposed Regional Strategic Framework's impacts are; and
- future steps

1.3 The appraisal was prepared by the Regional Planning Division of the Department of the Environment with the assistance of Riki Therivel (CAG Consultants) acting as an external advisor on current best practice for Strategic Environmental Appraisal. Ms Therivel also provided training for the team on the assessment of goals and policies for sustainability. We would like to record our thanks for the assistance, valuable professional advice and encouragement which she was able to

¹ For the convenience of the reader the Draft Regional Strategic Framework will be referred to hereafter simply as the Regional Strategic Framework or the Strategy.

provide, drawing from extensive experience in this field both in the UK and internationally.

2.0 BACKGROUND: THE PROCESS OF SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

2.1 Sustainability assessment is a process that anticipates and evaluates the environmental, social and economic consequences of strategies such as the Regional Strategic Framework. The integration of sustainability assessment throughout the process of developing the Regional Strategic Framework has allowed the Strategy to be modified to make it more sustainable. In particular, integrated sustainability assessment:

- suggests how the Strategy can be improved or alternative ways that its objectives may be achieved;
- allows alternatives - for instance different approaches to locating new development - to be considered and compared at an early stage in decision-making, before the pace of development begins to foreclose options;
- allows sub-components of the Strategy to be examined for compatibility one with another;
- considers environmental, social and economic factors on a par;
- increases confidence that the Strategy's outcome will be relevant and effective; and
- assists in determining priorities for action, balancing responses, and allocating resources.

2.2 Sustainability assessment is part of a world-wide trend towards environmental and social good practice. The United Nation's 1992 'Earth Summit' engendered global acceptance of the need to adopt sustainable development principles. The European Union's Fifth Environmental Action Programme of 1992, 'Towards Sustainability', highlighted the importance of integrating environmental assessment into the strategic planning process in order to achieve a consistent approach to the environment across Europe. A draft European Union Directive on strategic environmental assessment is currently being developed; it would, if implemented, legally require environmental assessments to be carried out for land use (and possibly other) plans.

2.3 A range of UK guidance also promotes the incorporation of sustainability issues into plans and policies. The recent consultation document: 'Opportunities for Change'² presented a vision of sustainable development that includes social progress which recognises the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources, and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. The approach used in the Regional Strategic Framework accords closely with this characterisation of sustainable development. Government guidance documents that advocate environmental/sustainability assessment include:-

² 'Opportunities for Change' – Consultation paper on a revised strategy for sustainable development: Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, February 1998.

- *Policy Appraisal and the Environment, Department of the Environment (GB), 1991;*
- *Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance, Department of the Environment (GB) 1992;*
- *Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A Good Practice Guide, Department of the Environment (GB) 1993; and,*
- *Policy Appraisal and the Environment: Policy Guidance, Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, 1998.*

2.4 Although sustainability assessment is not legally required in Northern Ireland, the Department of Environment committed itself at the outset to a full Strategic Environmental Appraisal of the Draft Regional Strategic Framework. Since 1990, all Government Departments in Northern Ireland have also been required to appraise new policies to ensure that they are socially equitable, under a separate process entitled Policy Appraisal and Fair Treatment (PAFT). The Government continues to attach a high priority to the ‘Targeting of Social Need’ (known as New TSN) based on the premise that greater equality can be achieved by improving the social and economic conditions of the most disadvantaged areas and people. Employment and employability have been identified as strategic priorities for the initiative. Furthermore, the regional health strategy ‘Well into 2000’³ advocates the preparation of health impact statements.

2.5 All three of these forms of appraisal - environment, social equity, and health - have been integrated here in a holistic approach. It is the first integrated sustainability appraisal undertaken in Northern Ireland, and aims to be a model for the sustainability assessment of future plans and policies in the Region.

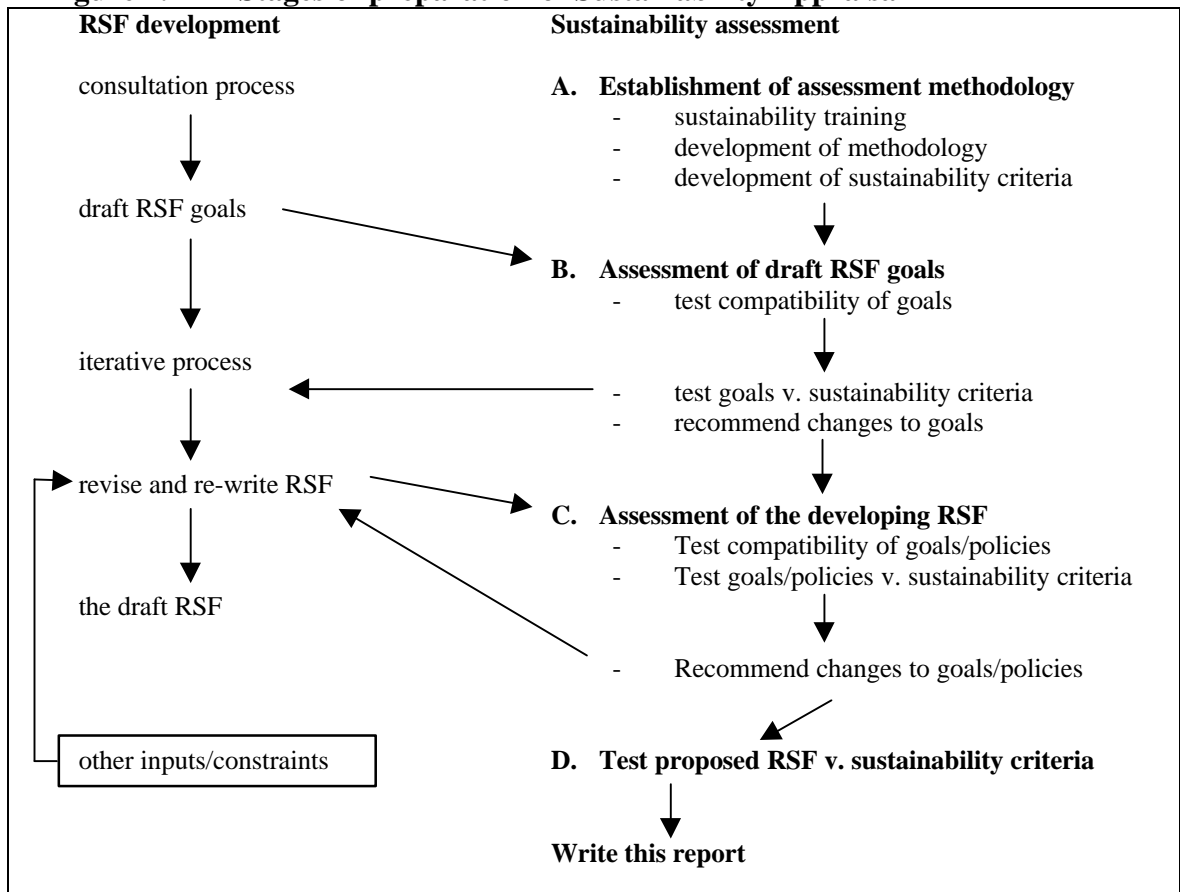
³ ‘Well Into 2000 : Regional Strategy for Health and Wellbeing’, Department of Health and Social Services, 1997.

3.0 APPLICATION OF SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT.

3.1 The stages involved in the sustainability assessment of the Regional Strategic Framework, which took place during 1997 and 1998, are summarised in Figure 1. The stages broadly follow the steps recommended in the Government publication *Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A Good Practice Guide*⁴, which suggests that an assessment should:

- identify and describe aspects of the environment (global, regional and local) which could be affected by the Strategy;
- ensure that the Strategy is in line with existing Government advice and other relevant guidelines. In the case of the Region of Northern Ireland the Regional Strategic Framework itself will provide the overarching framework, or ‘umbrella’, for other plans; and
- appraise sub-components of the Strategy (in this case the goals and policy recommendations) for 1) internal conflicts, and 2) the environmental effects (as identified in the first step).

Figure 1. Stages of preparation of Sustainability Appraisal



⁴ 'Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A Good Practice Guide', Department of the Environment (GB) 1993.

3.2 Key aspects that contributed to the effectiveness of the process are the close integration between the assessment process and the development of the Regional Strategic Framework, and the early start of the assessment process in parallel with the development of the Regional Strategic Framework's goals. Another key aspect was the continuous and iterative nature of the assessment process. Where aspects of the Strategy changed, then the impact of these changes were assessed: thus various components of Step C were carried out several times as the Regional Strategic Framework was developed.

3.3 The outcome of any assessment does not offer an 'ideal' solution, nor is the assessment the sole determinant for development of a regional Strategy. Sustainability assessment can offer insight into the environmental, social and economic consequences of a given Strategy, identify the scale and nature of appropriate mitigation measures, and suggest issues to be considered at the next point of review, but these findings need to be balanced out against the other inputs and constraints. In the context of the Regional Strategic Framework, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Strategy, the challenges of dealing with Northern Ireland's deeply divided society, relatively high unemployment, perceived need to improve the quality of the "hard" infrastructure, virtually sole dependence on a roads-based transport system, perceived inequity between rural and urban dwellers, and peoples' aspirations for improved quality of life (normally equated with increased personal mobility and affluence) all influenced the drafting of the Regional Strategic Framework and led to some policies for development being included in the proposed strategy, which may not be sustainable in the long term. To some extent, the selection of policies reflects the inherited, predominantly rural pattern of settlement, the social and economic challenges facing the Region emerging from 30 years of "troubles", and what might realistically be achieved particularly in the short to medium term. It will be important, therefore, to monitor and review policy impacts throughout the period to 2025 and to identify modifications which may be necessary to enhance the sustainability of the Strategic Framework to the benefit of future generations.

A. Establishment of the assessment methodology

3.4 Training of Department of the Environment staff on the latest sustainability techniques, as well as ongoing advice and comments on the assessment were provided. Staff from the Department carried out most of the assessment.

3.5 The first formal stage of the assessment thus involved identifying criteria for testing whether the emerging Regional Strategic Framework policies are sustainable or not. There is no clear Government guidance on what indicators are appropriate for sustainability appraisal at a regional level. Most assessments carried out to date have been limited to environmental issues. The sustainability indicators developed to appraise the regional planning guidance for the South East

and North East of England were used as a starting point for those for Northern Ireland, but were further refined, in part to meet the circumstances pertaining in Northern Ireland. The criteria were grouped into five categories, which were felt to reflect the different components of sustainability and which carried equal weight. There were environment, quality of life, social equity, futurity and participation.

3.6 The main concerns of PAFT were incorporated into the section on social equity. The social equity questions are phrased slightly differently from the other questions: whereas a ‘good’ outcome for the other questions involves enhancement of the environment, a ‘good’ PAFT outcome involves having no different effects for different groups of the populations. Policies which aim to enhance conditions for groups that have traditionally been underprivileged, are tackled in the Quality of Life assessment.

3.7 The selected sustainability categories and criteria were:

Environment

Theme	Assessment criteria: Ask "Does the Strategy..."
Biodiversity	threaten or enhance natural habitats or wildlife?
Landscape and countryside	threaten or enhance areas of open land?
Global warming and air pollution	help to reduce global warming? encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewables? contribute to air pollution?
Management of the water environment	reduce the need for water and/or promote reuse?
Mineral resources	reduce the need for minerals and/or increase recycling?
Waste disposal	reduce waste production and/or increasing recycling?
Energy efficient transport modes	encourage a reduction in travel? promote a shift from private cars to public transport, cycling and walking? promote alternative fuel technology?
Land and materials	encourage the efficient use of land and materials? minimise the use of greenfield land?
Urban environmental quality	improve the quality of the urban environment? enhance the role of town centres? encourage "sustainable compactness" (multifunctional urban communities which are not subject to town cramming)?

Quality of life

Theme	Assessment criteria: "Does the Strategy..."
Current needs	provide for the needs of current generations?
Unemployment/ poverty	provide access to employment? reduce deprivation and poverty?
Education	provide (life-long) education or training opportunities?
Crime	improve safety and/or tackle the causes of crime?
Housing conditions	improve the housing conditions of households?
Public health	improve health and living conditions?

Social Equity

Theme	Assessment criteria: "Does the Strategy have different effects on..."
Religion/politics	people of different religious beliefs or political opinions?
Gender	men and women?
Marital status	married and unmarried people/
Dependants	people with or without dependants?
Ethnic groups	people of different ethnic groups?
Disabilities	people with or without a disability?
Ages	people of different ages?
Sexual orientation	people of differing sexual orientation?

Futurity

Theme	Assessment criteria: "Does the Strategy..."
Future needs	provide for the needs of future generations?
Future choices	maintain or increase the choices available to future generations to meet their needs? apply the precautionary principle?
Future impacts	have significant impacts on the environmental quality/capacity or social equity of future generations?

Participation

Theme	Assessment criteria: "Does the Strategy..."
Review	allow for future amendment?
Public input	promote consultation with statutory and non-statutory expert bodies?
Partnerships	encourage the development of "sustainable" partnerships?

3.8 In the course of developing the Regional Strategic Framework, the current baseline, trends and conflicts were described, taking into account views expressed through public consultation, and are set out in the form of a section entitled 'Forces Driving Change' (Chapter 2 of the Regional Strategic Framework) supplemented by the Regional Baseline Report. The setting of targets for sustainability components (e.g. 'levels' of biodiversity to be achieved by 2025) was considered to require further research in the light of emerging guidance at the national level. Similarly the link to sustainability indicators for Northern Ireland is a matter for further consideration after the Regional Strategic Framework is finalised.

B. Appraisal of Regional Strategic Framework goals

3.9 Following the publication of a discussion paper in November 1997 to assist the consultation process and the preparation of the Regional Strategic Framework, and the subsequent receipt of comments from a wide range of viewpoints, the Department prepared a set of goals which sought to achieve the aspirations expressed and also meet the demands of Government policy. This was regarded as the starting point for the preparation of a Regional Strategic Framework;

3.10 In line with UK guidance, the goals were appraised in two ways:

- **Compatibility assessment:** Each goal was tested against every other goal in a 'compatibility matrix' to see whether they pulled in the same direction or not.
- **Sustainability impact assessment:** Each goal was also tested against the sustainability criteria developed in Step A, again in a matrix format. Filling in the matrix required the appraisers to ask, for each goal:
 - What impacts would the goal have on the sustainability theme?
 - If the goal is likely to have negative impacts, how could it be changed to reduce these impacts?
 - How could the goal be changed to enhance any positive impacts? This question was felt to be particularly applicable in the context of social equity where some groups may need special targeting for positive action.

3.11 An initial assessment – a compatibility and sustainability impact - was carried out by the expert external Adviser in discussion with the Department. The assessment

highlighted a lack of sustainability in some of the goals, as well as duplication between the goals. It also highlighted the need for:

- greater emphasis on areas of social need and vulnerable sections of the community, including more focus on providing housing and services for all sectors of the community;
- a move away from an emphasis on improving the transport infrastructure, and towards a greater balance with reducing the need to travel;
- less focus on development of particular sectors of the economy and more on creating a wide range of employment opportunities;
- a move away from an emphasis on the promotional aspects of tourism (e.g. business, water-based), and towards a spatial development strategy supporting sustainable tourism.

Subsequent discussions, both internally and with the external Adviser, further refined these goals and provided a basis for writing detailed policy recommendations.

C. Assessment of the developing Regional Strategic Framework

- 3.12** The proposed content of the Regional Strategic Framework was continuously appraised as it was developed, using compatibility and sustainability impact assessment.

The **compatibility appraisals** showed that most of the new goals/policies, expressed in the Strategic Planning Guidelines (SPGs), were broadly compatible with each other, and they became increasingly compatible as the Strategy was worked up. The new emphasis on sustaining and supporting the existing rural community, the more balanced approach to transport, and the less sector-specific emphasis of the economic policies particularly helped to achieve a more balanced, internally compatible Strategy.

The main conclusions included:

- some of the goals/policies were not phrased clearly or seemed to duplicate each other;
- there was potential conflict between some goals/policies for economic development and for environmental protection;
- there was potential conflict between goals/policies for sustainable tourism and expansion of the tourism infrastructure; and
- there was potential conflict between goals/policies for tourism, and for health and environment.

- 3.13** The **sustainability impact assessment** showed that many of the Strategy's sustainable impacts were strongly positive, particularly in terms of quality of life (reducing unemployment and poverty, improving housing conditions and public health) and social equity (positive effects for older people, people with

dependants, and people with disabilities). Particularly positive SPG s include those on improving transregional co-operation, restructuring the Belfast Metropolitan Area, and making Derry/Londonderry the regional City for the North-West.

- 3.14** It showed that subsequent versions of the Strategy maintained a stance of continuity and steady, measured and more sustainable progress, emphasising the need to move on from "the troubles" to the development of a more integrated and harmonious society, urban-rural equity (making urban areas more attractive but not discouraging or channelling rural in-migration), the desire to promote tourism, and the upgrading of Northern Ireland's infrastructure and services in an equitable (rural-urban) manner. In the early stages the Regional Strategic Framework was felt not to have a sufficiently focused message regarding land use and development, although this improved over time as the emerging Spatial Development Strategy increasingly endeavoured to integrate land use, transport, environmental factors and other policy considerations.
- 3.15** Overall the Strategy sought to provide an integrated approach in which the negative environmental aspects arising from social and economic advancement are minimised as much as possible, e.g. rural growth despite impacts on air quality, tranquillity etc., and improvements to infrastructure without comprehensive policies to safeguard the environment from the impacts of that infrastructure. The assessment highlighted the need to promote some core environmental goals, for instance reducing need to travel, improving the balance between concentration and dispersal of development, and focusing on brownfield and other urban sites with development potential.
- 3.16** In the early stages, the Strategy was felt to have few implications on fair treatment as defined by PAFT. However it did seem to have differential and potentially positive impacts on 1) the unemployed, in terms of job creation, training and education etc., and 2) rural v. urban dwellers, with some policies benefiting rural more than urban dwellers and vice-versa.
- 3.17** The assessment of the developing Strategy recognised the challenge and potential benefits emerging from the need to support established rural communities which are undergoing change and diversification and at the same time to foster sensitive rural development and a more sustainable use of resources. A major issue arising from the sustainability assessment concerned the potential accumulative environmental impacts arising from the level of future development in rural areas. The Strategy was vague regarding what is meant by 'rural', which in turn affected the interpretation of many policies, for instance on the provision of services in rural areas, the rural landscape, and economic development in rural areas. For example, the assessment process highlighted the impact of unrestricted rural development on traffic growth. Even with considerably improved rural bus services, it was felt that rural traffic would significantly increase under the draft

Strategy, although the extent of this growth would depend on the form of rural development.

- 3.18** Current rural development trends in some areas, and particularly emanating from urban areas, were also felt to lead to a pattern of service and infrastructure provision which is neither environment-friendly nor cost-efficient. Dependence on septic tanks for sewage treatment may well have worse impacts on water quality than use of public sewerage infrastructure. Additional electricity and telephone lines would need to be provided to dispersed locations, with greater visual impacts and potentially at greater cost. Gas provision would be difficult with implications in terms of the cost of energy for all energy users in Northern Ireland, and for the environment in that gas is a more environmentally friendly option than electricity, coal and peat. More roads would probably need to be built or substantially improved to handle greater numbers of vehicles, pressures may possibly be generated to provide education, health and other services in areas where a population threshold consistent with good health and education standards may not be obtainable. This could in turn generate more car dependence, again with implications on land use, biodiversity, and the cost of provision.
- 3.19** The development of a balanced settlement strategy was felt to offer people a broad choice of locations for development consistent with seeking to reduce and minimise environment impacts whilst keeping the urban centres vital and sustaining the rural community including a living and working countryside.
- 3.20** In response to the findings of the sustainability assessment and other inputs, the Regional Strategic Framework was changed over time as follows:
- The Regional Strategic Framework policies became more clearly expressed, with more emphasis on benefits. This included a shift in emphasis from protecting the best to protecting and valuing the distinctiveness of Northern Ireland's natural and built heritage and promoting proper stewardship of all the Region's environmental resources. The need for positive management of the environment was also increasingly stressed.
 - It was recognised that transport need - both in urban and rural areas - cannot be satisfied by always constructing new road infrastructure, but requires a new and integrated approach which extends travel choice and changes travel culture over time. Land use-transport integration was increasingly stressed, with a shift of emphasis from mobility and road-based transport to accessibility and public transport. More emphasis was also put on creating a Strategic Transport Network in urban as well as rural areas, recognising the dynamic potential of the transport network in urban as well as rural areas, recognising the dynamic potential of transport corridors, urban hubs, and gateways. Mixed use developments within or on the edge of towns were increasingly promoted to optimise the benefits of developing around transport modes in these corridors.

- The Strategy focused increasingly on promoting the interdependence of urban and rural settlement patterns, on acknowledging the roles of different scales of development, and maintaining good interdependent centres whilst trying to shift away from excessive dispersal.
- For rural areas, it increasingly emphasised regeneration and balanced communities rather than just housing.
- For urban areas, it increased housing targets within existing built-up areas including brownfield sites, with more emphasis on derelict land and reuse of urban areas. More emphasis was placed on the need to preserve and manage existing urban areas, villages, and buildings, thus reducing dependence on greenfield development.
- The Regional Strategic Framework increasingly moved to promoting economic growth in the most suitable locations providing better integration with transport and a more sustainable approach to the use of environmental resources. In the tourism sector, it moved from promoting tourism generally to promoting it in distinctive resorts, based around larger settlements that can provide a better focus for tourism investment, subject to environmental safeguards.
- Finally, the Regional Strategic Framework became increasingly balanced in terms of the spread of development across the Region.

D. Testing the Regional Strategic Framework against the sustainability criteria

3.21 The final stage in the sustainability assessment was to test the draft Regional Strategic Framework against the sustainability criteria identified in Step A, to give an indication of the likely main impacts. This test used a matrix to record the considered impacts for each Strategic Planning Guideline. Copies of the matrices can be found in Appendix A. The conclusions of this exercise are recorded in the next Section.

4.0 APPRAISAL OF THE DRAFT REGIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

4.1 The sustainability appraisal of the proposed Strategic Planning Guidelines (SPGs) of the Regional Strategic Framework was carried out by the Project Team and recorded on an individual matrix for each of the 30 Strategic Planning Guidelines. The criteria employed to determine sustainability are those previously listed at paragraph 3.7.

The main conclusions from this appraisal were as follows:

- The Strategic Planning Guidelines (SPG s) almost uniformly have positive impacts on quality of life, reflecting the Strategy's overarching aim of providing a high quality of life for all the citizens of the Region;
- A high degree of cross-referencing between SPG s has been achieved;
- There are a number of important policies where the impact of the sustainability objectives of the Regional Strategic Framework will depend on how and when they are implemented by the public and private sectors and indeed the whole community and how they are worked out in operational policies including through Planning Policy Guidance or Development Plans;
- Most of the SPG s impacts are positive. SPG s that are mostly positive over the entire range of sustainability criteria include those on community relations (3), changing the regional travel culture (14), Northern Ireland's world wide image (21), prudent resource use (28) and health (29-30);
- Inevitably, any development on greenfield sites will have a negative impact on the environment, in particular on biodiversity, landscape and countryside, air pollution, land and materials, and a range of other environmental factors. This accounts for the negative impacts identified for the SPG s on European /trans regional links (1&2), transport, (12 &13), economic / rural development (15-19) and tourism (21-24). In all these cases it was felt that the economic and social benefits would outweigh adverse environmental impacts. The assessment highlighted the need for careful environmental appraisal at the implementation stage and the use of mitigating measures;
- Overall, the Strategy seeks to provide an integrated approach in which negative environmental impacts arising from social and economic advancement are minimised as much as possible. Potential negative impacts will need detailed appraisal at the local level and particularly the implementation stage. This includes careful site selection, environmental impact assessment for individual projects, and specific mitigation measures. the use of 'shadow projects' - environmentally beneficial projects that neutralise the negative effects of another project - should be considered, where appropriate. Environmental enhancements should, if possible, be the ultimate goal of any project;
- Most SPG s had no differential impacts on the PAFT groups highlighted.

- A number of SPGs had a differential impact in the form of better provision for TSN groups that are currently disadvantaged, notably people with restricted access to transportation / services;
- The sustainability assessment suggests that the Regional Strategic Framework overall provides a balanced approach to people living in the east v west of the Region, in rural and urban areas, and on disadvantaged areas. This should contribute to fostering a more cohesive society in the Region.
- The impact of transportation policies measured against sustainable criteria is very important. A heavy reliance on a mainly road based solution implies a concerted complementary effort to neutralise the inevitable adverse environmental impact and this should be reflected in transport investment priorities. The Regional Strategic Framework lays emphasis on:
 - provision that minimises additional demand for travel by car, meeting needs on a resource efficient way, minimising air pollution and global warming potential;
 - investment in existing Strategic Network, which should meet current and future needs in a resource efficient way;
 - a programme of transport integration measures designed to make the regional towns more attractive and better functioning places to live and work and, particularly in the Belfast City Region, to help provide relatively self-contained counter magnets to the Belfast Metropolitan Area.
- Impacts on the futurity were generally positive offering a range of quality of life choices, such as making city and town living more attractive choices(4), building urban communities for the future (6), sustaining a living and working countryside (9), the Belfast Metropolitan Area (10), and develop an integrated Regional Strategic Transport Network (12), with upgraded public transport elements.
- Many of the impacts on participation were not possible to predict given the present uncertainties regarding the devolution of powers to the Assembly. The Assembly provides the opportunity to promote more democratic input at the regional level. In addition, there is already a highly developed network of community organisations and specific purpose partnerships. These have contributed effectively in recent years augmenting the contribution arising from other measures such as the enhanced powers given to District Councils to promote economic development.

5.0 FUTURE STEPS.

- 5.1** As shown above, the sustainability assessment has already influenced the shape and content of the Regional Strategic Framework, making it more environmentally friendly and sustainable, clearer, and more internally consistent. The Regional Strategic Framework will provide a framework for the development of future plans and projects, many of which will themselves be subject to sustainability assessment. Techniques for such assessment are continuously evolving. However this assessment's emphasis on sustainability (not just environmental) issues, integration of the appraisal process with the development of the Strategy, and focus on improving the Strategy (rather than giving a snapshot of its impacts) should provide a useful model for future similar assessments. However, clearly the Regional Strategic Framework relies on developers coming forward with sustainable proposals, on an economic system that supports such proposals, and on the commitment of the whole community to more sustainable outcomes. The sustainability assessment has also highlighted the value of building sustainability factors into the decision making process relating to public expenditure infrastructure.
- 5.2** In relation to implementation and monitoring, ideally each goal should be accompanied by targets for success (for instance for the provision of important infrastructure, or the use of private cars for commuting). Each target would be linked to a form of measurement which indicates the progress towards achieving the goal or objective. In this way it should be possible to measure progress in achieving the overall aims of the strategy, and to determine which factors are preventing the achievement of success. A set of nationally agreed sustainability indicators are expected to be available early in 1999. As these are introduced, and as performance data begins to become available, quantitative assessment of progress will be a valuable additional monitoring tool for the Regional Strategic Framework.
- 5.3** In addition, monitoring and review may need to be supplemented by further studies to provide additional information which would assist the future evaluation of urban and rural development trends in relation to sustainability, and how future plans and policies should evolve in the light of international best practice.

The Role of Sustainability Appraisal in Implementation and Monitoring

- 5.5** The sustainability appraisal has been used to develop the Regional Strategic Framework as a whole, and individual Strategic Planning Guidelines within it, and to test them against sustainability criteria. Ideally the final Regional Strategic Framework emerging from the Public Examination process, and consideration by the Assembly, should then be appraised in relation to sustainability.
- 5.6** The use of sustainability assessment also has an important role in the immediate future, as the final Regional Strategic Framework is interpreted and made operational through local plans and other policies and programmes. The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland, will aim to ensure that the Regional Strategic Framework is reflected in these plans and followed through into their proposals and programmes. As an important step in that process, consistency with the Regional Strategic Framework could be demonstrated if local plans were prepared and tested using sustainability assessments similar to the one outlined in this document.
- 5.7** It is envisaged that the progress of the Regional Strategic Framework's implementation will be monitored using key sustainability indicators. The sustainability assessment approach that has been developed to structure the Regional Strategic Framework will continue to guide the monitoring process. It will be refined and possibly modified in the light of experience and ongoing research and debate about how sustainable development can be achieved. The evolving sustainability indicators and targets for Northern Ireland will play a role in implementing and monitoring the Regional Strategic Framework. In this way the appraisal framework will remain 'active' and influential as progress on the Regional Strategic Framework is periodically checked and the need for policy review is considered.

APPENDIX

Sustainability Analysis Matrices – Strategic Planning Guidelines

Key to the assessment of direct effects:

X	Negative impact
-	No relationship
?	Relationship uncertain
✓	Positive

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 1

To strengthen and extend European and world-wide linkages

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Likely negative effect of increased travel leading to greater use of fuel and air pollution.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	Adding environmental pressures around ports and airports and along main transport corridors.
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	-	Potential change to natural assets.
	Land and materials	-	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Increased linkages may have adverse effect on existing business interests e.g. small local retailers, but could provide additional employment opportunities.
	Unemployment/poverty	?	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Positive impact providing issues of accessibility are addressed by other SPGs e.g. disability.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Given the inevitable social and economic global changes this policy helps meet future needs. Future impact less certain due to increased competitive pressure.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Not explicitly promoted but potential is present.
	Public input	X	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	X	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 2

To increase links with neighbouring Regions and capitalise on trans-regional development opportunities

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Environment will be affected in a negative way but recognition of co-operation in dealing with adverse effects will help to offset some of the negative impacts.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Indirectly supports economic growth, meeting current needs and reducing unemployment.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Positive impact providing issues of accessibility are addressed by other SPGs e.g. disability.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Impact may be greater in the transport corridor but this may not necessarily be significant.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	Appears to be scope for review, public input and Partnerships. Only clear positive effect is in the area of partnerships.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No 3

To foster development which contributes to community relations, recognises cultural diversity, and reduces socio-economic differentials

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	-	Positive impact reinforced where neutral sites are accessible by public transport and by all sections of the community.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	Potential environmental and social benefits from removal of community interfaces.
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Allows integration where desired while recognising cultural differences. Does not force integration. Positive for housing and health because of link to regeneration.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Has a more positive effect on people with restricted mobility.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	Promotes targeting areas of social and economic disadvantage.
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	-	Review not explicit but partnerships offer opportunity for progressive development.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 4

To set Regional Housing Targets 2010

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	?	Provides regional housing control guidance to enable improved management of resources.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	Reduces greenfield consumption. Encourages regeneration of urban areas, and renaissance of urban living. Encourages use of public transport.
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	Strategic Greenbelt reduces land take and safeguards areas of high amenity.
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Encourages re-use of urban land and reduces dereliction.
	Unemployment/poverty	?	
	Education	-	Benefits across the board since development within urban areas relieves pressure elsewhere and enables better use of existing resources.
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Strategic Greenbelt will limit some choices but balanced model offers a range of quality of life choices.
	Future choices	X	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Public input not explicit.
	Public input	?	Provides direction for Area Plan process.
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	-	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 5

To provide housing choice to meet community needs

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	-	
	Landscape & countryside	-	
	Global warming, air pollution	-	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	-	
	Energy efficient transport	-	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Meets basic human need and addresses particular specialised needs.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	More positive for disadvantaged groups and groups with special needs.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Improves housing mix and choice.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	Means of implementation not specified.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 6

To build local communities for the future in existing urban areas

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	See SPG4
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	Policy should reduce pressure on countryside and biodiversity. However nature conservation sites in urban areas should be protected.
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	?	Reuse of selected existing buildings contributes to community stability and identity and is resource efficient.
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Establishes guidelines for the creation of safe, complete and balanced communities.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	✓	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Local community guidelines promote identification of distinct places of public assembly, community interaction and focal points with enhanced proximity and accessibility.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Strategic Greenbelt will limit some choices but balanced model offers a range of quality of life choices.
	Future choices	X	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Allows for review / amendment in 2010.
	Public input	?	Local community development guidelines will promote community participation in the planning process.
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 7

To strengthen the network of Regional Towns as major and key service centres for their urban and rural communities

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	?	Identifies towns as a major focus for development and therefore restricts rural sprawl. Impact of developing tourism and facilitating the provision of services in distinctive sub-regions may have a negative effect and will require mitigation to retain quality.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Access to services improved for both urban and rural communities.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Provides balance across the Region. A focus on key centres supports an equal distribution of quality services. Elderly rural dwellers will require support to access health and personal social services.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Accepts and supports choice of people to live in the rural area. Likely to be beneficial to social equity but will require mitigating measures to offset environmental impact.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	-	Participation is not explicit in any of this. Important to build partnerships between urban and rural.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 8

To underpin the role of local rural centres

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	May take some pressure off the open countryside and could relieve development pressure around the larger urban centres. Policy aims to reduce the long distance car commuting trips - but will require integration with other transport initiatives. Consolidation of existing settlements rather than substantial growth in order to minimise increase in car travel.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	?	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Make better use of existing local services.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	✓	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Could be positive for social equity yet have adverse environmental consequences.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Allows for review/amendment in 2010. Local community development guidelines will promote community participation in the planning process. Fosters rural community projects.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 9

To sustain a living and working countryside

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Diversification and strengthening the rural economy could threaten the rural environment if mitigation measures are weak.
	Landscape & countryside	?	
	Global warming, air pollution	-	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	Seems to support conservation and re-use.
	Mineral resources	-	Energy and rural transport issues require to be addressed. (See SPG 13.)
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Supports established rural communities through sensitive development and sustainable use of resources.
	Unemployment/poverty	?	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	?	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Generally positive; some restriction of choice for townspeople wishing to move into countryside (where development pressure is strong). Provides choices other than agriculture.
	Future choices	?	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Allows for review/amendment in 2010.
	Public input	✓	Local community development guidelines will promote community participation in the planning process.
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	Fosters rural community projects.

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 10

To create a thriving Metropolitan Area based on Belfast

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Metropolitan growth could have adverse effects and SPG 10 does not seem to specifically stress “enhancing the natural environment” - other than reference to Greenways.etc. General thrust is of development within existing urban footprint but a major greenfield extension is suggested for Lisburn. This needs mitigating principles such as mixed land uses, integrated public transport, the consideration of use of best and most versatile agricultural land to ensure that development is sustainable and environmentally acceptable. Mixed land use proposals linked to integrated public transport will have public health benefits.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	X	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Builds on regeneration and Targeting Social Needs initiatives. Town centre regeneration measures to be used in all town centres within Belfast Metropolitan Area.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	?	Strategic employment locations may cause challenges - their locations need links to transport policies which aim to provide “access for all”.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Offers wide range of choice.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	X	Participation through the City Vision process and the preparation of the Belfast Metropolitan Area plan.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 11

To strengthen the role of Derry/Londonderry as the regional City and hub for the North- West

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Port / Airport growth will encourage investment in industry. Development close to Lough Foyle would be environmentally damaging and mitigation measures must be considered.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	?	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Positive generally.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	?	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Commitment to public transport will be important to maintain equitable access to employment.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	X	Draft Area Plan contains proposals to 2011. Growth beyond that point should consider maintaining and protecting strategic landscape setting.
	Future choices	?	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	No explicit promotion of participation by this policy.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 12

To Develop a Regional Strategic Transport Network based on key transport corridors

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Continuation of a largely road based Regional Transport Network leading to:- Adverse impact on landscape, biodiversity, increasing air and water pollution, use of mineral resources, land and materials. No 'strong' encouragement to energy efficient transport modes, but provides improved accessibility, industry and commerce, Meets current needs and improvement in health due to minimising pollution.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	X	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Policy includes increased emphasis on public transport with multi-modal interchange facilities. More sustainable than building new roads.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	X	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Strengthens social cohesion
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Improving road based Regional Strategic Transport Network offers more choice for future generations.
	Future choices	X	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	✓	
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	-	
	Partnerships	-	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 13

To extend travel choices for all sections of the community by enhancing public transport

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Reducing private car travel reduces pollution. Discourages traffic growth within urban areas. Contributes to improving urban environmental quality. Reuse of abandoned trackbeds could cause loss of biodiversity - requires investigation. Integrated transport offers potential for more energy efficient transport.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Improves health by reducing pollution
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Enhances access to employment and education opportunities. Restrained car use could reduce air pollution and number of road accidents especially in housing areas.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Will provide enhanced transport choice.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	-	Regional transport plan will offer greater opportunity for public participation.
	Public input	-	
	Local determination	-	
	Partnerships	-	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 14

To change the regional travel culture and contribute to healthier lifestyles

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	?	Slightly positive long-term effect on biodiversity due to reduced pollution. Long-term reduction on emissions.. Should lead to more efficient use of land and materials in long-term. Significant medium and long-term benefits for energy efficient transport and urban environmental quality. Should reduce the use of fossil fuels.
	Landscape & countryside	?	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Benefits for unemployment/poverty will be in the long-term. Positive effect on road safety. Significant medium and long-term public health benefits from improved environmental conditions and access to healthcare.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	-	Needs of the disabled are a significant feature
	Gender	-	
	Married/unmarried	-	
	Dependants	-	
	Ethnic groups	-	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	-	
	Sexual orientation	-	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Will allow for choice in future. Long-term effect on environmental quality.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	-	Offers opportunity for community involvement in traffic calming measures such as home zones.
	Public input	-	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	-	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 15

To develop the Belfast Metropolitan Area, Derry/Londonderry, Craigavon and the Regional Towns as the main hubs for employment and community services

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Any development but especially edge of town sites, has the potential to adversely affect biodiversity Land and materials - concentration should encourage degree of efficiency. Provision of generous and continuous supply of urban land for employment and accommodation will have a negative effect and requires mitigation.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	?	
	Energy efficient transport	?	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Improved job opportunities should enhance quality of life.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	?	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Reference to new Targeting Social Need will assist in addressing community imbalances
	Gender	-	
	Married/unmarried	-	
	Dependants	-	
	Ethnic groups	-	
	Disabilities	-	
	Ages	-	
	Sexual orientation	-	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Provides for 'perceived' future needs and does appear to open up choice to future generations. No guarantee of impacting on environmental quality.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Will depend on implementation of the Regional Strategic Framework through Plans and Projects. Degree of success will depend on achieving balance as set out in regional targets.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 16

To exploit the economic development potential of the key transport corridors

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Edge of town areas have the potential for the consumption of greenfields.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	X	
	Mineral resources	X	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	?	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Likely to provide increased opportunity and access to employment.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	Offers more efficient/sustainable transport solutions.
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	?	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Increased employment sites will provide the opportunity for Targeting Social Need /equitable access to employment providing they are integrated to sustainable public transport.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Is likely to have significant impact on social equity but not necessarily on environmental quality.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 17

To promote the regional gateways as economic development opportunities

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Concentration of economic development in some sensitive areas/landscapes. However, may also provide scope for recycling of land.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	?	
	Energy efficient transport	?	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Proximity to major water bodies/catchments needs careful consideration/control. Increased employment opportunities.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	-	Increased employment opportunity may lead to reduced deprivation/poverty and provide better access to such opportunities.
	Gender	-	
	Married/unmarried	-	
	Dependants	-	
	Ethnic groups	-	
	Disabilities	-	
	Ages	-	
	Sexual orientation	-	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	May cater for future needs and possibly provide additional choice in employment.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 18

To promote a strong mixed use rural economy

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Potential to have adverse effect on biodiversity in rural areas. Adverse effect on landscape and countryside due to difficulty in controlling scale, nature and potential for expansion of some areas. Increase of vehicle travel to these dispersed enterprises may increase air pollution. Will cause increase in use of land. May encourage use of existing buildings.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	
	Mineral resources	X	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Possible impact on public health due to increase in air and water pollution. Positive impact on areas of rural disadvantage.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Area Based Strategies and community regeneration offer wide scope for participation.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Provides for short-term economic needs of rural population and gives them choices apart from agriculture.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	X	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 19

To undertake or, where appropriate, facilitate a programme of infrastructure improvements essential to business needs

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	New infrastructure and improvements will have a negative effect on biodiversity and landscape/countryside.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	The policy promoting a wider choice of energy supplies will offset the impact on global warming, etc. to a degree.
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Infrastructure improvements will increase competitiveness therefore reducing employment and poverty.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	No differential impact.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Future impacts - has some likely positive and negative effects, i.e. choices of renewable energy (positive) and improving existing transport network (negative).
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 20

To improve employability through lifelong learning and personal development

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	-	Few environmental disbenefits.
	Landscape & countryside	-	
	Global warming, air pollution	-	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	-	
	Energy efficient transport	-	
	Urban environmental quality	-	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Offers scope for quality of life improvement.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	✓	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Enhances educational opportunity for all sectors and targets disadvantaged areas.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Provides opportunity to make better choices for lifestyles.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 21

To establish a world-wide Image based on positive images of progress, and inviting and exciting places to visit

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	?	Overall a very positive policy - danger of losing distinctiveness by excessive change. Significant potential for employment and wealth creation across all parts of the Region.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	Balance between infrastructure and high quality development needs to be carefully monitored and managed.
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	?	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Has the potential to be strongly positive.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	-	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Potential to be very positive.
	Gender	-	
	Married/unmarried	-	
	Dependants	-	
	Ethnic groups	-	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	-	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Potentially positive - needs careful handling to minimise impact on the environment.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	Offers scope for partnership.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 22

To protect and enhance opportunities to capitalise on the Region's tourism magnets and niche market potential, in order to strengthen the regional 'pull' and spread benefits throughout Northern Ireland

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Possible conflict between protecting the natural character and biodiversity of the countryside and promoting the various activities outlined.
	Landscape & countryside	?	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	X	
	Mineral resources	X	
	Waste disposal	?	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	X	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Offers well distributed opportunities for economic development and jobs for a wide range of people.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	?	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Offers well distributed opportunities for economic development and jobs for a wide range of people.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Will depend on the extent to which partnerships are formed.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 23

To identify locational opportunities for the private sector to develop 'destination resorts' throughout Northern Ireland based on distinctive tourism themes

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Focusing attention on a selected range of destination resorts has benefits for sustainable public transport and environment / biodiversity options.
	Landscape & countryside	X	
	Global warming, air pollution	X	
	Mgmt of water environment	?	Success will depend on achieving a balance between development of the destination resorts and retaining their distinctiveness and environmental settings.
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	X	
	Land and materials	?	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quaity	Current needs	✓	Offers scope for quality of life improvement.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	Well distributed opportunities.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Focusing tourist development will offer better protection of our natural assets and allow change to be sensitively managed.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	?	Scope for partnership.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 24

To enhance the potential for City tourism in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	X	Potentially very positive - sustainable approach to tourism and a focus on destinations accessible by public transport.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	?	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	X	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	?	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Strongly complements City Vision process.
	Unemployment/poverty	✓	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	?	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	?	
	Future choices	?	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 25

To conserve our natural heritage and promote a wise use of natural resources

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Guideline is strongly positive in relation to landscape, biodiversity and heritage.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	-	
	Mgmt of water environment	-	
	Mineral resources	-	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	-	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	
	Unemployment/poverty	-	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	?	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Protects environment, although may restrict certain development.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Offers opportunity through development plan process.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	-	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 26

To cherish, protect and present to the world the Region's rich inheritance of fine monuments, buildings and other heritage resources and ensure a sustainable approach to their use

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Strongly positive.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	✓	
	Waste disposal	-	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	-	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Protecting and respecting is strongly positive. Tangible evidence of community values, possibly offering new economic opportunities.
	Unemployment/poverty	-	
	Education	✓	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	-	
	Public health	-	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	-
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	-
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Offers new opportunities for community based schemes.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 27

To achieve the highest standards of air and water quality and make Northern Ireland widely known for an outstanding clean environment

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	?	Positive framework for control and improvement.
	Landscape & countryside	?	
	Global warming, air pollution	?	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	✓	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	-	
	Energy efficient transport	?	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Likely to meet current needs and to address many of the environmental problems.
	Unemployment/poverty	-	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	No differential impact implications.
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	?	Has the potential to meet future needs by adopting high standards..
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Millennium 'clean up' offers opportunity for public involvement. Success will depend on the way individual lifestyles change to be more sustainable.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 28

To promote more prudent use of energy and resources

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Strongly positive. Increased use of gas as primary energy source will make contribution to reducing global warming.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	Reduction of waste to landfill will have positive environmental impact.
	Mineral resources	✓	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Strongly positive. Cleaner fuels will have public health benefits.
	Unemployment/poverty	?	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	?	Diversification of energy sources is positive. Increase in non-renewable sources is particularly sustainable.
	Future choices	?	
	Future impacts	?	
Participation	Review	?	Has the potential for significant public involvement. The measure of success for this guideline will depend on the degree and pace by which individual lifestyles will be changed to become more sustainable.
	Public input	✓	
	Local determination	✓	
	Partnerships	✓	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 29

To create healthier living environments

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Strongly positive. Will maintain and enhance quality of air, soil and water.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	✓	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Will improve quality of environment.
	Unemployment/poverty	?	
	Education	?	
	Crime	?	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	✓	
	Gender	✓	
	Married/unmarried	✓	
	Dependants	✓	
	Ethnic groups	✓	
	Disabilities	✓	
	Ages	✓	
	Sexual orientation	✓	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Offers enhanced quality for the future.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Offers opportunity through development plan process.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	

Strategic Planning Guideline No. 30

To support healthy lifestyles

sustainability theme		direct effects	summary of effects
Environment	Biodiversity	✓	Positive impacts.
	Landscape & countryside	✓	
	Global warming, air pollution	✓	
	Mgmt of water environment	✓	
	Mineral resources	✓	
	Waste disposal	✓	
	Land and materials	✓	
	Energy efficient transport	✓	
	Urban environmental quality	✓	
Quality	Current needs	✓	Positive impact on the general level of health.
	Unemployment/poverty	-	
	Education	-	
	Crime	-	
	Housing conditions	✓	
	Public health	✓	
Social Equity	Religion/politics	-	
	Gender	-	
	Married/unmarried	-	
	Dependants	-	
	Ethnic groups	-	
	Disabilities	-	
	Ages	-	
	Sexual orientation	-	
Futurity	Future needs	✓	Offers enhanced quality of life.
	Future choices	✓	
	Future impacts	✓	
Participation	Review	✓	Offers scope for partnership.
	Public input	?	
	Local determination	?	
	Partnerships	?	