



The integration of SEA into the English planning system

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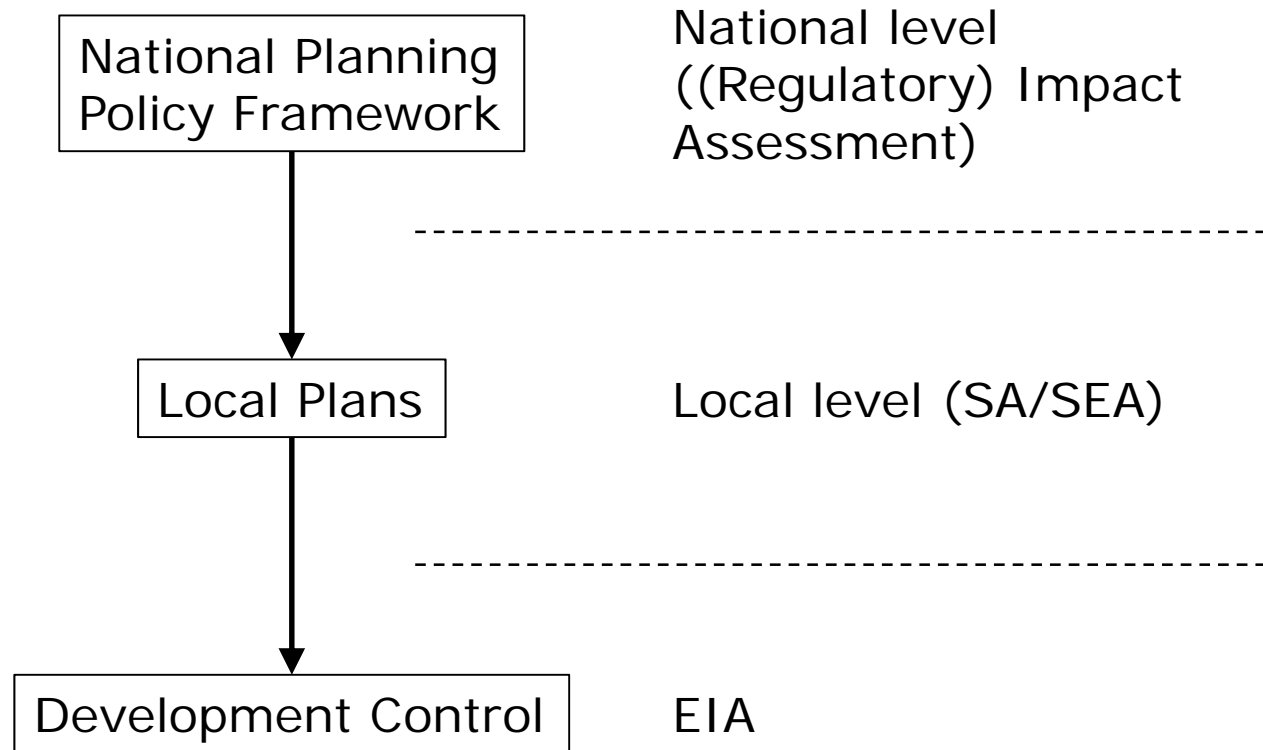




Decision making

- Depends on the Sector: most decisions concerning SEA fall with land use planning
 - But also roads; offshore oil and gas licensing; offshore wind farm licensing; catchment flood management plans; flood risk management plans; etc.
- Land use planning is a devolved matter. Here we look at England only.

Planning hierarchy

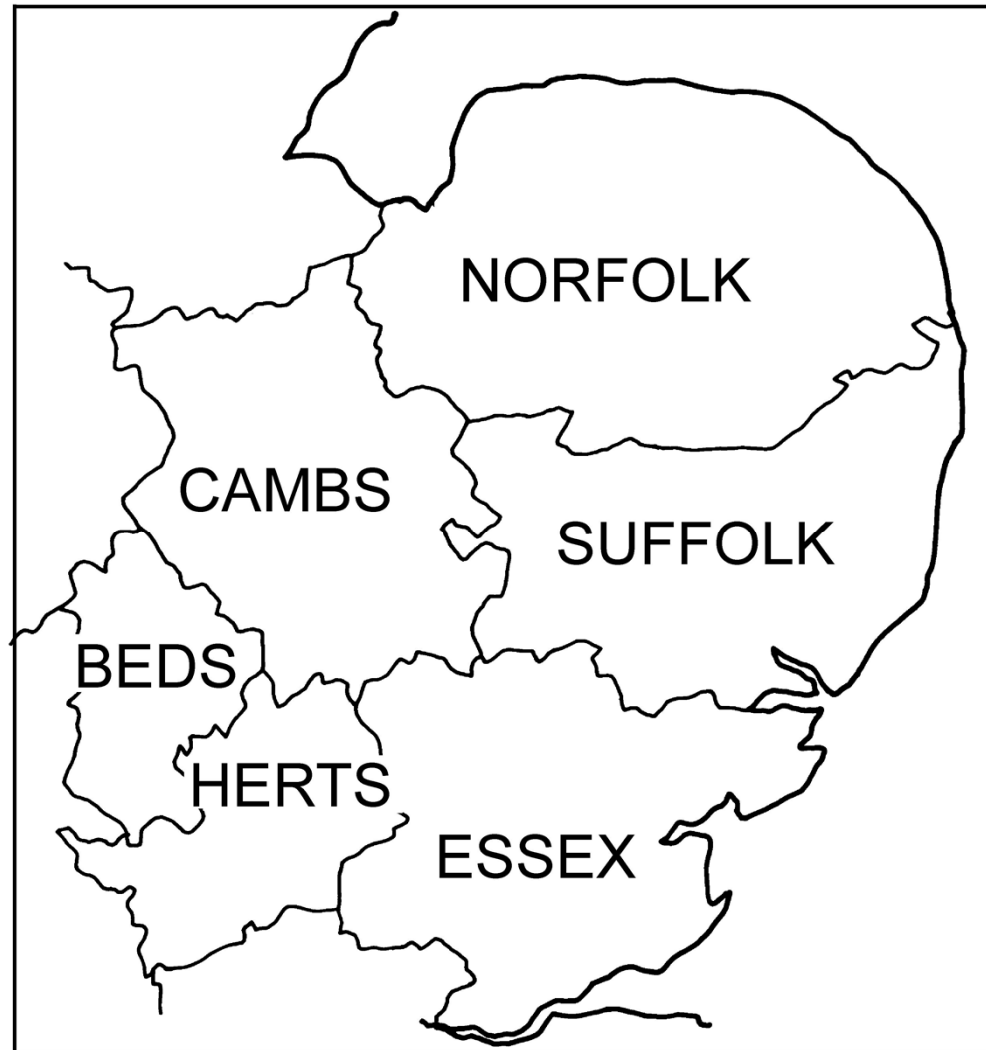




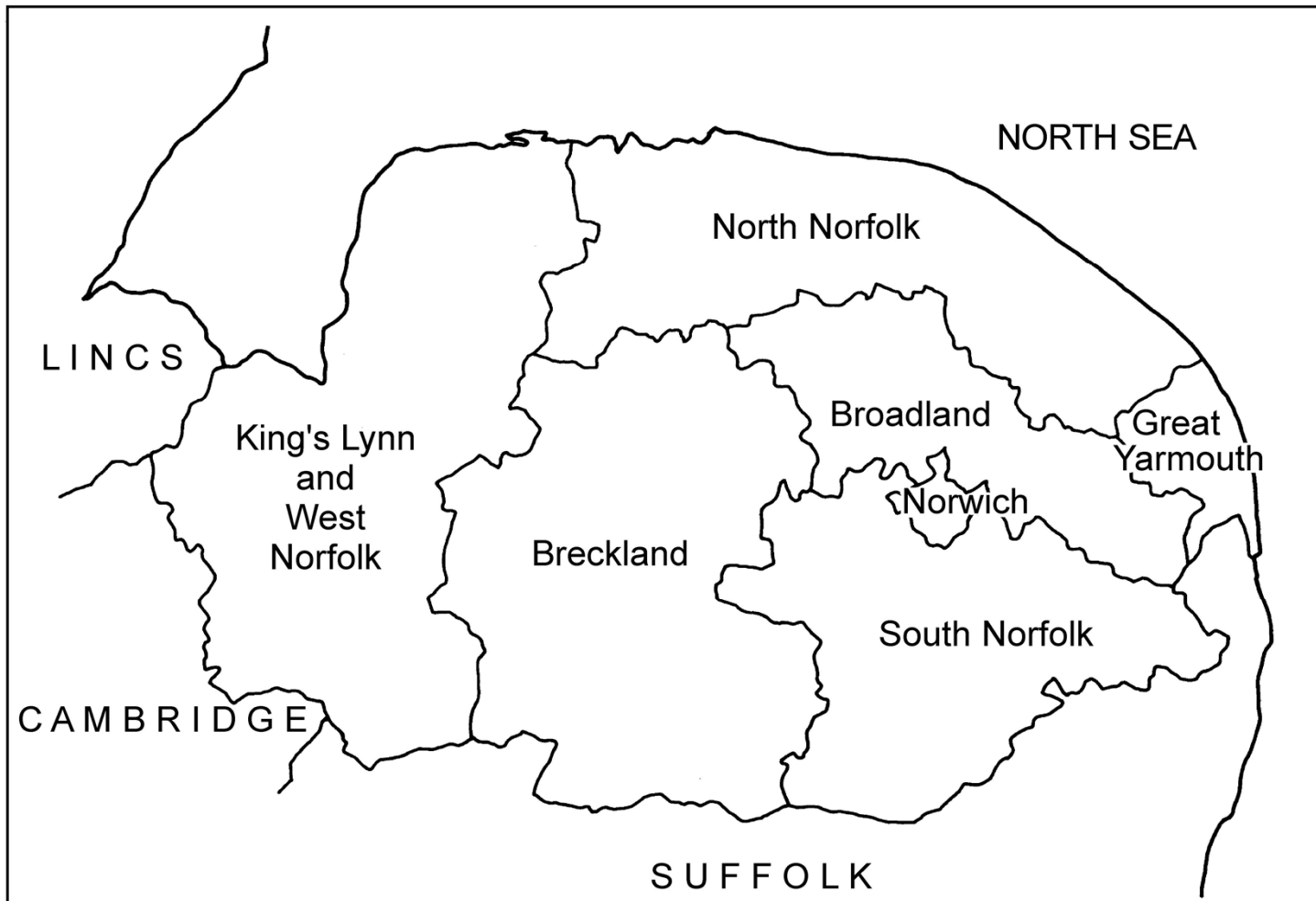
Planning – national level

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
 - Places a general duty on regional and local authorities to “*contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*”.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) adopted on March 2012
 - Reduced over a thousand pages of guidance to 65 pages
 - Contains a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”
 - Updated July 2018
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733637/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf)

Planning – local level



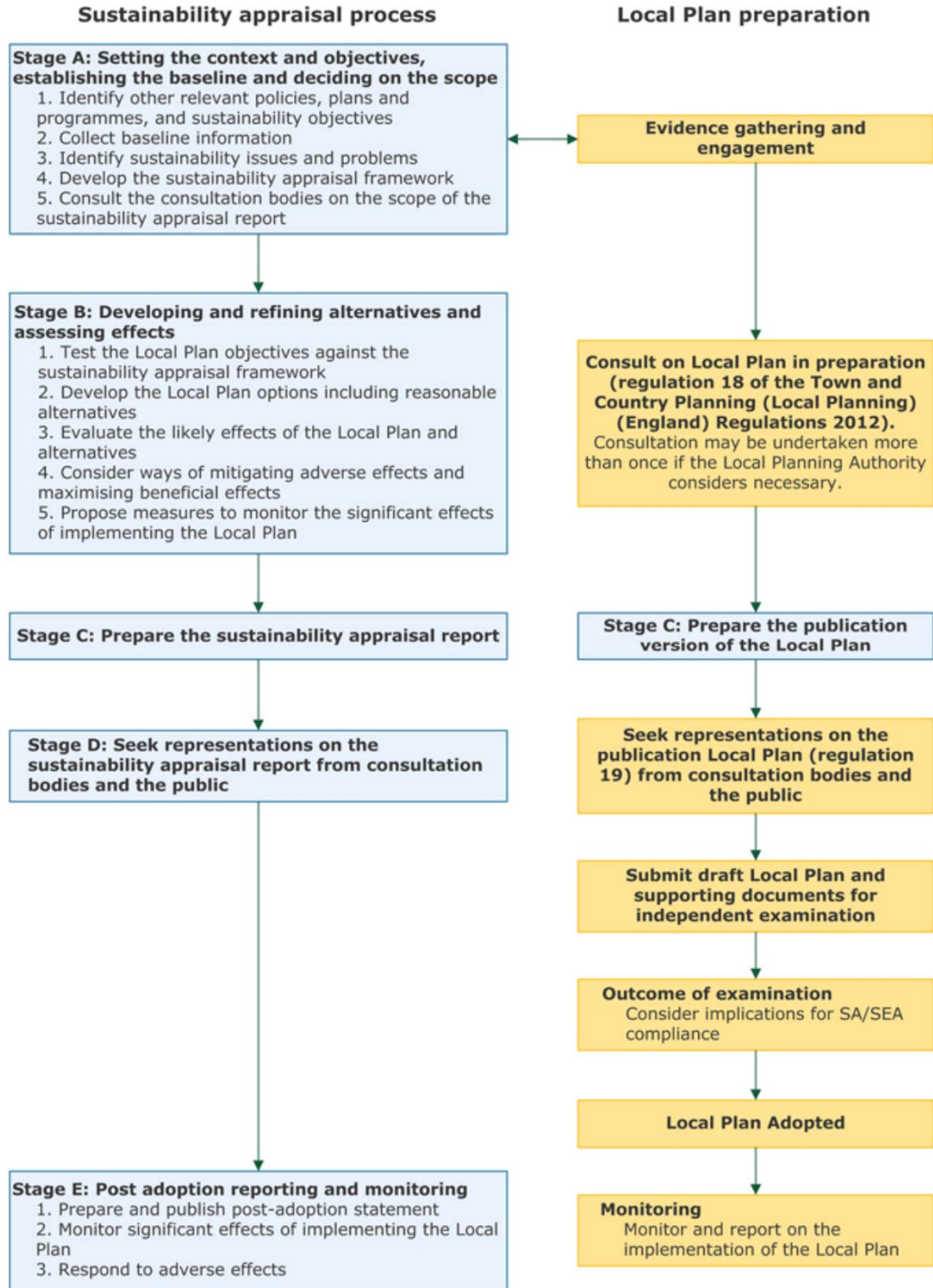
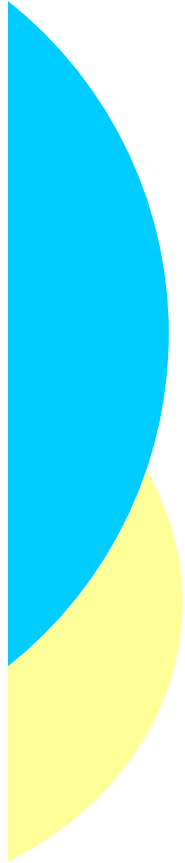
Planning – local level





Assessment Requirements

- EU: SEA Directive 2001/42/EC
- UK: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 SI No. 1633
 - Implement SEA Directive
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
 - Introduces new planning system into England & Wales
 - Section 39(2) makes Sustainability Appraisal (SA) mandatory
- Solution? SA is broader than SEA, so conduct SA consistent with the SEA Directive obligations





Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- What do we want the area to be like in the future (our objectives)?
- How do we measure this (indicators)?
- Objectives and indicators should be established through critical examination of existing policies/objectives and pressures in the given sector/area
- They should be agreed by as many stakeholders as possible

Impact matrix

Criteria	Global sustainability					Natural resources					Local environmental quality					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relationship or insignificant impact ✓ Significant beneficial impact ✓? Likely but unpredictable beneficial impact ? Uncertainty of prediction or knowledge ×? Likely but unpredictable adverse impacts × Significant adverse impact
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Proposed policies/action	Transport energy efficiency	Transport trips	Housing energy efficiency	Renewable energy potential	CO2 fixing	Wildlife habitats	Air quality	Water conservation	Soil quality	Minerals conservation	Landscape	Rural environment	Cultural heritage	Public access to parks	Building quality	
Urban regeneration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×?	•	✓	•	✓	✓?	✓	
Improved trams	✓	✓?	?	✓?	✓	•	✓	•	•	•	•	•	✓	?	✓	
Use of brownfield sites	•	•	•	✓?	✓	×?	•	•	×?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	

Typical objectives and indicators

- Protect and enhance biodiversity
 - Bird population indices (a) farmland birds
 - Characteristic plant and invertebrate species/groups
 - Butterfly abundance
- Enhance viability of farming
 - Average duration of product supply contracts
 - Number of farms with alternative enterprises
 - Farm profitability



Local Authority	SA report published	Core Strategy duration	Number of indicators in SA framework	Percentage indicators assessed using explicit timescale	‘Short-term’ definition	‘Medium-term’ definition	‘Long-term’ definition
Ashford	2006	2021	233	12%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Blaby	2006	2016	101	4%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Blackburn	2007	2024	112	0%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Charnwood	2006	2021	70	0%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Chelmsford	2006	2021	60	8.3%	Within timescale of plan	Within timescale of plan	beyond the timescale of the plan
Doncaster	2005	2021	150	0%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Great Yarmouth	2006	2021	106	0%	1-3	5	10+
Guildford	2006	2026	137	0%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Scarborough	2006	2021	133	12%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Compatibility analysis

Literature Review assessment: a review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies for sustainable development.

Document Title (and main reference point where appropriate)	Key Relevant Objectives	Key Relevant Targets and Indicators	Implications for Local Development Framework	Issues for Sustainability Appraisal
INTERNATIONAL				
The Rio Earth Summit, 1992	<p>Five separate agreements made at the Summit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Convention on Biological Diversity • The Framework Convention on Climate Change • Principles of Forest Management • The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development – 27 key principles • Agenda 21 - an action plan for developing the planet sustainably into the 21st century. <p><i>Particular issues include - systematic scrutiny of patterns of production — particularly the production of toxic components, such as lead in gasoline, or poisonous waste</i></p> <p>alternative sources of energy to replace the use of fossil fuels which are linked to global climate change</p> <p>new reliance on public transportation systems in order to reduce vehicle emissions, congestion in cities and the health problems caused by polluted air and smog</p> <p>the growing scarcity of water</p>		<p>Promotion of renewable energy & energy efficiency.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable development patterns & public transport.</p> <p>Promotion of water efficiency.</p> <p>Promotion of biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sustainability of new development patterns - contribution to public transport - contribution to renewable energy and efficiency - contribution to biodiversity
The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002	<p>International commitment to Sustainable Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse trend in loss of natural resources, e.g. through resource efficiency • Increase renewable energy and efficiency • Reduce loss of biodiversity 	<p>Strengthen global commitments on sustainable development set out at Rio (Plan of Implementation). Agreements were made to halve the 2</p>	<p>Promotion of sustainable development patterns.</p> <p>Promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</p> <p>Protection of natural resources.</p> <p>Promotion of health and economic well-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sustainability of new development patterns - contribution to renewable energy and efficiency - contribution to biodiversity - maintenance of natural resources - minimisation of waste - impact on health

Consistency analysis

Objective 1: No more building on green field sites.

Objective 2: Reclaim derelict land wherever possible.

Objective 3: Regenerate town centre economies.

Objective 4: Improve air quality in town centres.

Objective 5: Encourage the use of public transport.

Objective 6: Provide adequate car parking facilities in the town centres.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓		✓	✗
5	✓	✓	✓	✓		✗
6	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	



Sustainability Appraisal in practice

- Baseline vs objectives led – different results. A shift towards baseline-led as it aligns better with the SEA Directive (DCLG, 2010)



Resources

- 40-60 person days for standard SA, longer for more complex plans (Therivel, 2013)
- 60-100 person days (Glasson et al, 2012)
- 35% of one full-time staff member's time + £25,000 (295,000 SEK) for consultants (Plymouth City Council)(DCLG, 2010)

Sustainability issue: SA/SEA topic		All SA/ SEAs	SA/SEA for...		SA/SEA prepared in...	
			Preferred options document	Submitted core strategy	2004–2006	2007–2008
		n=45	n=28	n=17	n=23	n=22
Broadly social	Accessibility	1.27	1.20	1.38	1.41	1.14
	Crime	0.59	0.70	0.41	0.52	0.66
	Equity, inclusion	1.16	1.18	1.12	1.13	1.18
	Health	1.04	1.18	0.82	0.96	1.14
	Housing	1.23	1.21	1.26	1.28	1.18
	Average	1.06	1.09	1.00	1.06	1.06
Broadly environmental	Air	-0.21	0.04	-0.62	-0.26	-0.16
	Biodiversity	0.26	0.34	0.12	0.33	0.18
	Climate change, energy	0.09	0.38	-0.38	0.00	0.18
	Landscape, historical	0.67	0.63	0.74	0.72	0.61
	Resources	0.20	0.29	0.06	0.22	0.18
	Water	-0.04	0.11	-0.29	-0.09	0.00
	Waste	-0.34	-0.21	-0.56	-0.37	-0.32
	Average	0.09	0.23	-0.13	0.01	0.10
Broadly economic	Economic growth, investment	1.18	1.21	1.12	1.11	1.25
	Employment	1.17	1.07	1.32	1.15	1.18
	Skills	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.63	0.74
	Average	1.01	0.99	1.04	0.96	1.06
	Flooding	-0.30	-0.12	-0.64	-0.23	-0.38
	Land use	1.04	1.11	0.94	0.89	1.28

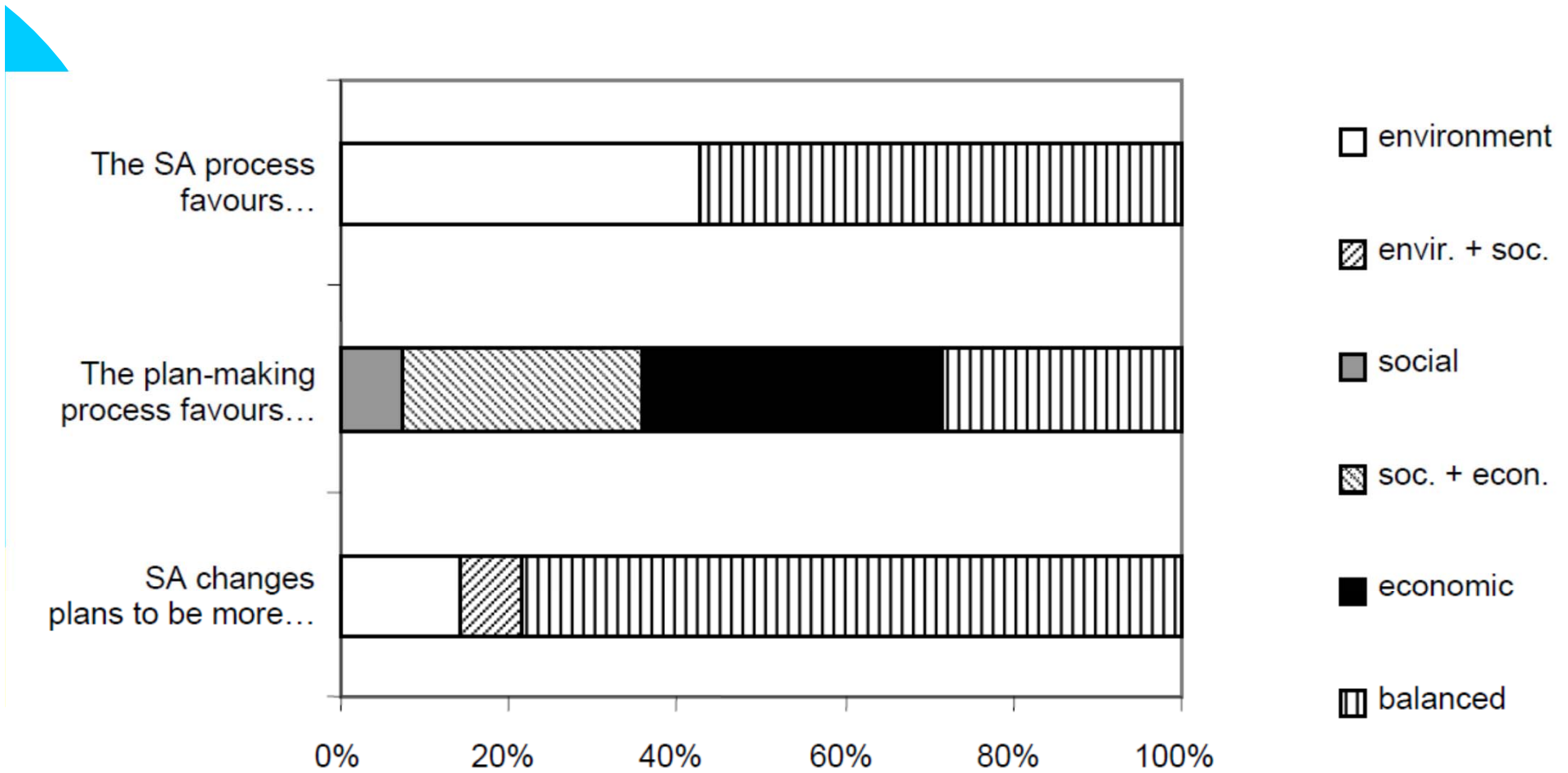


Figure 1. Environmental, social or economic bias? Planners' questionnaire responses (n=14)



Some successes

- Improved, more sustainable plans (Therivel and Fischer, 2012)
- Planners gain greater awareness of sustainability issues (Therivel and Fischer, 2012)
- Planners gain greater understanding of their plans (Therivel, 2013)
- Planners gain ideas/inspiration for the next round of planning (Therivel, 2013)
- Greater emphasis on joint working with external partners (Therivel and Fischer, 2012)



Some issues

- Weak at suggesting alternatives – most legal challenges have focussed on development and assessment of alternatives (Glasson et al, 2012)
- "*The lack of requirement for inspectors to consider SA quality also suggests that the national administration gives little weight to SA*" (Therivel, 2013b)
- 4/5 plans change as a result of SA, but only 13% have a major effect on plan (Therivel and Fischer, 2012)
- Weak at public engagement – "*public involvement in English sustainability processes is negligible*" (Therivel, 2013a)



Conclusions

- SA has been around a long time (since ~1991 in some form) and is generally seen as working well
- SA fits into a planning context, and this can both strengthen and undermine the 'effectiveness' of SA
- SEA has potentially undermined the aspirational approach (of SA) to delivering sustainable development
- Brexit makes the future uncertain
- Better regulation agenda is a significant threat



References

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