



Assessing the sustainability of
redevelopment projects in
practice: the **RAF**

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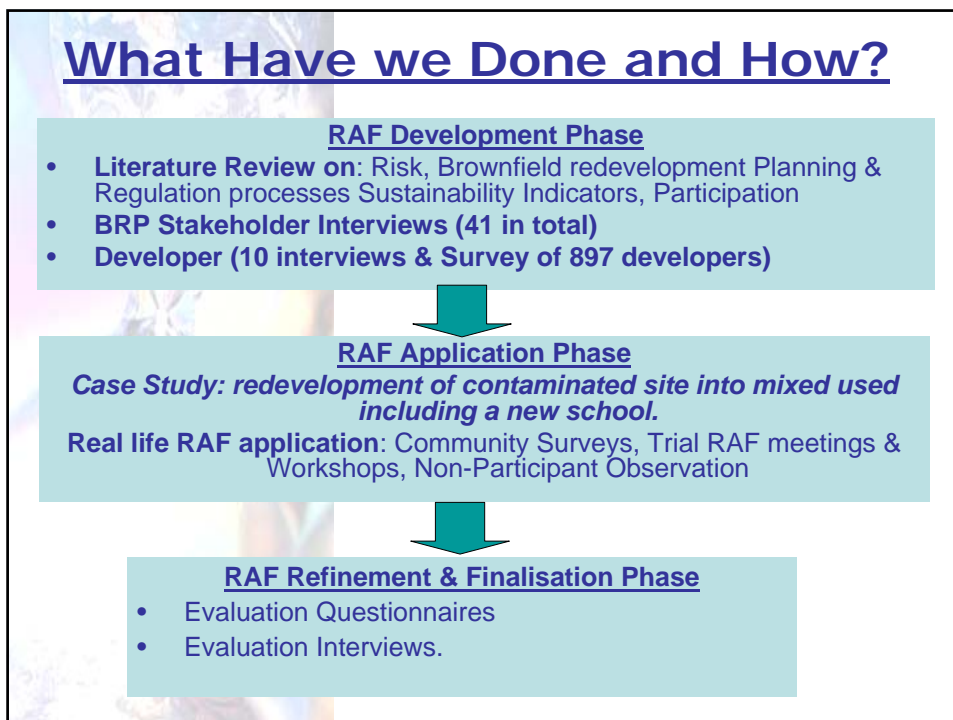
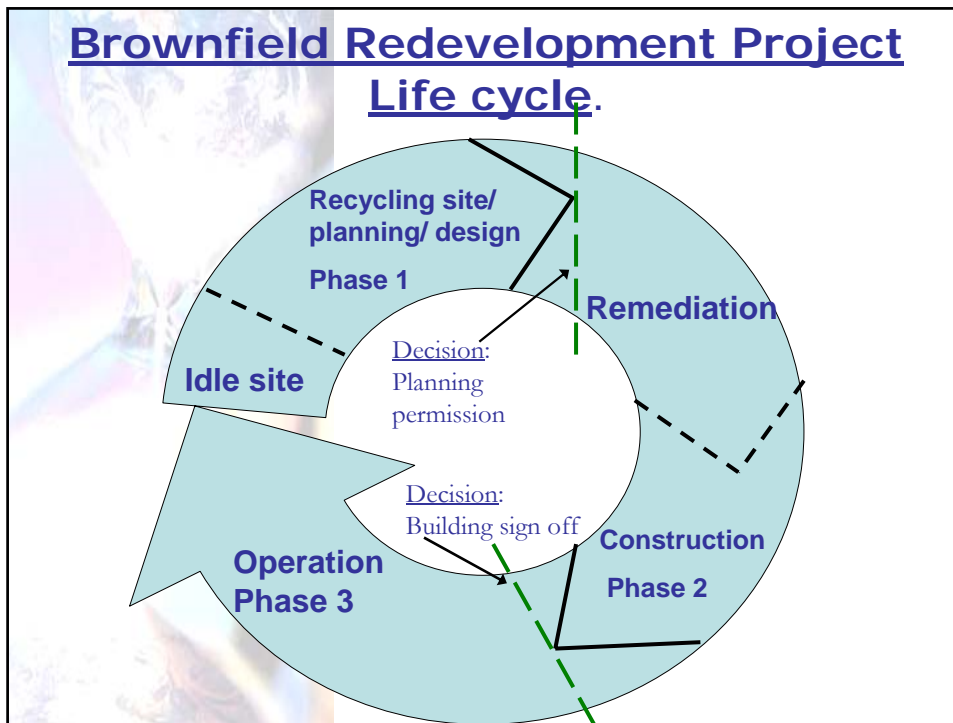


Research Rationale

**Growing government pressure for Brownfield
redevelopment.**

- It is a core government objective to achieve
sustainable communities
- It is considered as inherently sustainable
- Many redevelopments are unsustainable

**There is a need to monitor the long term
sustainability of Brownfield Redevelopment
Projects (BRP).**



Barriers to Sustainability Monitoring

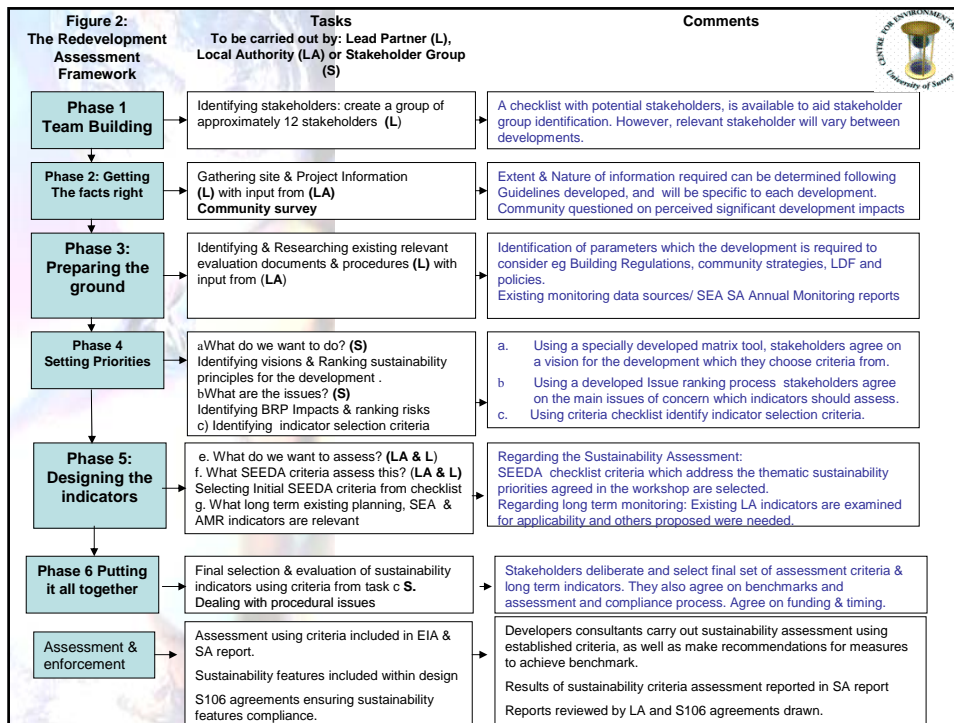
Barriers to adoption	Procedural limitations	Tool limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lack of understanding of sustainability •Lack of market demand •Lack of enforcement/ resources & skills •Too many tools resulting in lack of confidence in them •Build & Forget development culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lack of time •Lack of a structured process to follow •Lack of communication •Lack of ownership of the assessment process •Lack of integration of existing tools with planning processes eg planning application process, EIA, SEA, SA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Scope of assessments limited to building performance •Scope of assessments mostly covering environmental issues •Lack of context specific assessments •Lack of measurable benchmarks •Output approach to monitoring




 To create a **Redevelopment Assessment Framework**, through which the sustainability of a Brownfield Redevelopment Project can be **evaluated throughout its land-use life cycle, in a practical, site specific and inclusive manner.**

Characteristics:

- Participatory
- Dynamic/ flexible
- Incorporates risk
- Context Specific
- Integrate existing processes (planning)



Going through each phase..

• Phase 1: Team Building

- 12-15 participants (selected by developer and DC officer using stakeholder checklist) ratified by group.
- Participants, statutory or non statutory consultees (essentially project decision makers).
- Public representation limited to councillors & area board representatives.



Phase 2: Getting the facts right

- **Task 1: Site & Development information.**
 - Lead partner collects information on the site and development using EIS review checklist.
 - Non-technical summary provided to all participants.
- **Task 2: Community Consultation**
 - Community Survey (obligatory).
 - Additional Community workshops (recommended).
 - This is in line with new Statement of Community Involvement requirements (Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004).
 - Results summarised in report to participants for consideration.



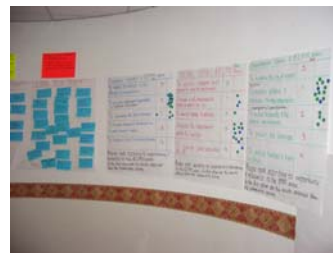
Phase 3: Preparing the Ground

- Background research into existing indicators and available baseline data. **Creating a one stop shop to monitoring**
 - Best Value Performance indicators
 - Community Strategy indicators
 - LDF, Area Action Plan SEA SA and annual monitoring report indicators
 - LA Sustainability checklists
 - Funders monitoring requirements
 - EIA and Sustainability Assessment post monitoring requirements.
 - Other impact assessment requirements eg TIA green



Phase 4: Setting Priorities

- **Half day workshop in 3 sessions with all stakeholders.**
- **Task 1: Developing a sustainability vision for the project. Identify main concerns, benefits.**
- **Task 2: ranking sustainability principles for the area.**
- **Task 3: Identifying criteria for indicator selection using checklist.**
 - Discussion of management parameters (finance, public access, time scales)



Phase 5: Designing the indicators

- **Selecting relevant SEEDA checklist criteria** for sustainability assessment of development proposals.
 - Planning relevant benchmarks.
 - Cover social environmental & economic aspects.
 - Consider the development as a whole not only building.
- Identifying and **developing relevant long term indicators** to assess the sustainability of the development during its construction and operation period.
 - List of existing indicators provided for consideration from Phase 3.
 - Some issues of scale and consistency.
- **Case study use:** SEA, SA indicators and baselines and EIA post monitoring requirements.



Phase 6: Putting it all together

- Final Half day workshop (all participants).
- **Task 1** Select relevant SEEDA sustainability checklist criteria and agree performance benchmarks.
- **Task 2** Design and select long term monitoring indicators and agree benchmarks and baselines.
- **Task 3** Logistics, agreeing on:
 - Who pays for monitoring?
 - How will the results be used?
 - Who is going to coordinate the long term monitoring?
 - Public access to results.



What happens next? Assessment and enforcement

- SEEDA selected criteria utilised as part of a **development sustainability assessment** handed in with application or as part of **EIA**.
- Requirements to meet SEEDA benchmarks **included within design statement**, or where relevant identified for inclusion in detailed application.
- Long term monitoring indicators collated if relevant with EIA post monitoring requirements and **S106 agreement created to ensure monitoring is carried out.**



Evaluating the RAF process: results from the case study.

- **Evaluation Methods:**
 - Evaluation Questionnaires after Phase 4 & 6.
 - Non- participant observers attending workshops.
 - Evaluation interviews post RAF completion (15 interviews).



Evaluation results:

Participants were overall very satisfied with the process and felt it had met its objectives. **The participating LA will be using this process for future large applications.**

Commented positively on the **holistic and context specific** nature of selected indicators.

The participatory nature was identified as the main strength with participants stating how the RAF helped **increase understanding and communication** between participants and the sustainability of the development.

Participants valued the way the **RAF process** and the survey 'forced them' to take into **consideration community views.**

Participants emphasised the benefits of having a structured process to decision making.



Evaluation of practical applicability of RAF.

- **Time and timing.**

- All participants felt time allocated to undertake was reasonable and well spent. Some proposed longer or more workshops.
- Participants felt the RAF should be done as early as possible in the pre application phase.
- Participants commented that the RAF has the ability to speed up the planning process itself!

- **Cost.**

- Estimated at £10.000 if carried out by consultancy.
- The paying developer did not find the costs unreasonable. **Most RAF requirements used also for other application requirements.**



Compatibility and integration with existing planning processes.

Participants stated that the RAF is:

- A structured process to aid development application decision making.
- A useful tool for developments requiring EIA but should not be limited to these.
- A **useful & transparent** process to integrate *Statements of Community Involvement* into development decision making.
- Compatible to changes in planning and in particular regarding added monitoring requirements.



What lays in store.. The future of the RAF

All participants recommended:

- The RAF should be applied to all large development projects.
 - The need to define large.
- The RAF should be stipulated by government guidance or policy for it to be widely adopted.
- The RAF is compatible to the planning process so there is no reason why it couldn't be proposed by government!



Conclusion...

This research has identified a need, designed a solution, as well as proposed external measures which need to be undertaken to ensure future adoption. The RAF is a product ready for launch, its now up to government and the powers that be..

Thank You!

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Publications

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