

West Berkshire Emerging Draft Local Plan Review to 2037

Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report

December 2020

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
2. Methodology	6
3. Sustainability Context for Development in West Berkshire District	26
4. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) findings for emerging Draft Local Plan Review Policies	37
5. Sustainability Appraisal findings for emerging Draft Local Plan Review Site Options	68
6. Consultation	74

Tables

Table 1: Requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations
Table 2: SA framework for West Berkshire Local Plan Review
Table 3: Proposed indicators for the SA of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review
Table 4: Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan Review
Table 5: SA findings for policies relating to the Development Strategy
Table 6: SA findings for policies relating to our environment and surroundings (strategic policies)
Table 7: SA findings for policies relating to our environment and surroundings (natural and built resources)
Table 8: SA findings for policies relating to our environment and surroundings (historic resources)
Table 9: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (1)
Table 10: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (2)
Table 11: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (3)
Table 12: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (4)
Table 13: SA findings for policies relating to fostering economic growth (1)
Table 14: SA findings for policies relating to fostering economic growth (2)
Table 15: Summary of SA findings for sites by spatial area and settlement

Appendices

Appendix 1.	Consultation comments on SA Scoping Report
Appendix 2.	Baseline information
Appendix 3.	Links to plans, policies, and programmes
Appendix 4.	Detailed SA of draft policies
Appendix 5.	Detailed SA for site options

1. Introduction

- 1.1. West Berkshire Council is reviewing its Local Plan to cover the period up to 2037. The purpose of the reviewed Local Plan will be to assess the future levels of need for new homes (including market, affordable and specialist housing and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation) and employment land and other land uses up to 2037, and to provide an appropriate basis for housing, employment land and infrastructure provision over that period.
- 1.2. This report forms the interim Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (called a SA report in this case). It reports on the assessment of the emerging draft West Berkshire Local Plan Review (LPR) to 2037¹ and is published for consultation at the same time under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012². In this way, respondents are given the greatest amount of sustainability information available at this stage upon which to base their representations on the emerging draft LPR. Representations will inform the proposed submission documents (for the Secretary of State) under Regulation 19 of the 2012 Regulations including a revised sustainability appraisal.

Requirements for a Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.3. Planning authorities are required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Local Development Documents. Originally this was produced in accordance with the requirements of a European Directive (2001/42/EC)³ but it is enshrined in national law by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁴ and the SEA Regulations (Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)⁵ which necessitated a Sustainability Appraisal for all local development documents, now generally called 'local plans'. The Sustainability Appraisal fully incorporates the SEA requirements, but expands it to also take account of social and economic matters. Thus, the requirements of the SEA also applies to the wider remit of the Sustainability Appraisal. **Table 1** signposts the relevant sections of this SA Report that represent the required contents of the Environmental Report.
- 1.4. At this time the UK is nearing the end of its transition phase of withdrawal from the European Union. This report is written on the basis that most EU law will apply under the provisions in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 consequently it complies with the same legal requirements as part of the plan making process.

¹ West Berkshire emerging Draft Local Plan Review to 2037: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/localplanreview2037>

² Town and Country Planning Regulations: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/regulation/18/made>

³ EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment:
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-legalcontext.htm>

⁴ Section 19 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/19>

⁵ SEA regulations 2004: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/introduction/made>

Table 1: Requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations

SEA Regulation Requirements	Where it is covered in the SA Report
Preparation of an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated.	This document along with the SA scoping report (2018) including appendices.
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	Section 3 and Appendices 2 and 3.
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme and the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Section 3 and Appendix 2 and SA Scoping Report (2018).
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	Section 3 and Appendix 2 and SA Scoping Report (2018).
The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 3 and Appendix 3.
The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects).	Section 4 and 5 plus Appendices 4 and 5.
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the	Section 4 and 5 plus Appendices 4 and 5.

SEA Regulation Requirements	Where it is covered in the SA Report
environment of implementing the plan or programme.	
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 2. Details of the assessment are in the Appendices 4 and 5.
A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Regulation 17	Section 3
A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	A separate non-technical summary will accompany the submission version of the Environmental Report.
The report shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment (Regulation 12(3)).	Considered throughout the report, including methodology for the SEA and content and level of detail in the emerging draft Local Plan Review.
Consultation: Authorities with environmental responsibility and the public shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Regulation 12.5 and 13).	Consultation on the SA Scoping Report was undertaken between December 2017 and February 2018. It accompanied a Scoping Report on the Local Plan Review. A further Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Review was undertaken in October 2018.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. The Sustainability Appraisal process is intended to be an integral part of preparing a Local Plan, rather than an adjunct to it. SA offers a systematic and robust way for checking and improving on plans as they are being developed. It helps planning authorities to fulfil the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in preparing their plans, and thus contributes to sound plan making. The SA should inform the evaluation of options and is an important part of the site selection process. It provides a key means to demonstrate the appropriateness of the emerging plan given reasonable alternatives.
- 2.2. This interim SA assesses the proposed policies and their options and alternatives for site allocations, both for the emerging draft of the LPR.
- 2.3. The Appraisal generally consists of assessing policies and specific sites against the 10 sustainability objectives that were set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2018) and can be seen in Table 2 below. This assessment involves considering what effects the policy or site will have on that objective, in the short, medium or long term, and in conjunction with other plans and policies.
- 2.4. The Sustainability Appraisal is a multi-stage process, most of which is undertaken in separate appraisals of individual plans. The national guidance on strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal⁶ sets out the process for local plans in a number of stages, as follows:

STAGE A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

A1- Identify other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives

A2- Collect baseline information

A3- Identify sustainability issues and problems

A4- Develop sustainability appraisal framework

A5- Consult the consultation bodies on the scope of the sustainability appraisal report

STAGE B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects

B1- Test the Local Plan objectives against the sustainability appraisal framework

B2- Develop the Local Plan options including reasonable alternatives

B3- Evaluate the likely effects of the Local Plan and alternatives

B4- Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects

B5- Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan

STAGE C: Prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Report

STAGE D: Seek representations on the sustainability appraisal report from consultation bodies and the public

STAGE E: Post adoption reporting and monitoring

E1- Prepare and publish post-adoption statement

E2- Monitor significant effects of implementing the Local Plan

E3- Respond to adverse effects

- 2.5. This interim report covers Stages B and C of the above list. Stage A was covered in the SA Scoping Report (2018) and is considered further in paragraph 2.8 onwards.

⁶ Guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans-and-spatial-development-strategies>

- 2.6. Stage D is the subject of the current consultation under Regulation 18, the results of which will be used in an iterative way to refine the final SA prior to submission to the Secretary of State. Stage E cannot be undertaken before the LPR is adopted.
- 2.7. This SA was drafted mainly by Council officers responsible for the production of the local plan. This is appropriate at this stage, as the consideration of environmental, social and economic outcomes is a central element to deciding on the policy approach and the suitability of each site. Consequently, the SA has a significant influence on the content of the Local Plan.

Stage A: Scoping

- 2.8. Stage A, task A1 - 5 of the SA process were completed between December 2017 and January 2018 with the production by West Berkshire planning officers of The Local Plan Review to 2036 SA Scoping Report⁷ which was subject to a five week consultation with the statutory consultees, Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England. The Scoping Report was amended and subject to further wider consultation with the general public alongside the Local Plan Review Scoping Report between February and March 2018.
- 2.9. The report contains the following:
- An outline of contents, the methodology and description of the SA/SEA process and the specific SA/SEA tasks undertaken.
 - A review of other plans and programmes and their relationship to the West Berkshire Local Plan Review. This can be viewed in Appendix 1 of the scoping report.
 - A description of the environmental and sustainability context, or baseline information. This can be viewed in Appendix 2 of the scoping report.
 - A summary of key sustainability issues.
 - The SA/SEA Framework which sets out the SA/SEA objectives for assessing West Berkshire's Local Plan Review.
- 2.10. Overall there was consensus that the baseline information was adequate with some exceptions relating to the age of some data and the paucity of data on green infrastructure, tourism and recreation, and the racehorse/equestrian industry. There were many useful suggestions to tighten up the evidence. There was general agreement with the key sustainability issues and objectives identified. Ranking the objectives was not seen as helpful. A number of refinements were suggested from statutory bodies and amendments are made and will continue to be made as more evidence or updates become available although it is expected that the long term issues are likely to remain the same.

⁷ Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/localplanreview2037>

- 2.11. **Appendix 1** tables the comments received and the Council responses. At the same time as incorporating amendments following the comments, a general update has been done and appended here to ensure that the baseline information, **Appendix 2**, and relevant plans, **Appendix 3**, are kept current. It is recognised there needs to be more update prior to submission. In addition, further evidence has been gathered to inform the plan making which are summarised in Section 3.
- 2.12. **Table 2** on the next page sets out the SA framework for the LPR that includes 10 headline SA objectives, each with sub-objectives to which associated criteria in the form of questions have been added, in order to draw out the significance of the effects of the Local Plan options, policies and sites on sustainability outcomes. The table includes the SEA topics as listed in the regulations to show how they have been covered by the SA objectives. The framework is designed to address the key sustainability issues identified from the SA Scoping Report and is included in this report in **Table 4** after paragraph 3.28 in the next section.

Headline SA Objective	Sub-objective	Criteria for determining the likely significance of effect from implementing the plan/policy/site allocation.	SEA Topics
	2(b): To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy support the reduction of crime or the fear of crime? • Will the policy promote development that creates safer places? 	Population
	2(c): To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy provide opportunities for, or improve the quantity and quality of rights of way, recreation areas, open space and green infrastructure generally? • Will the policy foster beauty and a sense of pride and place? 	
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy provide better access to educational and training facilities • Will the policy provide better access to medical facilities? • Will the policy provide better access to major retail centres? • Will the policy improve access to nature, rights of way, recreation areas, open space and green infrastructure generally? 	Population Human Health
	3(b): To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it support access to digital services and other IT technologies? 	
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	4(a): To reduce accidents and improve safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads? 	Human Health Air Population
	4(b): To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy increase access to and opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport? • Will the policy help reduce vehicular traffic? • Will the policy help reduce congestion in AQMAs or on major roads and/or their junctions? 	

Headline SA Objective	Sub-objective	Criteria for determining the likely significance of effect from implementing the plan/policy/site allocation.	SEA Topics
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.	5(a): To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy encourage the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and species inside and outside of designated areas? • Will the policy encourage habitat creation and connectivity? • Will the policy help tackle climate change? 	Biodiversity Flora Fauna Landscape Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological Landscape
	5(b): To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it conserve and enhance local distinctiveness? • Is development appropriate in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern, and character? 	
	5(c): To protect or, conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enable a heritage asset to make a positive contribution towards the economy and environment? • Will it improve access to, and public enjoyment of, historic buildings and other heritage assets • Will it preserve or enhance the appearance of Conservation Areas? 	
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	6(a): To reduce air pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help reduce vehicular traffic and/or congestion? • Will the policy help reduce or minimise emissions of greenhouse gases? • Will the policy help improve air quality? 	Air Human Health Soil Water Biodiversity
	6(b): To manage noise levels in main settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help reduce noise levels in the settlement? 	
	6(c): To maintain and improve soil quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help minimise or reduce the loss or damage to soil quantity or quality? • Will the policy help prevent or reduce risk of contamination? 	
	6(d): To maintain and improve water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help improve the quality of water resources (including groundwater and surface water) in the district? 	

Headline SA Objective	Sub-objective	Criteria for determining the likely significance of effect from implementing the plan/policy/site allocation.	SEA Topics
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	7(b): To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy encourage the use of brownfield land in preference to greenfield? • Will the policy minimise the loss of high quality agricultural land? 	Material assets Soil
	7(b): To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy achieve the efficient use of land via appropriate density of development? 	
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently.	8(a): To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable energy technologies, generation and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy minimise the need for energy usage and generation? • Will the policy support energy efficient development? • Will the policy promote the use of renewable energy and new technologies? • Will the policy discourage the use of fossil fuels? 	Climatic factors
	8(b): To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy promote the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste and materials? 	Material assets
	8(c): To reduce water consumption and promote reuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy minimise water consumption as a result of development? • Will the policy minimise the amount of waste water generated by development? • Will the policy promote the re-use and sustainable management of water? 	Water
	8(d): To reduce the consumption of minerals and promote reuse of secondary materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy support the reduction in consumption of minerals? • Will the policy promote re-use of secondary materials? 	

Headline SA Objective	Sub-objective	Criteria for determining the likely significance of effect from implementing the plan/policy/site allocation.	SEA Topics
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	9(a): To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help improve resilience to climate change through adaptation and mitigation? • Will the policy support the adoption of low carbon technologies? • Will the policy support the use of green and blue infrastructure? 	Climatic factors
	9(b): To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy [prohibit][discourage] development in areas at risk of flood? • Will the policy help reduce or manage flood risk? • Will the policy support sustainable urban drainage systems? • Will the policy support water resource management of surface and groundwater flows? • Will the policy support sustainable floodplain management? 	
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	10(a): To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy attract workers and residents to the district? • Will the policy improve people's chances of success in applying for, and retaining jobs? • Will the policy improve accessibility to jobs via the location of employment sites and business premises? • Will the policy support the needs of the racehorse industry? 	Population
	10(b): To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy help attract businesses and inward investment to the district? • Will the policy ensure it meets the needs for a range of sustainable employment areas and sites? 	Human Health
	10(c): To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the policy promote the sustainable economic growth of urban areas and the vitality of town centres? • Will the policy promote the sustainable economic growth of villages? • Will the policy support sustainable rural diversification? 	

SA Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

- 2.13. At this stage, the approach taken is set out for the appraisal of alternative options for each of the policies and sites. It is a continuation of the iterative process of consultation and refinement.
- 2.14. As mentioned, the purpose of the LPR is to assess the future levels of need for new homes (including market, affordable and specialist housing and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation) and employment land and other land uses up to 2037 and to provide an appropriate basis for housing, employment land and infrastructure provision over that period.
- 2.15. In light of any updated evidence the scope of the review involves:
- a review of the existing Core Strategy strategic objectives
 - a review of the existing spatial strategy for the District;
 - a review of all of the existing Core Strategy and Housing Site Allocations DPD policies to ensure their continued consistency with national policy;
 - the introduction of additional development control policies in response to the review of the saved development control policies not replaced by the Core Strategy or the Housing Site Allocations DPD; and
 - the introduction of new policies in response to recent changes in national planning policy and guidance.
- 2.16. It will not be the purpose of the LPR to change or remove policies that remain in accordance with national policy and support the delivery of sustainable development but will more often take the opportunity to add to or strengthen policy and provide more clarity.
- 2.17. Comments received on the two Regulation 18 consultations largely endorsed the review conclusions over which policies needed review and where new policies were needed, but also made many other suggestions which the Council has taken into account. Details can be seen in the West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2036 - Scoping Report Consultation Statement (October 2018) and LPR Reg 18 Nov-Dec 2018 consultations⁸.
- 2.18. This SA is being applied to a review of an adopted Local Plan that has thus far involved two Regulation 18 consultations pertaining to the scoping and review of policies in the current policy context (as laid out in Section 3 of this report). Hence, the Council's approach has been developed from the base standpoint of:
- the revision or modification including deletion of an existing policy against the alternative of continuing with the current Local Plan policy;
 - the introduction of a new policy against the alternative of having no policy in place or simply relying on national policy, and/or on a supplementary planning document, for example.
- However, where relevant, other alternatives have been included.

⁸ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/localplanreview2037>

- 2.19. The identification of the basket of potentially suitable and available sites came from a number of studies and assessments. The principal sources of evidence and information were the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), the Brownfield Register, the Economic Land Review and the Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).
- 2.20. The HELAA is a technical study which aims to identify as many potential sites as possible for residential and economic development uses in West Berkshire. The HELAA identifies specific sites being promoted for development across the District and makes a preliminary assessment of their development potential, suitability, availability and achievability to deliver during the plan period. This is important because not all sites being promoted for development will be appropriate. In doing so the HELAA then effectively produces a basket of sites from which the Council can then further assess in Stages and, as appropriate, select the most sustainable sites to allocate through the LPR. The site selection process is informed by this SA. See the Site Selection Background Paper⁹ that accompanies the emerging draft LPR.
- 2.21. For the purposes of the SA, in each spatial area all sites considered suitable as part of the basket of sites are regarded as reasonable alternatives. The SA process therefore, has been used to help identify potential sites for proposed allocation, which are favourable in terms of the impact on sustainability.
- 2.22. Each of the sites and policies with their reasonable alternatives for the emerging draft Local Plan Review to 2037 have been appraised according to their predicted impact on the sustainability objectives in the SA framework using the methodology set out in **Figure 1** below. Detailed SA of policies can be found in **Appendix 4** and similarly for sites, in **Appendix 5**. The findings for the proposed policies and site options are pulled together in Sections 5 and 6 respectively.

⁹ Site Selection Background Paper (December 2020): <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/evidencebase>

Figure 1: Key to appraising significance of effects of option/policy on SA objective

++	Significantly Positive	Option/policy/site would significantly help with achieving TBC objective	Positive effect but consider whether effect can be enhanced
+	Positive	Option/policy/site would help with achieving objective	Net positive effect but consider whether effect can be enhanced
?	Uncertain	More information needed	Where this will come from – who has it? What will be done about collecting it? When will it be collected?
0	Neutral	Option/policy/site would neither help nor hinder the achievement of the objective	Policy or allocation likely to be acceptable but would require intervention to realise positive effects
-	Negative	Option/policy/site would be in conflict with the objective. Exceptional circumstance test demonstrating it to be in the public interest	Will require demonstrable levels of mitigation in order to make the plan/policy/site acceptable.
--	Significantly Negative	Option/policy/site would be in conflict with the objective and unlikely to be acceptable. No evidence has been provided on potential mitigation or any relevant exceptional circumstance test demonstrating it to be in the public interest	Unlikely that adequate mitigation could be provided to make the site acceptable. Delete, reconsider or amend the policy or site
<p>Aggregated score: The effects have been assessed for each sub-objective with associated criteria and marked with the considered symbol and colour. The sub-objectives have been aggregated for the headline objective and assigned the colour code and symbol.</p>			

2.23. The appraisal differentiates between the most significant effects and others of a lesser effect by the use of colours and symbols as shown above. When assessing the effects of alternatives it is important to note that these are being assessed against the baseline and not being compared against each other. The exercise requires the assessor to make a series of judgements about the magnitude of the effect. It is quite possible for alternatives to receive the same score. For each appraisal a written commentary has been included to explain and justify the scoring concentrating on the more defining effects. Neutral effects have not generally been discussed in the commentary. In the SA matrix for policies in Appendix 5, a concluding

paragraph states the preferred option taking into account of other factors that may influence the overall achievement of the policy against the sustainability objectives.

- 2.24. To aid consistency of approach from different assessors in the appraisal of site options, assumptions and criteria have been applied based upon the HELAA methodology devised for all the participating Berkshire local authorities, publishing of new evidence and comments received from internal and external specialists including the statutory consultees. Examples include distance and thresholds for transport links and designated wildlife sites and landscape sensitivities. Further detail is set out in the Site Selection Background Paper.
- 2.25. During the production of the SA a number of difficulties have been encountered. 1. Consistency of assessment of policies and sites. Different members of the Council's staff and consultants were deployed to carry out the assessment of 62 policies and their alternatives and of the 50 sites. Despite the development of assumptions and criteria, a consistent approach has been difficult to achieve. To address the issue, all SAs were checked by those who drafted the policies if they did not also do the SA and cross checked by other officers. One person was assigned to inspect and oversee and check the assessments. This was continuous and integral to the production on a regular basis between assessors. 2. It was sometimes difficult to discern the subtle differences between continuing current policy and a revised policy. However, policies needed to be updated due to changes in national policy and prioritisation of issues such as carbon neutrality. Many of the revised policies have been made more explicit to provide more detail and clarification of the policy than previously, often in light of casework experience. 3. Difficulty in assessing strategic long term effects. Predicting the outcomes from the application of policy was challenging. Some depended on implementation of the policy with regard to quality, scale and community behaviours amongst others. For instance, providing for green infrastructure can be undone by poor design and/or providing for the wrong benefits.

SA Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

2.26. This interim report forms the main output for Stage C. It describes the process for carrying out the SA of the emerging draft LPR and presents the findings thus far. Any likely significant effect is highlighted using the methodology set out in Figure 1 above and taking into account:

- Effect – Positive or negative.
- Likelihood/probability – How likely is it that the effect will actually occur?
- Scale/magnitude – what is the potential scale of the effect, considering the geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected, the degree it influences other plans and environmental problems/sustainability issues.
- Duration – Are the potential effects likely to be permanent or temporary? The permanent impacts are those that are considered reasonably irreversible, and the temporary impacts are those that may be reasonably reversed.
- Timescales – Are the potential effects short, medium or long term? S = up to 5 years from the time of assessment; M = to the end of the plan duration; L = 50 years from the time of the assessment.
- Cumulative – Do the individual effects together compound the significance?

Stage D: Seeking representation on the interim Sustainability report from consultation bodies and the public

- 2.27. The consultation on the West Berkshire website for both the emerging draft local plan review to 2037 and this interim SA takes place for a period of eight weeks from the date of publication of the documents. Comments are invited.
- 2.28. Changes will undoubtedly be made with the benefit of comments made on the consultation and other evidence, such as a Habitat Regulation Assessment, will continue to inform the SA for the submission version of the Plan.

Stage E: Post adoption reporting and monitoring

- 2.29. This stage of the SA process will occur after the adoption of the Local Plan Review to 2037.
- 2.30. Following adoption, a post-adoption statement will be prepared and published. This will outline how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, how opinions expressed during public consultation have been taken into account, the reason for choosing the Plan as adopted and the measures that are to be used to monitor the significant effects of implementation.
- 2.31. Monitoring the success of policies should help to provide an indication of whether the significant effects predicted as part of the SA are consistent with actual effects, once the plan is being implemented. It should measure whether the plan is contributing towards the achievement of the desired sustainability objectives and whether any mitigation measures identified are performing as well as expected. Damaging trends should be detected at an early stage and remedial action taken.
- 2.32. Monitoring of policies will be presented in the Annual Monitoring Report, based on the indicators set out in **Table 3** below as amended following consultation and comments on the SA Scoping Report (2018). This monitoring and review will be essential to the successful delivery of the objectives and policies, and will function as an important feedback loop to assess performance, identify unforeseen circumstances and enable adjustments and revisions to be made, where necessary.

Table 3: Proposed indicators for the SA of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review.

Headline SA Objective		Suggested Indicators
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	To maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of housing completions by spatial area/total Affordable housing completions by spatial area/total No of specialist housing completions for older people including Use Class C2. Housing mix by type and size by spatial area/total
	To enable provision of housing to meet all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households on housing register Number of net additional pitches/plots (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people) Number of self and custom-build housing completions Number of housing units for older people
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	To support healthy, active lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General health summary significantly better than England average Years of potential life lost Number of people per annum visiting Council owned sports/recreational facilities Results from Active People Surveys % of adult population who participate in Sport or Physical activity at least twice in the previous 28 days.
	To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of crime surveys Number of violent crime, robberies, vehicle crimes and domestic burglaries per 1000 population
	To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability, use and access to eligible open spaces Meet Accessible Natural Green space Standard Percentage of the Rights of Way network in a “favourable” condition
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure.	To improve access to education, health and other services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre Percentage of school places within 2 miles (primary) or 3 miles (secondary) in accordance with the council’s School Travel Plan. Percentage of schools rated ‘Good’ or above by Ofsted Proportion of 19 years olds with Level 2 qualifications (5 or more GCSEs Grade A* to C) Percentage of schools under/over capacity Percentage of the Community Infrastructure Levy expended on elements of community infrastructure

Headline SA Objective	Suggested Indicators	
	To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage by Superfast_Broadband • % access to WBC digital services and information by smartphone or tablet device
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	To reduce accidents and improve safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of deaths and serious injuries on the roads (for all ages and children)
	To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children walking or cycling to school • Proportion of cars to household ownership • Bus passenger numbers (LA subsidised) • Percentage of new development within 400 metres of a bus service% growth/reduction in travel by rail • Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre • Length of cycleway • Number of monitored cyclists • Length of Public Rights of Way
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.	To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of SSSI and SAC land in a favourable or recovering condition • Loss or damage in ha of SSSIs and SACs, ancient woodlands and number of veteran trees • Change in areas of biodiversity and geological importance, in priority habitat and number of priority species • Area of statutory LNRs per number of population
	To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of building on greenfield land • Percentage of land under environmental land management schemes
	To protect or, conserve and enhance the built and historic environment including the significance of heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments, and registered battlefields, indicated as “at risk” on the Heritage at Risk Register • No. of heritage assets included on the Local List • % of Conservation Areas in West Berkshire with an up-to-date character appraisal (and management plan)Number of major development projects that enhance the significance of heritage assets or historic landscape character • Number of major development projects that detract from the significance of heritage assets or historic landscape

Headline SA Objective		Suggested Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and % of planning applications where archaeological mitigation strategies (preservation by design and/ or archaeological recording) were developed and implemented
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	To reduce air pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level and trend of air pollutants NO₂ Level of traffic flows Exceedances in Air Quality Management Areas Local Air Quality Management measures
	To manage noise levels in main settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of noise complaints per annum received by West Berkshire
	To maintain and improve soil quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of “Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land” to development Loss of greenfield land to development Level of potentially contaminated sites remediated and suitable for use
	To maintain and improve water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of surface waters and groundwater water bodies at ‘Good’ Water Framework Directive (WFD) status Measures of chemical and biological water quality of inland watercourses “good” and “fair” Deterioration in WFD status from 2015 baseline Incidents of major and significant water pollution No of remediated contaminated sites no longer impacting on water quality No of planning approvals granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on water quality grounds The number of planning approvals granted contrary to the statutory water/sewerage undertakers advice (Thames Water Property Services)
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of new or converted dwellings and non-residential developments on previously developed land Area of registered brownfield sites suitable and available for residential development
	To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density of major developments completed

Headline SA Objective	Suggested Indicators	
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently.	To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable energy technologies, generation and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kWh reduction in energy use • % commercial buildings meeting BREEAM excellent standard • Increase in energy storage from renewable technologies • % of total energy consumption for the District coming from renewable/low carbon energy generation • Promote the use of new or preferred energy technologies ('Smart' towns) • Promote the use of renewable energy generation and energy storage
	To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % change in waste generated • % of household waste and biodegradable waste to landfill • % total tonnage of waste that has been recycled, composted, reused and recovered, or used to recover heat power and other sources of energy
	To reduce water consumption and promote reuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of development incorporating water conservation and/or water efficiency measures • Water consumption per capita • New Developments with SUDs installed
	To reduce the consumption of minerals and promote reuse of secondary materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual primary aggregate production and annual reuse of secondary materials as in local aggregates assessment/per 1000 head of population
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of car use to work • Number of Low Emission Vehicles registered in West Berkshire • Number of public charging points available in West Berkshire • Percentage of development achieving BREEAM Excellent Standards
	To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood risk grounds • Number of major developments with approved sustainable drainage systems • Number of flood alleviation schemes developed to protect housing and infrastructure • Number of developments granted permission within Flood Zone 3.

Headline SA Objective	Suggested Indicators	
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage unemployment rate amongst economically active population • Percentage of working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance • Percentage working age population in employment or unemployed • Amount and type of non-residential completions • Amount of Protected Employment Area land developed
	To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of land developed for employment by type which is on previously developed land • Amount of employment land lost to residential development • Gross employment floor space developed
	To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total amount of floor space for town centre uses • Completed retail development • Percentage increase or decrease in the total number of VAT registered businesses in the area • Vacancy rates of units • Loss of town centre uses

3. Sustainability Context for Development in West Berkshire

The Current Position

- 3.1. The current West Berkshire Local Plan consists of the following documents:
 - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2006 - 2026) adopted July 2012: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/corestrategy>
 - Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document adopted May 2017: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/hsa>
 - West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 (Saved Policies 2007): <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/article/28783/The-West-Berkshire-District-Local-Plan-1991-2006-Saved-Policies-2007>
- 3.2. Together these documents set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the District up to 2026, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure - as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design. The Plan is also a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as it is the starting-point for considering whether applications can be approved. It is important that the Council has an up to date plan in place to positively guide development decisions.
- 3.3. National planning policy sets clear expectations as to how a Local Plan must be developed in order to be justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared to deliver sustainable development that meets local needs and national priorities.
- 3.4. The current Local Plan makes clear what is intended to happen in West Berkshire over the life of the plan (up to 2026), where and when this will occur and how it will be delivered. This is done by setting out broad locations and specific allocations of land for different purposes; through designations showing areas where particular opportunities or considerations apply (such as protected habitats); and through criteria-based policies to be taken into account when considering development. A policies map illustrates geographically the application of policies.
- 3.5. The Local Plan is part of the statutory planning framework for the District and together with the following documents forms an essential part of the overall Development Plan for West Berkshire:
 - [Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) (NDP) adopted June 2017¹⁰
 - [Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire](#) incorporating alterations adopted in December 1997 and May 2001¹¹
 - [Waste Local Plan for Berkshire](#) adopted December 1998

¹⁰ When adopted, future neighbourhood plans will also form part of the Development Plan

¹¹ We are currently in the process of creating a new Local Plan for minerals and waste planning policy <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/mwlp>

3.6. There are a number of reasons for reviewing the Local Plan:

- To establish a new housing requirement which will look forward to 2037.
- To complete the assessment of the remaining Saved Policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 which were originally only intended to be in place until 2012.
- To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 to ensure that the Plan remains relevant and effectively addresses the needs of the local community.
- To ensure we meet the policy expectation, set through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance that authorities should regularly review their plans to respond flexibly to changing circumstances.

Content and Objectives of the Local Plan Review to 2037

3.7. The emerging draft Local Plan Review presents the development strategy with its proposed supporting policies and sites for the delivery of new homes (including market, affordable and specialist housing and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation), employment land, other land uses and infrastructure provision up to 2037.

3.8. The LPR includes a vision, strategic objectives and a set of policies which together provide a policy framework for assessing planning applications and guiding development across West Berkshire. It is set out as follows:

- **Introduction and context**
- A **spatial portrait** which describes and sets out a snapshot of West Berkshire in facts and figures
- Our **Vision** of what West Berkshire will look like in 2037
- Our **Strategic Objectives** which represent the key delivery outcomes that the LPR should achieve and against which its success will be measured
- Our **Development Strategy** which sets out our overall approach for managing growth and change across the district up to 2037 and which outlines our place based approach focusing on the following spatial areas:
 - Newbury and Thatcham
 - Eastern Area
 - North Wessex Downs AONB
- **Strategic policies** which set out the overarching principles for development and which are considered fundamental to achieving the Vision and Strategic Objectives, focusing on:
 - Our place based approach
 - Our environment and surroundings
 - Delivering housing
 - Fostering economic growth and supporting local communities

- **Non-strategic site allocation policies** which, led by the capacity of the landscape, allocate large, medium and small residential and mixed-use sites for development within each of the spatial areas
 - **Development Control policies** which are considered in the context of the strategic policies, providing more detail on specific issues
 - **Appendices** which set further technical information and guidance to assist in implementing the policies, including **Implementation and Monitoring**
 - **Policies Map** which geographically illustrates the LPR policies
- 3.9. The aspiration of the LPR Vision is supported by 11 strategic objectives which frame how the overall vision for development in West Berkshire will be carried forward.
- 3.10. The strategic objectives included relate to responding to climate change; conserving and enhancing our heritage and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; promoting the cultural distinctiveness of the area; providing a green infrastructure that supports healthy living, meeting the identified housing needs; with high quality sustainable development which contributes an attractive, safe and accessible environment; a strong and diverse economy; vital and viable town and other centres; and a supporting infrastructure and transport network that promotes sustainable growth with low emission choices.

Baseline information

- 3.11. Baseline information for West Berkshire was first produced for the Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report¹². A number of changes have been made since that report as a result of comments received from consultees and general update. A revised version is included with this report as **Appendix 2**. This information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and will help to identify sustainability issues and alternative ways of dealing with them. Sufficient information on the current state and future trends within the District is included to a degree that is proportionate for the adequate prediction of the LPR effects on sustainability.
- 3.12. The information is constantly changing and prone to becoming out of date in some respects although it is expected that the longer term issues highlighted have and will remain the same. This SA considers whether more up to date information is available that will affect the performance of a particular policy or site.
- 3.13. There are some important elements which have either changed since the Scoping Report or which call for more detail which are essential for an appraisal, particularly of sites. A number of important assessments and studies have been completed¹³ since the publication of the scoping report

¹² <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/localplanreview2037>

¹³ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/evidencebase>

that have informed policy making and appraisals. Others will be added once they are ready to be published. The conclusions and/or implications of each are summarised in the following paragraphs.

- 3.14. The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA): Prepared by West Berkshire Council officers and considers the capacity for accommodating residential and economic development within the District. The HELAA identifies specific sites and makes a preliminary assessment of the development potential, suitability, availability and achievability to deliver during the plan period. First published in February 2020 it was updated in December 2020 to include the correction of several factual inaccuracies identified by site promoters, as well as the assessment of a further six sites which were promoted to the Council after the original publication. In addition, planning commitments data with a base date of 31 March 2020 was used to update the assessment of capacity. The Council intends to publish a new HELAA in Spring 2021 that takes into account of all of the other evidence studies produced to inform the LPR, as well as any further sites promoted during the December 2020 Regulation 18 consultation on the LPR.
- 3.15. Employment Land Review (ELR): informs the preparation of the economic development and employment land policies. The study achieves the following three objectives: i) an assessment of future demand for employment floor space, ii) an assessment of the existing and committed future supply and; iii) identification of a floor space/land requirement to address unmet need. In terms of future demand for employment floor space, the study identifies an additional need up to 2036 (commissioned before the end date of the LPR was extended to 2037) for: 11ha of office floor space and 16ha of industrial floor space. It also recommends that all existing Protected Employment Areas should continue to be designated for employment use.
- 3.16. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Assessment (GTAA): provides the overall pitch/plot requirements for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the district. The assessment considers the 2015 definition of 'Gypsy and Traveller' and 'Travelling Showperson', to exclude anyone who has stopped travelling on a permanent basis (the PPTS need). The assessment also considers the cultural need, which includes those who have stopped travelling and consider themselves part of the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople community. The Gypsy and Traveller pitch need for the overall plan period 2018/19 to 2035/36 is 51 (cultural) and 48 (PPTS), of which there is a pitch need of 20 (cultural) and 18 (PPTS) for the five year period (2018/19 to 2022/23). Taking turnover in Paices Hill, an existing site, into account the overall pitch shortfall would reduce to 22 (cultural) and 19 (PPTS) over the plan period, of which 12 (cultural) and 10 (PPTS) pitches would be needed over the five year period. There is one Showperson's Yard in the District, with a previously identified need for 24 plots. The assessment is not identify any additional need for Travelling Showperson's yards and any need that arises can be addressed at Long Copse Farm. A four-pitch transit site may be appropriate. No specific need for moorings for permanent houseboats has been identified.

- 3.17. Updated Housing Needs Evidence: An assessment of affordable housing need and older persons' accommodation within West Berkshire. The study confirms notable affordability issues in West Berkshire and identifies the net need for rented affordable housing as 163 dwellings per annum (2,937 for the period 2018-2036). It suggests an appropriate mix for affordable housing. It also identifies a need for 1,457 residential care bed spaces for the same period.
- 3.18. Affordable Housing Viability Assessment: tests the potential viability of requiring market-lead residential development to provide affordable housing, whilst taking into account the local housing market, current delivery and the cumulative impact of the Local Plan policies (based currently on the adopted Local Plan policy set). The viability testing has explored the impact of requesting a range of affordable housing proportions (20%, 30% and 40%) across a series of development typologies. Overall, the results are considered to be positive, and this is reflective of the West Berkshire experience of delivering planning-led affordable housing using its existing policy set. The council also requested that testing included zero carbon assumptions were tested. The study concludes that the cost of zero carbon is likely to add 4% or 7% to build costs. If zero carbon is achieved through a 7% increase in build cost there would be an associated reduction in the percentage of affordable housing. However if zero carbon is achieved through a 4% increase in build cost, there would be no impact on the percentage of affordable housing. The study is used to inform the affordable housing policy within the Local Plan Review and the Council considers it appropriate to base policy on a 4% increase in build cost.
- 3.19. Transport modelling: considers the impact of development upon the District's highway network. The Council has developed three transport models that are being used to undertake the LPR Transport Assessment. The transport modelling work is able to produce a range of outputs that help provide an indication of network performance and changes in traffic flows. It helps to identify where there are likely to be issues on links and at junctions. This will help to identify locations where mitigation may be required. These outputs have been used in the production of the Phase 1 Transport Assessment report which is available alongside the LPR consultation.
- 3.20. Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): sets out the infrastructure necessary to support and underpin West Berkshire's growth through to 2037. Improvements to infrastructure will be fundamental to achieving the LPR Vision and Objectives. In addition they are considered necessary to deal with existing deficiencies and to cater for a growing and changing population. It is recognised that any proposed growth within West Berkshire must be supported by improvements to physical, social and green infrastructure, and where necessary, be delivered in advance of development. This infrastructure will include facilities needed for development to function and to ensure the integration and creation of sustainable communities. The IDP will set out the quantum and delivery mechanisms and timeframe of infrastructure delivery.

- 3.21. Landscape Character Assessment: provides a comprehensive and up to date landscape character assessment for all land outside defined settlement boundaries in West Berkshire; ensures that an understanding of the character of the landscape can be used as a positive tool to manage change by providing a framework for informed decisions to be made; provides a robust evidence base for more detailed site specific landscape sensitivity and capacity studies; facilitates the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework; and forms a sound evidence base for the review of the West Berkshire Local Plan and supporting the landscape character policies within it. The LCA can be used to consider landscape character when planning any type of change and is designed to be used by all involved in decisions about proposals for change and development.
- 3.22. Air Quality Study: considers the potential cumulative impacts on European designations for the protection of qualifying habitats and species, and the potential cumulative impacts on West Berkshire's Air Quality, including Air Quality Management Areas and in places at risk of breaching an air quality objective.
- 3.23. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 and Level 2 (SFRA): determines the variation in flood risk across the district. Level 1 provides a comprehensive analysis of flooding from all sources (fluvial, surface and groundwater) individually and cumulatively, across the district. It enables the application of the sequential test to the locations of new development sites to be carried out and to identify whether development can be allocated outside high and medium flood risk areas, based on all sources of flooding. It also assesses the effect of predicted climate change events on flood zones. A screening was carried out on all sites assessed in the HELAA to determine the level of flood risk. It identified that further assessment would be required at a number of sites. The further assessment takes place in the Level 2 SFRA. Level 2 SFRA provides evidence to help determine whether or not the Exception Test could be passed, i.e. development could be achieved safely for sites that have been found to be at flood risk by the Level 1 assessment. Of the 34 sites considered in the Level 2 assessment, there are 19 sites where part of the site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. However, for 26 of the sites examined, less than 50% of the site area is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Therefore, it is expected that it will be possible to preserve Flood Zones 2 and 3 (subject to a detailed flood risk assessment) as public green space or other open land category, with built development restricted to Flood Zone 1. For these sites, the Exception Test will only be required if built development is proposed in Flood Zone 2 or 3 and will be dependent upon their vulnerability.
- 3.24. Water Cycle Study: assesses the relationship between development and the water environment around West Berkshire. The Study is being produced in 2 phases. The Phase 1 Scoping Study assesses the potential issues relating to future development across West Berkshire and the impacts on water supply, wastewater collection and treatment and water quality. It will assist the

Council in selecting and developing allocations where there is minimal impact on the environment, water quality, water resources, and flood risk infrastructure. The Phase 2 study will commence after the LPR Regulation 18 consultation and will build on the work of the Phase 1 study. This is because there needs to be greater certainty on future growth. In particular it will:

- Water Resources: Reassess water resources, but only if significant changes are made to the growth forecast following the LPR Reg 18 consultation.
- Water Supply: Update the water supply assessment using the latest growth forecast based on proposed allocations.
- Wastewater Network: Update to the wastewater network assessment using the latest growth forecast based on the proposed allocations.
- Wastewater Treatment: A new growth scenario will produced an updated forecast for each Waste Water Treatment Works. This will inform the update to the capacity assessment.
- Water Quality: Modelling of the impact of the LPR on water quality
- Flood Risk: assessment of flood risk from additional effluent, but only if the growth forecast changes significantly after the Regulation 18 consultation.
- Environmental Impact: output of the water quality modelling will be used to predict deterioration in watercourses adjacent to protected sites identified in Phase 1.

Links to other Plans, Policies and Programmes

- 3.25. It is a requirement that the relationship is outlined between the West Berkshire LPR and other relevant plans, policies and programmes at international level as well as those at a national and local level. The aims and objectives of these plans and programmes were taken into account in constructing the SA framework.
- 3.26. The initial reference is contained in the SA Scoping Report (2018). In the light of comments made from consultees (see Appendix 1) and as part of the need to update since, a revised review of plans, policies and programmes is attached in **Appendix 3**.

Key Sustainability Issues

- 3.27. The SA Scoping Report (2018) identified the key sustainability issues affecting West Berkshire from an analysis of the baseline information and future trends together with the policy drivers from other plans and programmes to
- 3.28. Following consultation, a number of changes to the key sustainability issues have been since the Scoping Report. A revised version is presented in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan Review

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the Local Plan Review
<p>Ageing Population and healthcare: An increasingly ageing population placing an increased demand on social care and healthcare services.</p>	<p>Future demographics indicate that the population of the area as a whole is projected to rise to over 166,000 by 2036. Significantly, the population of over 65s is forecast to grow by over 59% in the period 2016-2036 and the over 85s by 148% over the same period. This is above the national average and will call for a much increased demand for suitable housing, health care services and facilities for the elderly. The increased prevalence of those with long term illnesses and disability (closely linked to an ageing population) living longer along with a desire for independence, will have the similar effect. Equally, the need to take more personal control of health and wellbeing should increase demand for green infrastructure and health facilities. A key challenge has been identified to explore any link between the District Health profiles and air quality.</p>
<p>Sustainable rural communities/rural isolation/access to services: Access to community services, care and facilities in rural areas</p>	<p>The most deprived areas in terms of access to services and social care are spread over the more rural areas of the District. For isolated rural communities the need to support home independence will continue, along with increased availability of transport links, access to social care and the use of ICT technologies.</p>
<p>Education/skills: Addressing gaps in skills and adult education needed to find and remain in work</p>	<p>Demand for childcare places will increase from 2017 and parental choice over settings makes provision complex to predict. Higher primary numbers post-recession are about to hit secondary in 2019, with growth mainly around Newbury and Thatcham. New housing growth here is likely to need additional educational infrastructure. Correspondingly, as pupil growth moves out of the primary schools, numbers will decrease affecting rural areas most and raises an additional risk of viability.</p> <p>Levels of educational attainment in West Berkshire are generally higher than national for both school and higher qualifications. However, a significant number of the working population, 17%, have no qualifications, compared to 15% nationally, which can act as a break on the local economy and create pockets of deprivation and exclusion. Inequality in adult educational achievement should combine with opportunities to acquire skills suited to business need. A deficit of literacy and numeracy skills and the gap to more disadvantaged pupils at secondary phase needs to be addressed for reasons of well being, crime and health as well as future employment prospects.</p>
<p>Housing: The allocation and phasing of the housing delivery up to 2037 that meets the predicted demand. An identified shortage of affordable and/or suitable homes for local people at different stages of life</p>	<p>The higher than average annual income, and house prices now amongst the highest in the UK, have particularly affected key occupational workers and potential first time buyers who are unable to get onto the property ladder. The lack of smaller sized as well as affordable dwellings for predicted lower density households is an issue for the future, particularly in relation to rural areas and in retaining younger local people employed in the District. The increasing number and proportion of older persons and those with long term needs places more demand for housing and accommodation that is available and/or adaptable for different stages of life.</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the Local Plan Review
Air quality: Impacts from development and infrastructure on the environment and health and wellbeing.	Only two areas are acknowledged as having poor air quality, both associated with sections of road in Newbury and Thatcham. Sites that offer sustainable transport opportunities and choices such as rail, bus and greenways would be preferable to help reduce air quality impacts caused by road congestion. The Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2026) has a specific policy on Air Quality and sets out a long term 'mixed' strategy to provide the District with more sustainable travel choices linked to the Air Quality Action Plan. A key challenge has been identified to explore any link between the District Health profiles and air quality.
Crime and Safety:	Although the level of crime is of importance to the residents of the area, it is antisocial behaviour that is of more concern (even if only perceived) as this has a direct effect on the quality of life and general appearance of the area. The Local Plan Review can have a key role in promoting well managed environments and secure buildings which will influence the levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of both in an ageing District.
Climate change: Responding to climate change impacts including vulnerability to flooding and rising consumption of finite resources, especially water, and carbon emitting energy.	<p>Climate change will be a key issue for the Local Plan Review to address persistently. A changing climate is expected to exaggerate weather events; heavier rain, stronger winds and more summer heat-waves. It will have an impact on the landscape and our lifestyles; the economy and infrastructure; rare wildlife habitats and species may be threatened by loss or change in habitat; farming could suffer from more pests, soil erosion and a decrease in agricultural productivity; more intense rain, rising sea levels and wetter soils will increase flood risk; and water supplies will be affected along with our demands made on them.</p> <p>There is a need to reduce impacts on climate change through reduced emission of greenhouse gases, consumption of natural resources, vehicular movements. In addition, more sustainable designs are required to mitigate and adapt to the physical, financial and economic impacts of a potential rise in flooding and overall temperatures.</p>
Resource efficiency: Rising consumption of finite resources, especially carbon emitting energy.	Lifestyle and consumption trends in the UK and more widely have generally resulted in increased demands on energy and material resources. While many of the driving factors are outside the influence of the Council, others can be influenced in the direction of sustainability. Waste minimisation and recycling, high standards of water and land use efficiency plus energy efficiency including renewables, will require particular consideration, being areas where planning can have a direct role.
Water supply: Rising consumption of finite resources, especially water.	The supply of water and the necessary infrastructure to meet demand is a key issue for West Berkshire. The Environment Agency suggests that within less than thirty years there will be a major water shortage in the South East unless there is a reduction in the amount of water used or new resources are found and that West Berkshire is within an area with "serious levels of water stress". There is also a need to protect and enhance surface and groundwater supplies (identified through the groundwater sensitivity and source protections zones) throughout West Berkshire.
Water quality: Pressure on infrastructure and risk of contamination.	Meeting water quality standards is a challenge for the region and West Berkshire. Together with tightening water quality standards, a growing population and development pressures are placing extra demands on the sewerage treatment infrastructure and the waters receiving effluent. As well as increased sewage pressures, development can pose other risks to water quality, this can could include inappropriate mobilising legacy contamination, waste management or site drainage.

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the Local Plan Review
Flood risk: Vulnerability to flooding.	The risk of flooding to a large number of homes and businesses (as in 2007 and 2014) and its frequency within West Berkshire is widespread, arising not only from rivers but also from surface water runoff , groundwater flooding and infrastructure failure. Locating developments outside areas of flood risk is essential to avoid a legacy of economic, social and environmental costs as is maintaining existing flood risk management infrastructure and ensuring all development incorporates sustainable drainage systems to minimise surface water flood risk.
Landscape: Cumulative impacts of consumption and development on the natural environment.	Current driving forces relating to landscape change are agriculture/forestry, recreation and development. Primary development pressures are from changing population and business economies and the need to accommodate housing and modern business premises. Other pressures relate to mineral extraction (although there is some opportunity for sympathetic restoration of wetland landscapes), wind and solar power, and telecommunications and transport infrastructure.
Historic Character and Features: Deterioration of quality and accessibility.	<p>The conservation of historic, sites and commons, monuments, battlefields, parks, buildings and Conservation Areas has contributed to the historic, cultural, economic heritage of West Berkshire and helped to sustain the distinctive communities in the District. Without sensitive restoration, conservation and enhancement above and below ground, the quality, connectivity and accessibility of these historic assets can easily deteriorate, particularly with respect to those heritage assets at risk. However, conservation and mitigation needs are not necessarily incompatible with building development for local needs, if care is taken over form and design.</p> <p>A further issue is new development in the vicinity of the nuclear installations within the district. The influence of such developments on safety matters will require detailed assessment by the Nuclear Directorate of the Health and Safety Executive.</p>
Culture: Maintaining local distinctiveness and richness.	Cultural distinctiveness and richness is closely associated with the natural and man-made heritage of West Berkshire, integral to the sense of identity for residents but also represents an area where opportunities exist for developing a more attractive visitor experience. Data and information is limited for the District and gaps exist for instance, on the contribution and potential of equestrian sporting prowess for which the area is well known.
Biodiversity: Cumulative impacts of consumption and development on the natural environment	Population growth requiring more housing and infrastructure and consumption of natural resources, along with changes in agricultural land use (perhaps more acute in the medium term in response to leaving the European Union) and climate change, will continue to place pressure on the wildlife and ecosystems in West Berkshire. Without positive protection, conservation and enhancement, existing species and habitats will decline in quality and extent, and the value of nature for people's appreciation and enjoyment, will be diminished.
Green Infrastructure: Provision of an integrated network for the benefit of the environment and people's health and wellbeing.	The delivery of new green infrastructure will depend on meeting the need created as a consequence of new development so that it contributes to effective spatial planning and place shaping by taking account of its relationship to existing and proposed green spaces within the district and their connections to it. Focusing and prioritising GI investment on economic growth points where the majority of people can gain access in the future, will maximise the multiple benefits it can provide,
Employment and affordability: Difficulty in recruitment and retention.	The availability of skills suited to the local employment need and the high cost of housing means that some sectors such as agriculture, residential care and elementary occupations may be faced with staff recruitment and retention problems and pockets of relative income deprivation in and around Newbury, Thatcham and the fringe of Reading.

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the Local Plan Review
Employment Land: Allocation of the right mix of employment land to meet the needs of business.	The supply of modern good quality industrial accommodation of the right mix is limited with much of the existing stock needing refurbishment. In rural areas the demand for rural employment space is limited and will need stimulating to encourage rural and home based businesses.
Growth: Support from sustainable development.	With high employment rates it is likely that the greatest uplift in economic output will be driven through productivity improvements rather than by an increase in the number of people employed. Maintaining the vitality of town and other centres in face of competing retail offers is needed to protect the role they play in providing jobs and contributing to a strong local economy.
Sustainable transport: A heavy reliance on private car use and corresponding low levels of public transport use) leading to congestion and excessive demand on the road network.	The high dependency on private transport combined with forecasted increase in traffic flows and the need to cut emissions and improve air quality are drivers for addressing the key issue is slowing down the rate of increase in traffic and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport and alternatives to travelling. Provision needs to be integrated with other sustainability issues and solutions such as access to services in more remote areas and promoting healthy active living. The capacity of the road network, particularly around Newbury and Thatcham, the A34 and A339 is also a key issue.

4. Sustainability Appraisal findings for the emerging Draft Local Plan Policies

- 4.1. This section along with section 5 presents the findings from the most substantial element of the SA process; the assessment of the likely significant effects of the options for the Local Plan Review to 2037 that have been identified.
- 4.2. The SA of the policies and their reasonable alternatives have been assessed in turn against the 10 sustainability objectives. The detailed assessments can be found in **Appendix 4** with a summary and conclusion on the preferred option as the proposed policy. The findings for the proposed policy are brought together here. Both strategic and development control policies are grouped using the same section headings as in the emerging draft LPR and analysed in associated clusters as set out in **Tables 5 to 14** below.

Development Strategy: Our place based approach

- 4.3. West Berkshire's proposed development strategy sets out the overall approach for managing growth and change across the District up to 2037 and which outlines our place based approach focussing on defined spatial areas.

Table 5: SA findings for policies relating to the Development Strategy

SA objective	SP1: Spatial strategy	SP2: AONB	SP3: Settlement hierarchy	SP4: AWE & Aldermaston	DC1 Development in the countryside
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	0	+
SA2: Health & inequality	+	++	0	++	0
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	+	++	0	+
SA4: Sustainable travel	+	+	++	0	+
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	+	++	0	+	++
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	+	0	0	+
SA7: Efficient land use	++	++	+	0	++
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	+	++	0	0	0
SA10: Economy	++	++	++	+	+
Overall effect					

- 4.4. Spatial strategy: The revised spatial strategy policy proposes to focus a higher proportion of development within the Newbury and Thatcham area than in the Core Strategy. Other spatial areas are more constrained and therefore not proposed to take strategic scale development. Thatcham was previously allocated only modest development in the Core Strategy and Housing Site Allocations DPD but it is proposed that the town becomes the focus for significant development in the plan period to 2037 with the consideration of a strategic site at North East Thatcham. This focus means the proposed policy scores significantly positive on the objective for delivering housing (1). Other significant positive effects are demonstrated for objectives relating to efficiency of land use (7), with greater specification in the policy

regarding density, and to supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). A strategy focussed on the existing settlement pattern will support the local economy in a number of ways, including through attracting inward investment and promoting economic growth of urban areas and the vitality of town centres. Other positive effects relate to the objectives of improving health, safety and wellbeing (2) and improving accessibility to community infrastructure (3). New development in sustainable locations will not only provide much needed housing but also accompanying infrastructure and opportunities to create high quality developments which will be designed to create safe places, incorporate multi-functional GI, and thus improve health, safety and well-being. Similarly positive effects are assessed for objectives of maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4), of conserving and enhancing the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment (5) and of reducing emissions contributing to climate change (9). Focus on the more sustainable settlements and on use of previously developed land within settlement boundaries, with limited additional growth proposed in the North Wessex Downs AONB all have positive sustainability effects.

- 4.5. AONB: The policy gives specific consideration for the conservation and enhancement of the local distinctiveness and setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB including its special qualities. The appraisal affirms the benefits of a specific policy which in addition to having a significantly positive effect on ensuring appropriate and sustainable growth of housing (1) it highlights the effects on health and equality (2), the natural, built and historic environment (5) and climate change as expected but recognises the importance of the local economy (10).
- 4.6. Settlement hierarchy: The appraisal affirms that the policy would have a significantly positive effect in terms of maximising the provision of housing in the most sustainable locations of the District (1) and should ensure an equitable distribution of housing, including housing for different sectors of the community. Also, the policy would have a significantly positive effect in terms of improving access to community infrastructure (3) and promoting and maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4), by ensuring that development is located within settlements according to the level of services and opportunities for employment, community and education, and the accessibility and frequency of public transport and destination choice. The Positive effects are seen in promoting and improving the efficiency of land use (7) in focusing housing and economic development within the urban areas through regeneration and change, as well as encouraging infill, changes of use and other development within the settlement boundary. In addition, the policy would have a significantly positive effect in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) through the redevelopment of previously developed land, and a scale of development that supports the vitality and viability of town and village centres.
- 4.7. AWE & Aldermaston: The policy applies special consideration of development in the vicinity of the two licensed nuclear installations located in West Berkshire with respect to potential major hazard to public safety and the

restriction of non-compatible surrounding land uses. The removal of the middle consultation zone together with detailed maps in the supporting text provides greater clarity. The proposed policy provides a significantly positive benefit with regards health (2), safety and residents. The provision of the DEPZ indirectly results in a greater green (5) lung around AWE B and also protects the two establishments (10) enabling them to continue to function.

- 4.8. Development in the Countryside: The policy sets out a presumption against development in the countryside, together with criteria covering exceptions to that rule. In doing so, the policy has the greatest effect on the sustainability objective of protecting the character of the environment (5) and promoting the efficient use of land (7). Restricting development in the countryside also makes a positive contribution to ensuring dwellings have access to infrastructure (3) and facilitate sustainable travel and minimise emissions (4, 6), which are easier to achieve in already developed areas, where the need to travel is less. Limiting development in the countryside also contributes to the safeguard or agricultural land (soil resources) (6). The exception criteria allow for specific types of housing development, thereby contributing to the housing objective (1), as well as development to support the rural economy (10). A criterion also specifically allows for exceptions where a development would secure the future of a heritage asset (5).

Our environment and surroundings

Table 6: SA findings for policies relating to: Our environment and surroundings (strategic policies)

SA Objective	SP5: Responding to climate change	SP6: Flood risk	SP7: Design principles	SP8: Landscape character	SP9: Historic environment	SP10: Green infrastructure	SP11: Biodiversity & geodiversity
SA1: Housing	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
SA2: Health & inequality	++	+	++	+	+	++	0
SA3: Community infrastructure	0	0	+	0	0	+	+
SA4: Sustainable travel	+	0	+	0	0	++	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	++	+	++	++	++	++	++
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	+	+	+	0	0	++	+
SA7: Efficient land use	0	0	++	0	0	0	+
SA8: Natural resources	+	0	+	0	0	+	0
SA9: Climate change	++	++	++	+	0	++	+
SA10: Economy	+	0	+	0	0	0	0
Overall effect							

- 4.9. Climate Change: The policy embeds the principles of climate change into new development and commits development to becoming and staying carbon neutral by 2030. It is supported by other policies in the LPR. The appraisal indicates that the policy would have a significantly positive effect on improving health and wellbeing (2) in terms of the provision of green/blue infrastructure and open spaces in the layout of new development to provide cooling and shading. It would also have a significantly positive effect on the

character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment (5) by ensuring the integrity of the historic environment is maintained, and that new development contributes towards wildlife habitat and species conservation. Furthermore, the policy would have a significantly positive effect in terms of the reduction of climate change emissions and reducing waste consumption (9) by promoting the provision of renewable, low and zero carbon energy for its own use and/or local distribution networks and the reduction of waste. The policy would have a positive effect in terms of maximising safe and sustainable travel by requiring the provision for sustainable forms of vehicular and personal transport (4). The policy would also have a positive effect on improving on air, water and soil quality (6) in terms of reducing emissions from the private car and conserving the quality of the water environment. In addition, there would be a positive effect on the reduction of waste consumption (8) in terms of waste reduction and the provision of recycling during construction and occupation. And finally, a positive effect in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) in terms of supporting sustainable economic growth and attracting businesses and inward investment to the district.

- 4.10. Flood Risk: The policy seeks to ensure that new development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant through the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures and construction methods to reduce the risk of future flooding. As the policy directly seeks to minimise the risk of flooding and the potential for water bodies to be polluted, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objectives (9) (a) and (b). By supporting the incorporation of multifunctional sustainable drainage measures at new developments, the revised policy could also provide a range of associated benefits. The SuDS SPD seeks techniques that not only drain the site, but provide other benefits such as improving water quality, resilience to climate change, public amenity, green infrastructure, and biodiversity. This has the consequence of the policy having positive effects in respect of objectives (2) (a) and (c), (5) (a) and (b), (6) (c) and (d), and (8) (c). The revised policy now includes a requirement for all new development to take advantage of the opportunity presented to improve and enhance the river environment and contribute to biodiversity requirements. This results in a positive effect against objective (5) (a).
- 4.11. Design Principles: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all new development across West Berkshire is of the highest possible design quality. The policy applies to all forms of development, appropriate to their nature, location and scale. The appraisal affirms the benefits of having a specific policy which strengthens a sense of place through high quality, locally distinctive place shaping. It highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to the significantly positive contribution it makes towards the health and wellbeing of new residents (2), protecting landscape character and distinctiveness and providing for wildlife (5), the efficiency of land use (7) and responding to climate change (9). It is also positive in the provision of housing (1), accessibility to community infrastructure (3), promoting safe and sustainable travel choices (4) and the protection of soil water and air and

against noise (6), the management and use of natural resources (8) and support of a sustainable economic base (10).

- 4.12. Landscape character: The policy aims to ensure that development is landscape led whereby the diversity and local distinctiveness of the local landscape character is conserved, enhances and appreciated. The appraisal affirms the benefits to be provided from landscape led development, showing it will have a significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development in both the short and longer term. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to conserving and enhancing the character of the natural and historic environment (5). It also highlights the positive effect on health, wellbeing and reducing inequalities (2) and responding to climate change (9).
- 4.13. Historic environment: The policy gives great weight to conserving the significance of the district's heritage assets and their settings. The appraisal affirms the benefits to be provided from a specific policy on the historic environment, showing it will have a significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development in both the short and longer term. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to conserving and enhancing the character of the natural and historic environment (5). It also highlights the positive effect on health, wellbeing and reducing inequalities (2).
- 4.14. Green Infrastructure: The policy aims to maximise the potential for strengthening both local and strategic green infrastructure across the District to benefit both the environment and health and wellbeing of communities. The appraisal affirms the multi-functional benefits to be derived from providing high quality Green Infrastructure (GI) integrated conceptually and practically and with a high likelihood of having significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development for a long time. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to the GI contribution towards promoting safe and sustainable travel choices (4), protecting landscape character and distinctiveness and providing for wildlife (5) and, in helping the district to tackle climate change. Policy is also strong in its support for the health and wellbeing of the new residents (2) but its effect on levels of crime and bad behaviours needs to be tempered by the risk of poorly designed GI prohibiting some function and enjoyment. The protection of soil water and air and against noise (6) is significantly positive overall also but GI can only have a limited effect on soil quality with the context of new development. The policy has a positive effect on the provision of housing (1) not so much on absolute numbers but in as much as the policy actively looks to advantage residents of affordable housing that might not otherwise have as much domestic space, and also those residents who are elderly or have special needs. Accessibility to community infrastructure (3) is positively affected by the policy in that it will support the use of green routes for commuting and linking parts of the urban areas and create access to the countryside, but it is not designed specifically to enable IT technologies though these may use GI if designed sensitively. The policy has a largely positive effect on the management and use of natural resources (8) particularly by helping reduce

energy use. However the policy can only be neutral in its effects on the use of minerals and waste. The appraisal marks the policy effects on the efficiency of land use (7) support of a sustainable economic base (10) as neutral. Arguably, the provision of GI is part of the efficient use of land for its positive effects on health and wellbeing and similarly its provision should create a more attractive place to live, work and invest.

- 4.15. Biodiversity and geodiversity: The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for conserving and enhancing this richness and diversity both for its own sake, but also the positive contribution that it makes to the overall quality of life and sense of place for residents and visitors to West Berkshire in both urban and rural areas. The appraisal reaffirms that the policy would have a significantly positive effect on the natural, built and historic environment (5) in terms of seeking to secure improvements and enhancements to designated sites and habitats. It specifically seeks to minimise the fragmentation and maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancements and connection of natural habitats in order to realise biodiversity net gain. The policy would have a positive effect on the accessibility of community infrastructure (3) in terms of improving biodiversity's permeability within wider green infrastructure. It would also have a positive effect in terms of protecting and improving air, water and soil quality (6), in terms of conserving the richness and diversity of underlying geology and soils, as well as recognising that the three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in the District are sensitive to surface and groundwater quality. It would also have a positive effect on promoting the efficiency of land use (7) according to location and setting by ensuring that buffer zones are incorporated between development and designated sites. Finally, the policy would have a positive effect on ensuring adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change (9), in terms of requiring development to incorporate conservation features that will help wildlife to adapt to climate change.

Table 7: SA findings relating to our environment and surroundings (built and natural resources)

SA Objective	DC2: Health and wellbeing	DC3: Building sustainable homes and businesses	DC4: Environmental nuisance and pollution	DC5: Water quality	DC6: Water resources	DC7: Air quality
SA1: Housing	0	-	+	0	+	0
SA2: Health & inequality	++	++	0	+	0	++
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	0	0	0	+	0
SA4: Sustainable travel	+	+	0	0	0	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	++	+	0	++	+	+
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	+	0	+	++	0	++
SA7: Efficient land use	+	+	+	0	0	0
SA8: Natural resources	+	++	0	0	++	+
SA9: Climate change	++	++	0	+	++	++
SA10: Economy	+	0	+	0	+	0
Overall effect						

4.16. Health and wellbeing: The policy sets out the importance the Council places on the consideration of health and wellbeing in new development. The appraisal affirms the benefits of having a specific policy which supports and enhances positive mental and physical health and wellbeing and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. It highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to the significantly positive contribution it makes towards the health and wellbeing of the new residents (2), protecting landscape character and distinctiveness and providing for wildlife (5) and responding to climate change (9). It is also positive in accessibility to

community infrastructure (3), promoting safe and sustainable travel choices (4), the protection of soil water and air and against noise (6), the efficiency of land use (7), the management and use of natural resources (8) and support of a sustainable economic base (10).

- 4.17. Building sustainable homes and businesses: The policy sets out minimum standards of construction to address reduction in carbon omissions and reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. The proposed revised policy requires houses to be built to the Home Quality Mark which starts off at a standard almost equivalent to Part L of the building regulations but then progresses to net Carbon neutral and even carbon positive (8) & (9). However, the viability assessments done say that there is a trade-off between the number of affordable houses that can be provided and made to be net carbon neutral which means that the policy cannot maximise the provision of affordable housing (1). Homes that are provided to the HQM must be healthy and have access to gardens and green infrastructure (2) as these are areas required to be scored.
- 4.18. Environmental nuisance and pollution: This policy is intended to aid in promoting good quality of life for all land users through avoiding any adverse effects from pollution from new development. The appraisal affirms the multi-functional benefits to be derived from providing a new policy on Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control (ENPC) integrated into a single policy with a high likelihood of having significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development for a long time. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to the ENPC contribution towards maximising affordable housing in sustainable locations (1), protecting soil, water, and air pollution (6) with benefits for both human health (2) and for wildlife (5). The policy can strengthened still further by supplementary information on local standards for example the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is more susceptible to noise and light pollution than other parts of the District.
- 4.19. Water quality: The policy aims to improve the water quality of water bodies, above and below ground, to be in line with the Water Framework Directive requirements. Overall, the effect of the policy on sustainability is positive and affirms the benefits of having a specific policy that in conjunction with other policies in the Local Plan contributes particularly to its primary purpose of the protection and improvement of water quality (6), the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape (5), as well as having a positive effect in the longer term on people's health and wellbeing (2) and, the use of green and blue infrastructure (9) in support of climate change and the quality of the public realm. The contribution of developments in improving water quality and the ecology of water bodies is likely to have a positive effect by ensuring that new development does not adversely impact on biodiversity and ensuring that, for example, it takes sewerage infrastructure into account. Otherwise the effects of the policy are likely to be neutral. Whilst there may be localised effects close to development in the short term, the substantial benefits of this policy will be achieved by cumulative action over a longer time

period and alongside other policies relating to the management of the water environment and the actions of partners.

- 4.20. Water resources: The aim of the policy is for development to minimise water use and to be as water neutral as possible. Overall, the effect of the policy on sustainability is positive and affirms the benefits of having a specific policy that in conjunction with other policies in the Local Plan contributes particularly to the reduction in consumption of natural resources (8) and mitigation of impacts on climate change (9) and including the promotion of energy efficiency and a reduction in the need for larger infrastructure. This option aims to maximise water and energy efficiency within the context of recent government guidance. It ensures the supply and wise use of water to new housing provision (1) and economic non-residential development (10). It will contribute positively in an indirect way by encouraging development to adopt higher water efficiency standards to alleviate water stress for the benefit of surface and groundwater flows, wetlands and associated biodiversity and landscape character (5). With regard to sub-objectives (6)(d) and (7)(b) the effects would be positive by helping to reduce the impact of pollutants on water quality and influence the most appropriate density of land use towards the most efficient means of managing water resources. However, the headline objective is marginally assessed as neutral due to the remaining sub-objectives being neutral. . The higher standards of water efficiency and re-use will cumulatively contribute to a range of sustainability objectives compounded over the longer term benefiting the environment, climate change and quality of life from a more secure supply of water for consumption and recreation.
- 4.21. Air quality: The overall aim of this policy is to maintain, and where possible, improve air quality and to reduce exposure to areas of poor air quality. The most positive effects from this policy on sustainability come from promoting health, wellbeing and active lifestyles (2), the protection and improvement of air quality (6) and the reduction of emissions in addressing climate change (9). Effects are indirectly positive on the reduction of consumption and efficient use of natural resources (9) and on the natural, built and historic environment (5) though arguably the significantly positive effects on biodiversity could weigh up the overall objective here. Primarily the positive effects relate to mitigatory activity whereby the policy should help steer away from less sustainable locations at risk from air pollution and encourage development to utilise mitigation measures such as improvements in transport infrastructure, the use of low energy technologies in design and construction and the use of green infrastructure to benefit communities and the environment.

Table 8: SA findings for policies relating to Our environment and surroundings (historic resources)

SA Objective	DC8: Conservation areas	DC9: Listed buildings	DC10: Non designated heritage assets	DC11: Registered parks & gardens	DC12: Registered battlefields	DC13: Assets of archaeological importance	DC14: Trees, woodlands and hedgerows
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA2: Health & inequality	0	0	0	+	0	0	+
SA3: Community infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA4: Sustainable travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	+	+	+	++	+	+	++
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Efficient land use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA10: Economy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall effect							

4.22. Conservation areas: The policy addresses the potential effects of development on setting of a conservation area and the important views into, out of, across or through the area, The appraisal affirms that the policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly with regard to the character, appearance and significance of Conservation Areas. In conjunction with policy SP9, the policy would also ensure the sensitive design of proposals to ensure that they respect their setting as part of the wider landscape. The policy would otherwise have a neutral effect.

- 4.23. Listed buildings: The appraisal affirms that policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly in terms of seeking to preserve the significance of Listed Buildings. In conjunction with policy SP9, the policy would also ensure the sensitive design of proposals to ensure that they respect their setting as part of the wider landscape. The policy would otherwise have a neutral effect.
- 4.24. Non designated heritage assets: The appraisal affirms that policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly in terms of seeking to ensure that development has a clear understanding of the significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings. In conjunction with policy SP9, the policy would also ensure the proposals have regard to the integrity of the landscape. The policy would otherwise have a neutral effect.
- 4.25. Registered parks and gardens: The appraisal indicates that policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly in terms of the conservation of Registered Parks and Gardens. It will also ensure that proposals consider the integrity of the landscape.
- 4.26. Registered battlefields: The appraisal indicates that the policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly in terms of the conservation of Registered Battlefields. It will also ensure that proposals consider the integrity of the landscape.
- 4.27. Assets of archaeological importance: The policy recognises the value of these designed landscapes and aims to protect them from development that would be harmful to their character or setting. The appraisal indicates that policy would have a positive effect in terms of conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment (5), particularly in terms of the conservation of heritage assets of archaeological interest. It will also ensure that proposals consider the topographical integrity of the landscape.
- 4.28. Trees, woodlands and hedgerows: The policy seeks to encourage their planting and protection as valued visual and ecological assets in towns, villages and countryside. The appraisal reaffirms that the policy would have a significantly positive effect on the natural, built and historic environment (5) in terms of recognising the value of trees, woodland and hedgerows as ecological assets, their contribution to landscape distinctiveness. In addition, the policy recognises the potential harm resulting from the loss of ancient woodland, and woodland and hedgerows located in historic parks. The policy also has a positive effect on improving health and wellbeing (2) in terms of improving the quality of green infrastructure and contributing to a sense of place and providing amenity. It also has a positive effect on the climate change objective (9) in terms of recognising the importance of trees, woodland and hedgerows in their adaptation to climate change.

Delivering Housing

Table 9: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (1)

SA Objective	SP12: Approach to housing delivery	SP13: Sites allocated for residential	SP14: Sites allocated for residential	SP15: Sites allocated for residential	SP16: Sandleford strategic site	SP17: North East Thatcham strategic site
SA1: Housing	+	++	++	+	++	++
SA2: Health & inequality	+	+	+	+	++	++
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	++	++	+	++	++
SA4: Sustainable travel	0	++	++	+	++	++
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Efficient land use	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA9: Climate change	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA10: Economy	++	+	+	+	0	+
Overall effect						

- 4.29. Approach to housing delivery: The option to deliver above the current housing need would aim to deliver some 10% above, with the requirement expressed as a range. Provision will be made for 8840 to 9775 net additional homes for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2037. This would demonstrate predominantly positive effects for objectives on delivering housing (1), including enabling provision for all sectors of the community, and for the objectives on improving health, safety and wellbeing (2) and improving

accessibility to community infrastructure (3). New housing to meet above the assessed need not only provides much needed housing but also accompanying infrastructure and opportunities to create high quality developments which will be designed to create safe places, incorporate multi-functional GI, and thus improve health, safety and well-being. Significantly positive effects are assessed for the objective of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). Increased housing provision will support the local economy in a number of ways, including through attracting inward investment and promoting economic growth of urban areas and the vitality of town centres. Other effects are predominantly neutral with the only negative effects identified being for sub objectives relating to efficiency of land use (7) and reducing consumption of natural resources (8). A level of growth higher than the current Core Strategy requirement and local housing need will inevitably lead to a higher level of greenfield land allocations, even with encouragement of brownfield land opportunities through directing growth to existing settlements. Similarly, higher growth will lead to increased consumption of natural resources, though other policies will ensure that new developments minimise consumption and manage their use effectively. There will however also be opportunities for redevelopment of brownfield land providing more environmentally sustainable housing schemes. Overall, this policy would boost supply of housing above the current development plan requirement and support economic growth, without significant negative environmental effects.

- 4.30. Sites allocated for residential development in Newbury and Thatcham: This area is the main focus for growth, where two strategic urban extensions are proposed. The appraisal confirms the site allocations in Newbury and Thatcham spatial area would have a significantly positive effect on maximising housing provision (1) as these areas have the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. The strategic site allocations including Sandford Park, Newbury and North East Thatcham are of a sufficient scale to make a significant contribution to affordable housing and meet the needs of different sectors in the community. Notably, the allocation at Long Copse Farm, Enborne would meet the needs of gypsies and travellers. The site allocations would also have a significantly positive effect in terms improving access to community infrastructure (3) and promoting and maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4) as these urban areas have the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. The policy would also have a positive effect in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10), by locating a scale of development which is proportionate to the vitality and viability of the town and village centres. The policy would also be likely to have a positive effect in terms of supporting healthy, active lifestyles (2). Whilst new housing development may have an adverse effect on road safety, there would be the ability to improve this as well as opportunities for walking and cycling. On this basis, there would be an overall neutral effect on promoting and maximising opportunities for sustainable travel (4). There is a similarly neutral effect on protecting and improving air, water and soil quality (6), as new housing may adversely affect air quality, it would also have the potential to improve this. In conclusion, there is a clear benefit in the new policy in identifying sites for housing

provision in the Newbury and Thatcham spatial area. There is a clear benefit in terms of identifying sites which would be suitable for meeting the needs of different sectors of the community. Furthermore, no policy could have a potentially negative effect by allowing unsustainable patterns of growth to take place.

- 4.31. Sites allocated for residential development in Eastern Area: Due to significant constraints no strategic allocation is made in this spatial area. New non-strategic allocations are proposed at Theale and Woolhampton with additional sites to be brought forward through Neighbourhood Development Plans. The appraisal confirms the site allocations in the Eastern Area would have a significantly positive effect on maximising housing provision (1) as this area, along with Newbury and Thatcham spatial area has the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. Although the site allocations are non-strategic in nature, the site allocations would contribute to meeting affordable housing need and meeting the needs of different sectors in the community. The site allocations would also have a significantly positive effect in terms improving access to community infrastructure (3) and promoting and maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4) as these urban areas have the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. The policy would also have a positive effect in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10), by locating a scale of development which is proportionate to the vitality and viability of the town and village centres. The policy would also be likely to have a positive effect in terms of supporting healthy, active lifestyles (2). Whilst new housing development may have an adverse effect on road safety, there would be the ability to improve this as well as opportunities for walking and cycling. On this basis, there would be an overall neutral effect on promoting and maximising opportunities for sustainable travel (4). There is a similarly neutral effect on protecting and improving air, water and soil quality (6), as new housing may adversely affect air quality, it would also have the potential to improve this. There is a clear benefit in the new policy in identifying sites for housing provision in the Eastern spatial area including those that would be suitable for meeting the needs of different sectors of the community.
- 4.32. The special characteristics of the North Wessex Downs AONB mean that development will be modest, helping to meet local needs, support the rural economy and sustain local facilities in accordance with Policy SP2. Sites in the rural service centres of Hungerford and Lambourn will be brought forward through neighbourhood development plans. New sites in the service villages of Chieveley, Kintbury, Bradfield Southend and Great Shefford are proposed or allocation in this LPR. The appraisal confirms that the sites considered in the North Wessex Downs AONB spatial area would have a positive effect on the provision of housing (1) in terms of locating housing according to the location and size individual rural service centres and service villages. In this context, the policy would support the provision of affordable housing on market-led housing sites and help to meet the housing needs of different sectors in the community. The sites would also have a positive effect in terms improving access to community infrastructure (3) and promoting and maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4) as sites would be

located according to the range and services available within these settlements. The policy would also have a positive effect in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10), by locating a scale of development which is proportionate to the vitality and viability of the town and village centres. The policy would also be likely to have a positive effect in terms of supporting healthy, active lifestyles (2). Whilst new housing development may have an adverse effect on road safety, there would be the ability to improve this as well as opportunities for walking and cycling. On this basis, there would be an overall neutral effect on promoting and maximising opportunities for sustainable travel (4). There is a similarly neutral effect on protecting and improving air, water and soil quality (6), as new housing may adversely affect air quality, it would also have the potential to improve this. There is a clear benefit in the new policy in identifying sites for housing provision in the North Wessex Downs AONB including those that would be suitable for meeting the needs of different sectors of the community.

- 4.33. Sandleford strategic site: The Council's spatial strategy is outlined in Policy SP1 and affirms a continued approach to focusing development in settlements in line with a District-wide settlement hierarchy (contained in policy SP3). Newbury, as part of the Newbury and Thatcham urban area, is a sustainable location for development and that Sandleford Park remains the most appropriate location for strategic housing delivery in Newbury.
- 4.34. North East Thatcham strategic site: The Council's spatial strategy is outlined in Policy SP1 and affirms a continued approach to focusing development in settlements in line with a District-wide settlement hierarchy (contained in policy SP3). Thatcham, as part of the Newbury and Thatcham urban area, is a sustainable location for development. A new urban extension to the north east of the town is allocated for development and will provide a new residential neighbourhood with supporting facilities and green infrastructure and enable long-term planning for Thatcham's future. Delivery of at least 1,250 dwellings is anticipated within the plan period. There are a number of significant positive sustainability effects that developing the site would have, including maximising the provision of: affordable housing (1); custom and self-build plots; new green infrastructure and public open space, new community infrastructure (3) including primary and secondary schools; and improvements to the cycling and walking network to improve opportunities for sustainable travel (4).

Table 10: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (2)

SA Objective	SP18: Housing type and mix	SP19: Affordable housing	DC16: Rural housing exceptions	DC17: Self and custom build	DC18: Specialised housing	DC19: GTTS	DC20: Retention of mobile home parks
SA1: Housing	++	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA2: Health & inequality	+	+	0	0	0	+	0
SA3: Community infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA4: Sustainable travel	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Efficient land use	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA8: Natural resources	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	0	+	0	0	0	+	?
SA10: Economy	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
Overall effect							

- 4.35. Housing type and mix: The policy emphasises the importance of ensuring that there is a wide choice and mix of housing to meet existing and future local needs, and to help secure mixed and balanced communities. The appraisal demonstrates positive effects with no negative impacts identified. This policy demonstrates significantly positive effects for the objective of enabling provision of housing to meet identified needs (1). The effects on health and well-being (2) are also positive as provision of a mix of housing to meet the needs of local communities will assist in reducing inequalities and improve quality of life, particularly for those in need of social housing. Meeting the need for a variety of housing tenures, types and sizes will

support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) as housing provision which meets the needs of all sectors of the community will support the local economy in a variety of ways, including through attracting inward investment and promoting economic growth. The effects on the remainder of the sustainability objectives are considered to be neutral as the policy relates to the tenure and mix of housing sizes within a development rather than to the level or location of housebuilding.

- 4.36. **Affordable housing:** In an area of high property prices the provision of affordable housing is seen as a priority as housing has wide implications on health, education and employment opportunities. The policy demonstrates significantly positive effects for the objective of enabling provision of housing to meet identified needs (1). The effects on health and well-being (2) are also positive as provision of affordable housing will assist in reducing inequalities and improve quality of life for those in need of social housing. As the policy relates to the tenure within a development rather than to the level or location of housebuilding, most effects are neutral. This revised policy which requires affordable housing to be built to net zero carbon standards will have positive impacts for objectives (8) and (9), to reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and to reduce emissions contributing to climate change, particularly for reduction of energy use and promotion of sustainable/renewable energy technologies and reducing West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Maximising opportunities for affordable housing will support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) as increased housing provision which is affordable will support the local economy in a variety of ways, including through attracting inward investment and promoting economic growth.
- 4.37. **Rural housing exceptions:** The rural exception housing policy relates to the provision of small scale sites to meet an identified local housing need associated with rural communities. In supporting housing development adjacent to existing rural settlements where there is a need, and making clear that the expectation is for these to be 100% affordable, the policy is making a direct contribution to the sustainability objective of enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations (1). The policy includes criteria to ensure that such developments do not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area, thereby contributing to the character and distinctiveness objective (5).
- 4.38. **Self and custom build:** The policy seeks to support self-build and custom-build housing with LPAs requiring a proportion of new homes to be provided as serviced plots for self and custom build. LPAs also keep a register of individuals and associations who have expressed an interest in acquiring serviced plots for self and custom build. Following the appraisal, all objectives for sustainability in the majority are at a neutral level with positive outcomes for objective (1) in terms of maximising housing provision and enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations.
- 4.39. **Specialised housing:** The policy provides specific guidance when it comes to housing for those identified with support or care needs. Following the

appraisal, all objectives for sustainability in the majority are at a neutral level. Objective (1) has achieved a positive outcome in the appraisal for maximising housing provision and enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations

- 4.40. Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showmen (GTTS): The appraisal affirms the benefits of having a revised policy which responds to meeting the needs of GTTS, as based on an up to date needs accommodation assessment, and having regard to the 2015 definition of 'Gypsy and Traveller'. It thus highlights a positive approach to seeking to meet the needs of this section of the community (1), seeks to reduce unauthorised sites by providing a policy, which benefits both the settled community and the traveller community, and benefits the character of the area (2) and (5), provides accessibility to community infrastructure (3) by seeking to locate pitches and plots in accessible locations and provide access to facilities and services; promotes travel choices (4), directs development to the most appropriate locations, and to previously developed land, and details what is expected of the applicant to demonstrate as part of the planning application (5) and (7), and seeks to respond to flood risk and promote sustainable urban drainage systems (9).
- 4.41. Retention of mobile homes: The appraisal confirms the positive effect that will be had in terms of helping to meet the housing need for different groups in the community, and specifically low-cost home ownership. Whilst the policy principally safeguards these sites, it does allow for their loss (either in full or on part) on an exceptional basis where it would provide 100% affordable housing to meet locally identified needs. As such, it has the potential to have a positive effect in terms of providing housing stock which is better suited to meet local housing needs (1). Where park home sites do come forward for redevelopment, there may be opportunities to enhance landscape character and the setting of heritage assets (5), but this effect is likely to be offset by the visual impact of park home sites which are retained. The impact on climate change is uncertain (9) given that such uses are classified as a 'highly vulnerable' use and pre-exist national planning practice guidance on flood risk. Whilst the policy will largely have a neutral effect on supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) – there may be positive effects as low cost home ownership may help to attract workers to the district. Given that the overall thrust of the policy is to retain park home sites, the overall impact of the policy is likely to be neutral on the remaining objectives.

Table 11: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (3)

SA Objective	DC21: Residential Use of Space above Shops and Offices	DC27: Residential extensions	DC28: Residential annexes	DC29: Residential space standards	DC30: Residential amenity
SA1: Housing	++	0	0	0	0
SA2: Health & inequality	0	+	0	0	++
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	0	0	0	0
SA4: Sustainable travel	+	0	0	0	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	0	+	0	0	0
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Efficient land use	++	+	+	0	0
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0
SA10: Economy	+	0	0	0	0
Overall effect					

4.42. Residential Use of Space above Shops and Offices: The policy provides in principle support for homes above retail units. In doing so it supports the objectives of providing sufficient homes (1) and making efficient use of land (7). Since the vast majority of such development would take place in town centres, it also supports the objectives of improved access to services (3), reducing the need to travel by unsustainable modes (4) and supporting the vitality of town centres (10).

- 4.43. Residential extensions: The policy presumes to favour proposals for the extension of existing permanent dwellings. Positive effects are attributed to improving the health and wellbeing (2) in terms of seeking quality amenity space, no adverse impact on neighbour amenity, and high quality design; and in conserving and enhancing the character of the area (5) in terms of expecting high quality design, and the criteria lists specific design attributes to achieve (subservient design, consideration of window placement, materials). The policy seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity features and requires development to not have an adverse impact on trees (5a) and advocates no harm to the historic setting (5c). A positive score has been given to promoting and improving the efficiency of land (7) as the policy seeks to make efficient use of existing residential land in both settlement and out of settlement areas.
- 4.44. Residential annexes: The policy is focussed on residential annexes which is a new policy to West Berkshire. The policy seeks to improve and set out clear guidance the requirements for annexes within curtilages of dwellings. This includes guidance over design, function, and the relationship with the main dwelling, its setting, use and impact over existing living conditions currently enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings. As a result, all objectives for sustainability in the majority are at a neutral level with a positive outcome to promote and improve the efficiency of land use (7) in relation to maximising the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate.
- 4.45. Residential space standards: The policy is focussed on the narrow topic of residential space standards which is a new policy which has come about under the nationally described space standards. The standards deal with internal space within new dwellings and sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notable bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. As a result, all objectives for sustainability are at a neutral level not contributing positively nor negatively. The single exception is the health and wellbeing objective (2) (a) whereby having adequate floor space and room would contribute towards a healthier lifestyle.
- 4.46. Residential amenity: The policy seeks a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of land and buildings. The appraisal finds that a new policy would have a predominately neutral impact on the sustainability objectives. There are positive effects attributed to improving the health and wellbeing (2) and accessibility to community infrastructure (3). The positive score is in response to seeking to improve the quality of life for residents, for existing and future users of land and buildings, and responds to current national government policy on ensuring natural light is provided and internal accommodation is of an adequate size. Non-residential uses will also be considered. Good size amenity space (gardens) seek to ensure that this element of green infrastructure is provided, thereby giving a positive score to (2) and (3) of the sustainability objectives. There would be a positive effect on the sub-objective of (10) to support the viability and vitality of town and village centres to ensure that development is appropriately located, extending to residential uses and in some cases non-residential uses.

Table 12: SA findings for policies relating to delivering housing (4)

SA Objective	DC16: Rural exception housing	DC22: Housing related to rural workers	DC23: Conversion of Existing Redundant and Disused Buildings in the	DC24: Replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside	DC25: Extension of residential curtilages in the countryside	DC26: Sub division of existing dwellings in the countryside
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	0	0	0
SA2: Health & inequality	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA3: Community infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA4: Sustainable travel	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Efficient land use	0	+	+	+	0	++
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	+	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA10: Economy	0	++	0	+	0	0
Overall effect						

4.47. Rural exception housing: The policy proposes that small scale rural exception housing schemes will be permitted adjacent to rural settlements to meet an identified local housing need. In supporting housing development adjacent to existing rural settlements where there is a need, and making clear that the expectation is for these to be 100% affordable, the policy is making a direct contribution to the sustainability objective of enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations (1). The policy includes criteria to ensure that such developments do not have a detrimental

effect on the character of the area, thereby contributing to the character and distinctiveness objective (5).

- 4.48. Housing related to rural workers: This specific policy has the most positive effect on the sustainability objectives concerned with housing provision (1) and supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). While supporting such accommodation where it supports rural business needs, the policy also puts in place safeguards to ensure such accommodation is sustainable. In particular, criteria make a positive contribution to the objectives on the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment (5), as well as promoting previously developed land (7).
- 4.49. Conversion of Existing Redundant and Disused Buildings in the Countryside: This policy applies to all existing buildings that are structurally sound including for example traditional farmsteads or buildings, stables, community and educational facilities. The policy sets out the criteria that will be applied in determining applications for conversion and/or re-use of existing redundant and disused buildings in the countryside to residential use. These relate largely to the impact on the surrounding landscape, any historic buildings and protected species (5), the support for re-use in itself contributes positively to housing supply (1), the efficient use of land (7) and minimisation of minerals resource use (8).
- 4.50. Replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside: The policy supports redevelopment of existing dwellings in the countryside, subject to a number of detailed criteria. The support for replacement dwellings supports the objective of reusing previously developed land (7) and the policy criteria ensure that any such development continues to make a positive contribution to the objectives of landscape character, including biodiversity and historic conservation (5), as well as to the objective of supporting the economy (10) through safeguards relating to the needs of rural enterprises.
- 4.51. Extension of residential curtilages in the countryside: The policy sets out the criteria that will be applied in determining applications for the extension of residential curtilages. The criteria relate to the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area, as well as highways safety, thereby contributing positively to the sustainability objectives dealing with those matters (5) and (4).
- 4.52. Sub division of existing dwellings in the countryside: The policy supports the subdivision of dwellings in the countryside, subject to a number of detailed criteria. In doing so it supports the objective of enabling housing provision (1) and reusing previously developed land (7). It also contributes to minimising the consumption of minerals, since reuse is more efficient than new-build (9). At the same time, policy criteria ensure the safeguarding of the character of the environment (5). Criteria also place importance on the relationship of proposed sub-divisions to settlements and their shops, services and facilities. This makes a contribution to accessibility of community infrastructure (3), as well as the possibility of accessing them by sustainable modes, and thereby air quality (4, 6).

Table 13: SA findings for policies relating to fostering economic growth (1)

SA Objective	SP20: Strategic Approach to Economic Development and Hierarchy of Centres	SP21: Sites allocated for economic development	SP22: Transport	SP23: Infrastructure requirement and delivery	DC31: Designated employment areas	DC35: Transport infrastructure	DC36: Parking and travel plans
SA1: Housing	0	0	++	+	0	+	++
SA2: Health & inequality	0	0	++	++	0	+	++
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	0	+	++	0	++	+
SA4: Sustainable travel	+	0	++	++	0	++	++
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	0	0	+	+	0	0	+
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	++	+	0	+	++
SA7: Efficient land use	+	+	+	0	+	+	+
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	+	+	0	0	+
SA9: Climate change	0	0	++	++	0	++	++
SA10: Economy	+	+	+	0	+	+	+
Overall effect							

4.53. Strategic Approach to Economic Development and Hierarchy of Centres: The purpose of this policy is to plan for growth and set out the type of floor space needed to meet the District's economic needs over the plan period. The appraisal indicates that the policy would have a positive effect on a number of objectives including improving accessibility to community infrastructure (3), promoting and maximising opportunities for sustainable travel (4), promoting and improving the efficiency of land use (7) and supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). This can

largely be attributed to the objectives of the policy in terms of “the town centre first” approach to new office development, as well as seeking to ensure that there are no other sequentially preferable sites for community facilities and other services (Classes E and F). The policy also seeks to protect the vitality and viability of town centres, by ensuring these uses are focused in these areas which are located in the most sustainable locations in the District. It also provides support for businesses requiring a town centre location and support the rural policy. The policy also seeks to promote the efficient use of land by safeguarding and seeking to intensify the District’s Designated Employment Areas. It also has a positive effect in terms of identifying additional land in order to meet the District’s employment land needs over the plan period.

- 4.54. Sites allocated for economic development: The appraisal confirms the positive effect it will have in terms of supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) and a significantly positive effect in terms of encouraging a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District. The policy provides a broad indication of employment floor space that should be provided on these sites which is considered to have a positive effect in terms of applying suitable densities in the context of promoting and improving the efficiency of land use (7). Given that the main purpose of the policy is to propose sites to be allocated for the economic development, it has a neutral impact on the remainder of objectives. However, it is considered that the provision of employment floor space is likely to have a neutral effect as well in terms of promoting and maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4), but there would be the potential for development to improve road safety and opportunities for walking and cycling.
- 4.55. Transport: The policy seeks to encourage sustainable travel in order to achieve the goals of improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment, and promoting quality of life whilst minimising the impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network. Central to this policy is the recognition of the part that transport needs to play in adapting to climate change. This appraisal affirms the benefits to be derived from a sustainable transport network with a high likelihood of having a significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development for a long time. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations (1), in improving health, safety and wellbeing and reducing inequalities (2), in promoting and maximising opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel (4), in protecting and improving air, water and soil quality and minimising noise levels throughout West Berkshire (6) and in reducing emissions contributing to climate change as well as ensuring adaptive measures are in place responding to climate change (9).
- 4.56. Infrastructure requirements and delivery: The appraisal affirms the multi-functional benefits to be derived from providing high quality infrastructure in a timely manner and with a high likelihood of having significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development for a long time. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to the infrastructure improving

health, safety and wellbeing and reducing inequalities (2), improving accessibility to community infrastructure (3), promoting safe and sustainable travel choices (4), and in helping the district to tackle climate change (9). The policy also has a positive effect on the provision of housing (1), in as much as the policy actively looks to advantage residents of affordable housing that might not otherwise have as much access to services and facilities, and also those residents who are elderly or have special needs. The policy can be strengthened still further by supplementary information on local standards and the priority locations for different types of infrastructure.

- 4.57. Designated employment areas: The current balance in the market, the Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) indicates that existing office and industrial stock should be protected from other uses. The policy states that employment uses will continue to be focused within the District's Designated Employment Areas. The appraisal affirms that there would be a positive effect in terms of building a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10) particularly in terms of protecting the District's Designated Employment Areas from non-employment uses. It is considered that there is a significantly positive effect in terms of ensuring the District's employment land is used effectively and efficiently. This is similarly reflected as a positive effect against objective (7) in terms of promoting and improving the efficiency of land. The remainder are neutral but maximising opportunities for safe and sustainable travel (4) for business uses proposed outside the District's Designated Employment Areas is also considered neutral. This is because the policy precludes development which would result in a vehicular conflict with surrounding uses, and would only permit uses outside these areas where there is sufficient highway capacity.
- 4.58. Transport infrastructure: The policy expects travel activity generated by development to be supported through a range of infrastructure associated with different transport modes. The appraisal highlights the benefits of having a policy to guide the identification and development of new transport infrastructure to support new proposals for new development. The new policy provides a greater emphasis on developing safe and more sustainable forms of travel, such as Active Travel (2 & 4) and Public Transport (4) to help mitigate the transport demand arising from new development. The new policy also includes emphasis on wider environmental issues, such as climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (9) through the development of sustainable modes along with a need to provide infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charge points to support the uptake of zero emission vehicles (8) that will occur over the lifetime of the plan. The focus on improving sustainable modes and encouraging zero emission vehicles will in turn provide benefits relating to local air quality (6) and wider natural and built environment issues (5). The new policy will also ensure new transport infrastructure will also assist in informing the location of new residential developments (1) and improving the efficiency of land use (7). It will help to sustain and enhance West Berkshire's economic base by improving access to employment areas and town and village centres (10). The new policy will also improve accessibility by all modes to important community infrastructure, such as education and health (3).

4.59. Parking and travel plans: The policy stipulates that parking provision associated with development should ensure that all modes have the facilities they require in a balanced way. This appraisal affirms the benefits to be derived from sustainable parking and travel plans with a high likelihood of having a significantly positive effect on the sustainability of development for a long time. The appraisal highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to enabling the provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations (1), in improving health, safety and wellbeing and reducing inequalities (2), in promoting and maximising opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel (4), in protecting and improving air, water and soil quality and minimising noise levels throughout West Berkshire (6) and in reducing emissions contributing to climate change as well as ensuring adaptive measures are in place responding to climate change (9). The policy is also strong in its support for improving accessibility to community infrastructure (3), in ensuring that the character and distinctiveness of the natural built and historical environments are conserved and enhanced (5), in promoting and improving the efficiency of land use (7), in reducing the consumption and waste of natural resources and the efficient management and use of land (8) and supporting a strong diverse and sustainable economic base that meets identified needs (10).

Table 14: SA findings for policies relating to fostering economic growth (2)

SA Objective	DC32: Supporting the rural economy	DC33: Redevelopment of previously developed land in the countryside	DC34: Equestrian / racehorse industry	DC37: Public open space	DC38: Promotion of FTTP (fibre to the premises)	DC39: Local shops, farm shops and community facilities
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA2: Health & inequality	0	0	+	++	+	0
SA3: Community infrastructure	+	+	0	+	++	++
SA4: Sustainable travel	0	+	0	+	0	++
SA5: Natural, built & historic environment	+	++	+	+	0	0
SA6: Water, air, soil, noise	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA7: Efficient land use	+	++	+	0	0	0
SA8: Natural resources	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA9: Climate change	0	0	0	+	0	0
SA10: Economy	++	+	++	0	+	+
Overall effect						

4.60. Supporting the rural economy: The policy is concerned with supporting the rural economy. In doing so, it has the most obvious effects on the sustainability objective concerned with supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). It also supports access to services for rural populations (3) by supporting business expansion and diversification in rural areas. The policy contains a number of criteria that all development relating to rural enterprise has to meet, thereby putting in safeguards against development which might be considered unsustainable in relation to the objectives of character and distinctiveness (5), the efficient use of land (7), thereby making a positive contribution to these objectives. The policy is

limited in its effects on the remaining objectives, having no particular provisions which affect these criteria. The policy therefore is considered to be neutral against these objectives.

- 4.61. Redevelopment of previously developed land in the countryside: The appraisal affirms the benefits of having a specific policy which advocates using previously developed land in the countryside for projects which contribute to the rural economy and the likely needs of the rural community. It highlights particular strength in the policy with regard to conserving and enhancing the character and distinctiveness of the environment (5); the promotion and efficient use of land, and ensuring that the type and amount of development is appropriate in its setting (7). In consideration of objective 5 the policy has a particular focus on protecting the character of the site and locality, seeking to ensure that the redevelopment is appropriate in its setting, including protecting heritage assets. This is why the policy is scored as having a significantly positive effect on this sustainability objective. In terms of objective 3 (community infrastructure) an overall positive score was given as proposals assessed under the policy would provide better access in rural areas to services and facilities, depending on the nature of the proposal, which is considered to have more of an effect on the sustainability objective than development of access to IT facilities. The policy is positive in seeking to promote safe and sustainable travel choices (4), taking into account the accessibility of the location; and in seeking to support a strong economic base (10), specifically in regard to strengthening the rural economy. Provision of housing to meet an identified need (1) is assessed as neutral, as this policy is directed to proposals benefiting the rural economy and community; and to improve the health, safety and wellbeing (2). Although, it is considered that the proposal will foster a sense of place and beauty, this does not present an aggregated positive impact on the objective when considering the other sub-objectives.
- 4.62. Equestrian/racehorse industry: The policy supports equestrian related development that will help to strengthen the rural economy, provide diversification opportunities for farmers and increase opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside in a sustainable way. In doing so, it has the most obvious effect on the sustainability objective concerned with supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base (10). It also includes safeguards in relation to the impact of such development on the environment (5). In addition, requirements in the policy to ensure good access to tracks and bridleways supports the health objective (2) and that of safety in transport (4). A requirement to consider the reuse of buildings first contributes to the objective of efficient use of land (7). Since the policy is focused on a very particular type of development, it is considered to have a neutral effect on all other objectives.
- 4.63. Public open space: The policy sets out where new housing must provide for high quality public open space and recreational provision, both in terms of space and associated facilities / equipment. The policy performs well against the health, safety and wellbeing objective (2) and access to community infrastructure (3), as it requires public open space to be provided in all larger

developments, making such spaces accessible close to people's homes. Within that requirement, the policy includes provisions regarding the design quality of these spaces, expecting them to be attractive, multi-functional, inclusive and safe. The policy also requires that the spaces created should be safely accessible by sustainable modes, adding to the sustainable travel objective (4), and for the spaces to make a contribution to biodiversity net gain (5). Open spaces and the planting within them make a positive contribution to air quality (6) as well as to reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change. Being focussed specifically on the provision of public open space in new developments, the policy has no impact on a number of the sustainability objectives, namely those relating to the provision of housing (1), reduction of waste (8) and the economy (10), although even within these, some of the criteria may be noted as being somewhat positively affected by the policy (for example the attractiveness of the district to workers and inward investors under objective 10).

- 4.64. Promotion of FTTP: The policy is focussed on the narrow topic of broadband provision in new development and therefore has no effect on many of the sustainability objectives. It does however make a contribution to objectives relating to health & wellbeing (2), Accessibility to community infrastructure (3), amenity & pollution (6) and the economy (10). The policy requires the installation of the fastest viable broadband connection in new residential and commercial development. This will help to reduce inequalities of broadband access, which in turn will make a contribution to wellbeing through better access to facilities and services and to economic opportunities. Well connected homes and businesses will increase the attractiveness of the West Berkshire as a place to live and do business. Well connected homes make working from home a more viable option, making more efficient use of employment land, and reducing the need to travel, which in turn may improve air quality. One possible negative effect has been identified against the sub-objective of reducing the use of minerals (8) (d), since broadband requires the use of mineral resources for its cabling.
- 4.65. Local shops, farm shops and community facilities: The policy gives support to the provision and retention of shops, services and facilities close to where people live. In doing so, it supports the sustainability objectives of easy access to community infrastructure (3) and sustainable forms of travel (4), and thereby makes a small contribution to air quality also (6). While the protection element of the policy could be considered restrictive for business, and therefore negative against the economy objective (10), however, on balance, maintaining good access to services helps make the settlements more attractive places for people to live, and supports their vitality, all contributing to a strong economy.

5. Sustainability Appraisal findings for the emerging Draft Local Plan Site Options

- 5.1. A total of 50 sites have been appraised. Of those, 44 are just residential; 2 are Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showmen sites; 4 include mixed use (residential and employment land at NEW3 (RSA1), GRE8 (SP16) in Newbury, THA20 (SP17) Thatcham and HSA22 (RSA27) in Compton. The detailed appraisals can be seen in **Appendix 5**. A visual summary of the SA findings for all the site options is presented in **Table 15** below. They are set out in the Appendix in the same order as Table 15. All are assessed as having a predominantly neutral effect, except the two strategic sites which are expected to have a significantly positive effect on sustainability and the Kennet Centre in Newbury which is assessed as positive. The numbers in brackets in the paragraphs below refer to the relevant SA objective.
- 5.2. At Sandleford, Newbury and North East Thatcham the effect is assessed as significantly positive due not least to the provision of a high number of new homes (1) the scale of which affords more access to community infrastructure (3) and improvements in health and wellbeing (2), for instance in the form of new educational and health facilities. Additionally, the provision of land for industrial and employment uses will help sustain the local economy and vitality of Newbury and Thatcham town centres (10). The focus on these two urban areas capitalises on the positive effects of providing different modes of sustainable transport and travel (4) particularly with regard to improvements to the cycling and walking network, and to reduce emissions (9). However, the fact of development being large scale is likely to increase traffic which will require mitigation from the impacts on air and noise (6) quality particularly along busy trunk roads. The size of development proposed also provides opportunities to provide and improve green infrastructure and the ability to use energy efficient design and technology will promote the efficient use of scarce resources (8) and land (7).
- 5.3. Of the non-strategic sites, forty-seven of the 48 sites considered for meeting the housing need (1) are assessed as having a positive effect. These represent the distribution that will support delivery of new homes across all the spatial areas in the District and outside of the strategic sites in Newbury and Thatcham. One site is assessed as having a negative effect due to the small scale and no affordable housing being provided. For the provision of specialised housing, thirty eight out of 48 is assessed as neutral. The two Gypsy and Traveller sites are assessed as significantly positive and the remainder as positive in providing a range, of care home accommodation, custom built or social rented housing, or affordable single person accommodation for the racehorse industry.
- 5.4. The effect of sites on health and wellbeing (2) is predominantly positive. Forty two of the 50 sites positively support active lifestyles and green infrastructure but is neutral or uncertain with respect to effects on crime and behaviour and the effect on green infrastructure is largely neutral. This is likely because it is so dependent on the quality of provision which will be controlled by the range of development management policies in the LPR. .

- 5.5. Forty out of 50 sites are assessed as having at least a positive effect on supporting good access to services and facilities (3) although the proportion is notably higher in the urban areas of the east and in the rural service centres where community infrastructure is likely to be more readily available. The effects are wholly neutral in terms of sites supporting access to digital technology though collectively one would expect the impact to be more positive in justifying investment in infrastructure in the long run.
- 5.6. With regard to sustainable travel (4), for all of the sites the effects on accidents and safety generally from traffic are assessed as neutral or uncertain. In increasing opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport, thirty out of 50 sites have a positive effect except one site in Newbury where the effect is expected to be significantly positive with proposals for improved pedestrian access and extension of speed limits. One site at Enborne is negative due its distance from a bus stop and lack of pedestrian accessibility. The effect is neutral for the remainder which are largely located in the more rural villages of the AONB.
- 5.7. The majority effect from sites on the natural, built and historic environment (5) is neutral. Negative effects on landscape character from 4 sites are recorded due largely to the erosion of the settlement pattern or the scale and intensity of development or the cumulative impact of development on sensitive landscapes and/or their setting. The effects on biodiversity from 14 sites are uncertain mainly due to the proximity of designated wildlife sites and/or possible presence of protected species requiring further survey. There are no identified negative effects on biodiversity at this stage of assessment. Similarly, there are 10 sites where their effect on heritage assets is uncertain principally due to the proximity of archaeological interest or historic building which requires further desk based study or investigation.
- 5.8. The effect on air, soil, water quality and noise levels (6) is predominantly neutral, particularly so in their effect on soil and water quality. There is a higher degree (15 out 50 sites) of uncertainty over effects on air quality with the main reasons cited as continued dependency on car use in rural locations, the location of the development within a site and the proximity to main roads. The proximity of sites to major roads such as the M4, A4 and A34 and to Air Quality Management Areas are principal reasons for eight sites having negative effects on air quality. Similarly, noise levels are assessed as uncertain or negative due to proximity to roads. The uncertainty (7 out of 50) over effects to soil quality pertain to possible risk of contamination from previous uses such as brick or sewage works. And the uncertainty over effects on water quality (5 out of 50 sites) relates to the sites being within Source Protection Zones or nearby sewage treatment works or possible contaminated land which would require further investigation.
- 5.9. Five sites are located on developed or previously developed land (7). The remainder have a negative effect due to the proposed use of greenfield. All sites bar one are assessed as positive with respect to applying the appropriate density of development to make the most efficient use of the

land. The exception concerns density of development being out of character with the existing lineal form of the settlement and the rural location.

- 5.10. All sites are assessed as offering opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency (8) measures using renewable energy and new technologies. The effects on objectives to reduce water consumption, waste and mineral consumption is largely neutral. There is a degree of uncertainty in relation to the capacity of the water supply network to support a small number of developments that would need further investigation and possible upgrade in advance. Similarly, there is uncertainty on 20 sites regarding underlying mineral deposits that will need investigation to assess mineral sterilisation issues and possible safeguarding measures. These are mainly in the east at locations such as Theale, Burghfield and Tilehurst.
- 5.11. All but three sites should support the adoption of low carbon technologies and help improve resilience to climate change (9). Where development is close to major roads mitigation will be required through the application of sustainable transport strategies and travel planning to encourage alternative modes of transport. Thirty six of the 50 sites are assessed as having a neutral effect with respect to risk of flooding. Six are positive. The two recorded as having a negative impact have areas that are within flood zone 3 and suffer risk from surface water flooding or high groundwater levels. Uncertainty exists at other sites where there are some records of surface water flooding and high ground water preventing infiltration therefore, further information is required to fully assess the flood risk and mitigation.
- 5.12. The effects of the vast majority of sites in relation to supporting a strong, diverse and sustainable economy (10) in the District is neutral. In particular housing development is commonly assessed as contributing towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business. Positive effects are expected from three sites; in Newbury which provide for employment land principally, and at Thatcham where it is identified that the most sustainable way for town to secure additional infrastructure is for strategic housing development to occur which will improve the potential to support the commercial centre and provide additional workforce and customers.

Table 15: Summary of SA findings for sites by spatial area and settlements

SA objective	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10																	
Newbury and Thatcham																											
Site ID	Strategic residential sites																										
GRE8 (SP16)	++	+	++	?	++	++	+	?	++	+	0	0	0	-	0	?	-	+	+	+	?	0	+	+	0	0	0
THA20 (SP17)	++	++	++	?	++	++	+	?	++	++	0	0	0	-	0	?	-	++	++	++	?	0	+	+	+	+	+
Newbury and Thatcham																											
Newbury																											
NEW3 (RSA1)	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	0	+	?	+	0	++	++	+	0	?	+	+	0	++	+	+
HSA1 (RSA2)	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
HSA2 (RSA3)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	?	+	?	?	?	0	?	-	+	+	0	?	+	+	0	0	0	0
HSA3 (RSA4)	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
GRE3	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	?	0	?	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
GRE6 (RSA5)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	?	0	0	-	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0
GRE10	+	0	+	0	+	-	0	0	+	?	-	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
NEW1	+	0	+	?	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	+	+	0	?	+	+	--	++	+	+
HSA4 (RSA6)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
SCD4	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	?	0	+	?	?	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Thatcham																											
HSA5 (RSA7)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	?	0	0	-	?	?	?	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	?	0	0	0
THA9	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	?	0	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	?	0	+	0	0	0	0
Cold Ash																											
HSA6 (RSA8)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	?	0	?	0	0	0	?	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0
HSA7 (RSA9)	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	?	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
CA12	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	?	+	+	?	?	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
CA15	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	?	+	+	?	0	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
CA16	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	?	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
CA17	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	?	+	+	?	?	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Enborne																											
TS2 (RSA33)	0	++	+	+	0	+	0	?	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0

SA objective	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10																	
Eastern Area																											
Tilehurst																											
HSA9 (RSA10)	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
HSA10(RSA11)	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
Purley-on-Thames																											
HSA11(RSA12)	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Calcot																											
HSA12(RSA13)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	-	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0
HSA13(RSA14)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	-	?	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theale																											
HSA14(RSA15)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0
THE1 (RSA16)	?	+	+	0	+	+	0	?	+	?	0	0	-	-	?	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	?	0	0	0
THE7 (RSA17)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	?	+	?	0	0	-	-	-	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	?	0	0	0
Burghfield Common																											
HSA15(RSA18)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
HSA16(RSA19)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	+	?	+	0	0	0	0
SUL1	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	?	+	?	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
Aldermaston																											
TS1 (RSA32)	0	++	+	+	0	+	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
Woolhampton																											
MID4 (RSA20)	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	?	0	0	?	?	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
North Wessex Downs AONB																											
Hungerford																											
HSA18(RSA21)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Lambourn																											
HSA19(RSA22)	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
HSA20(RSA23)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Bradfield Southend																											
HSA22(RSA24)	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	?	0	0	?	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
BRAD2	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	?	0	+	0	0	0	0
BRAD3	-	-	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	?	0	+	+	0	0	0
BRAD5(RSA25)	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
BRAD6	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	?	0	+	-	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	?	0	+	0	0	0	0

SA objective	SA1		SA2		SA3		SA4		SA5			SA6		SA7		SA8		SA9		SA10							
Chieveley																											
CHI23 (RSA26)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	?	+	?	?	?	0	?	-	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
Compton																											
HSA22(RSA27)	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	?	0	+	+	+	?	0	+	+	0	0	0	0
Great Shefford																											
GS1 (RSA28)	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hermitage																											
HSA24(RSA29)	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
HSA25(RSA30)	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
Kintbury																											
KIN3	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	?	+	?	?	0	?	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
KIN4	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	?	-	?	?	0	?	0	-	-	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0
KIN6 (RSA31)	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	?	+	0	?	?	?	0	-	+	+	0	0	?	+	0	0	0	0

6. Consultation

- 6.1. This is an interim Sustainability Appraisal of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review and is available for consultation alongside the LPR document between 11 December 2020 and 5 February 2021.
- 6.2. Following the consultation, the findings of the SA will be considered with respect to the comments received and any further evidence forthcoming in the meantime. The next iteration of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review will be accompanied by a full SA.