West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report

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Section One: Introduction

1.1 West Oxfordshire District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan (previously called ‘Core Strategy’) to replace the existing Local Plan adopted in 2006. As part of this process, the Council is required to ‘test’ the Local Plan through a process of ‘Sustainability Appraisal’ (SA) to ensure that the final policies and proposals contained in the strategy contribute to achieving ‘sustainable development’. Sustainability appraisal is integral to the plan making process and several SA reports have already been published alongside previous consultation documents. This document is a Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Local Plan (October 2012). A final SA report will accompany the proposed submission Local Plan due to be published in spring 2013.

The context / background for the Local Plan

1.2 The Local Plan sets out the key elements of the planning framework for West Oxfordshire, guiding public and private sector investment and development and making clear spatial choices about where development should go. It is the key document in the Local Development Framework.

1.3 The draft Local Plan covers the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2029. It seeks to address the challenges apparent in the District, now and in the future. These challenges include global issues such as climate change and the economy as well as addressing local issues such as affordable housing and transport needs.

1.4 Various options have been tested and consulted upon throughout the development of the Local Plan. The strategy has been refined accordingly and following further consultation in November/December 2012 the plan will be formally published in spring 2013 with submission to Government to follow.

Draft Local Plan (October 2012)

1.5 The draft Local Plan includes an overall vision for how West Oxfordshire will develop up until 2029 and sets out a series of core objectives designed to deliver the vision. Flowing from the vision and objectives are a number of core policies. These include ‘cross-cutting’ policies that apply to all development, ‘topic based’ policies that apply to certain types of development and ‘place-based’ policies that apply to specific parts of the District. For clarity, a brief outline of the content and structure of the draft Local Plan is described in Box 1 below.

Local Plan Contents

| Section 1: | Introduction |
| Section 2: | Sets out a brief profile of the District, identifying the key issues and challenges to be addressed. |
| Section 3: | Sets out a vision of West Oxfordshire in 2029 which is underpinned by a series of core objectives. These have been refined through extensive consultation. |
| Section 4: | Builds on the vision and objectives and sets out the overall strategy for the District, which is based on five key principles including a presumption in favour of sustainable development, locating development in the right places, prudent use of natural resources, high quality design and supporting infrastructure |
| Sections 5 – 8 | Deal with a number of specific aspects of the overall strategy including housing and economic growth, the natural and historic environment and transport. |
| Section 9 | Sets out area-specific strategies for the Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton and rural sub-areas. |
| Section 10 | Explains how the various elements of the Local Plan will be implemented and monitored. |

Box 1: Local Plan contents
1.6 The core objectives are laid out thematically so it is clear which elements of social, economic and environmental development they relate to. The objectives are summarised in Box 2.

### Strong market towns and villages

- **CO1:** Provide new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type and in locations which will help improve the quality of life for rural communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car can be minimised.
- **CO2:** Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet local housing needs.

### Meeting the specific housing needs of our communities

- **CO3:** Ensure the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.
- **CO4:** Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people and in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, newly forming households and travelling communities.

### Sustainable communities with access to services and facilities

- **CO5:** Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.
- **CO6:** Ensure that land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.
- **CO7:** Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- **CO8:** Achieve sustainable economic growth which improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities, removes potential barriers to investment and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.
- **CO9:** Achieve a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy.
- **CO10:** Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve the centres.
- **CO11:** Maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District’s residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.
- **CO12:** Improve access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

### Protecting and enhancing our environment and reducing the impact from climate change

- **CO13:** Conserve and enhance the high environmental quality of West Oxfordshire with protection and promotion of its diverse landscape, biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and its local cultural, heritage and environmental assets.
- **CO14:** Reduce the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.
- **CO15:** Achieve improvements in water and air quality.
- **CO16:** Minimise use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.
- **CO17:** Improve the sustainable design and construction of new development, including improving energy, water efficiency and water management.
- **CO18:** Ensure that new developments are suitably located and well designed to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of our towns and villages as well as contributing to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.

**Box 2: Local Plan objectives**
Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report

1.7 The purpose of this Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report is to demonstrate that environmental, social and economic considerations have been properly taken into account in preparing the draft Local Plan. It is important to reconcile the need for social and economic development with the protection of the environment. This is key to the delivery of sustainable development in the District.

1.8 This SA report has been published alongside the draft Local Plan to demonstrate how the preferred policy options in the strategy have been selected and refined through the SA process.

1.9 The key stages of the sustainability appraisal process are illustrated in Table 1 below. Each of the stages has been carried out in turn in accordance with best practice and to ensure that a thorough assessment of the draft Local Plan policies has been undertaken.

1.10 Further information is provided in Section 2 including a detailed explanation of each stage and how it has been applied to the Local Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>A1</td>
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<th>STAGE B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</th>
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<th>STAGE C: Preparing the sustainability appraisal report</th>
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<tr>
<th>STAGE D: Consulting on the preferred options of the DPD and SA report and preparing the submission document</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preferred Options Document</td>
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<td>D1</td>
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<td>Submission Document</td>
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<td>D2 (i)</td>
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<td>Following Examination in public</td>
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<td>D2 (ii)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D3</td>
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### Table 1: Key stages in the SA process

#### SEA Directive Requirements

1.11 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Local Plan is required under section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). In accordance with best practice, this SA report incorporates the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC which is intended to assess the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

1.12 The requirements of the SEA Directive are illustrated in Table 2 below which indicates where within the SA report each of these requirements is addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEA Directive Requirement</th>
<th>Location in SA Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>This requirement is addressed throughout the whole of the report.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other plans or programmes. | Box 1: Local Plan contents……………………Page 4  
Box 2: Local Plan objectives ……………………Page 5  
Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. (A1) ………..Page 11  
APPENDIX 1  
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report  
| The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme | Collecting Baseline Information (A2)……….Page 13  
Description of ‘business as usual’ scenario…Appendix 2  
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report  
| The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected | Collecting Baseline Information (A2)……….Page 13 |
| 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; | Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment)  
………………………………………………………Page 9  
Identifying Sustainability Issues and Problems (A3)  
………………………………………………………Page 23 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEA Directive Requirement</th>
<th>Location in SA Report</th>
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<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. (A1) .......... Page 11 APPENDIX 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>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);</td>
<td>Section Three: Appraisal of the Draft Local Plan .......... Pages 34-89 Appendix 2: Appraisal of draft Local Plan policies. Detailed appraisal tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;</td>
<td>Appraisal of current planning policies (B4 / B5) .......... Pages 79-89 Appendix 2: Appraisal of draft Local Plan policies. Detailed appraisal tables</td>
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<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Problems encountered in preparing the SA report .......... Page 10 Developing the Local Plan options, predicting and evaluating the effects of the options and potential mitigation and maximisation of benefits .......... Pages 41-76 Appendix 2: Appraisal of draft Local Plan policies. Detailed appraisal tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.</td>
<td>Separate Document – Non Technical Summary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making</td>
<td>This requirement is addressed throughout the whole of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the plan’s or programme’s implementation</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Reports (available separately – for latest report see <a href="http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/8665-4610.pdf">http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/8665-4610.pdf</a></td>
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Table 2: Conformity with SEA Directive requirements
Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment)

1.13 In addition to the sustainability appraisal, an appropriate assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact of the development strategy and policies on areas designated in accordance with Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.

1.14 HRA aims to ensure the protection of sites of exceptional importance for rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community. The European Habitats Directive\(^1\) designates sites that are of international importance for their habitats, flora, or fauna; these are known as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. Together they make up a network of protected sites known as the Natura 2000 network or ‘European sites’.

1.15 The impacts of the Local Plan have been assessed against the conservation objectives of all sites protected by European legislation within 20 miles of the Local Plan area. Following an initial screening exercise, two sites were considered to be at potential risk as a result of growth planned through the Local Plan, both Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):

- Cothill Fen SAC
- Port Meadows SAC

1.16 A systematic process has therefore been followed by the District Council in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council and Natural England to identify and address any potential impacts.

1.17 The scoping report (2010) identified a number of potential impacts relating to water abstraction, water quality, air quality, recreation and mineral extraction.

1.18 Following on from this, the Stage I screening report (2011) more specifically identified potential impacts on two Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) - Cothill Fen (an increase in water abstraction, a reduction in water quality and an increase in recreational pressure) and Oxford Meadows (a reduction in air and water quality and an increase in recreational pressure).

1.19 A more detailed Stage II report (2011) then narrowed down the potential impacts to recreational pressure on both Cothill Fen and Oxford Meadows and air quality at Oxford Meadows.

1.20 The views of Natural England were sought and ruled out potential recreational impact on Cothill Fen.

1.21 The two key issues to address are therefore recreational pressure and air quality at Oxford Meadows.

1.22 In terms of recreational pressure, whilst in theory the presence of Oxford Meadows has the potential to attract visitors from West Oxfordshire, the reality of the situation is that most

\(^1\) Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna
visitors are from Oxford itself with less than 2% from West Oxfordshire. Recent and planned improvements to green infrastructure within the District will help to ensure that recreational pressures on other areas do not increase as a result of future growth within the District.

1.23 In terms of air quality, the evidence suggests that the increase in traffic likely to be generated as planned growth in the District is of such a magnitude that it will not have a discernible impact in relation to nitrogen deposition at Oxford Meadows.

1.24 A separate report has been prepared which illustrates the potential impacts of the Local Plan on these protected sites with suggested mitigation measures to address these impacts. Importantly the report concludes that the level of growth planned through the Local Plan is unlikely to have a significant impact on either of these two European sites.

Problems encountered in preparing the SA report

1.25 No significant problems were encountered in preparing the SA report. The information required to undertake the assessment was readily available and close working with other organisations such as Oxfordshire County Council ensured that information and knowledge gaps were easily addressed. However, there have been a number of changing circumstances since preparation of the Local Plan process began including the proposed abolition of the South East Plan, the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 and a material change in circumstances relating to potential housing options at Carterton and the decision to refuse the compulsory purchase of land needed for the Cogges Link Road at Witney. These various issues have increased the complexity of the plan preparation process and caused some delay.

1.26 The broad, strategic nature of the Local Plan policies also meant that some of the cumulative long term impacts were difficult to predict. This is reflected in the commentary associated with each of the detailed policy appraisals in Appendix 2 and the summary included in Table 35 (Page 84).
Section Two: The evidence gathering stage

2.1 As outlined above there are five main stages to the SA process, A, B, C, D and E. This section summarises Stage A, the evidence gathering stage. More detailed information is provided in the SA Scoping Report (December 2009) which can be found at http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/7316-2445.pdf. The main information is summarised below and has been updated to reflect policy changes since 2009.

2.2 Stage A of the SA process is about identifying and analysing relevant contextual and baseline information in order to develop the Sustainability Appraisal framework that is used to ‘test’ the Local Plan. There are five ‘sub-stages’ (A1-A5) as summarised in Table 3 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>A1</td>
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Table 3: Stage A of the SA process

Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives. (A1)

2.3 In order to develop a comprehensive and effective SA framework, it is essential to take account of other relevant plans and programmes at a national, regional and local scale, to ensure that the sustainability objectives of the SA framework are compatible with the aims and objectives of other plans and strategies affecting West Oxfordshire. A summary of the plans and strategies considered in the preparation of this SA report is set out at Appendix 1.

2.4 Key influences have included:

- Oxfordshire and West Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategies.
- District Council Strategies such as Housing and Tourism
- Town and parish plans
- LDF documents in neighbouring local authorities
- Cotswolds AONB Management Plan and planning guidance
- National planning policy – the Local Plan must comply with this unless local circumstances justify an alternative approach
- Information, including site suggestions for development, provided by parish councils, landowners, developers and agents
- Specific LDF studies such as town and village services and facilities, various aspects of housing provision and need, the economy, retail needs, transport, landscape, flood risk, renewable energy and sustainable construction.
### Strategy Update and Implications for Baseline Information

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012

The publication of the NPPF has been a key consideration in the preparation of the draft Local Plan and the SA report. The NPPF replaces a significant amount of policy material, previously contained within separate Planning Policy Statements and it has been essential to ensure that any policy gaps left by the removal of these statements where relevant to West Oxfordshire, have been interpreted locally through the Local Plan. The Local Plan policies have been drafted not only to conform to the NPPF, but to also address any remaining policy gaps where locally relevant.

#### Proposed revocation of the South East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

The South East RSS has been an important consideration throughout all of the previous stages of Local Plan preparation and consultation. The intention to revoke the RSS has resulted in the need for further strengthening of Local Plan polices to ensure that any policy gaps left by the removal of the RSS are filled. At the present time the RSS remains a material consideration.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 4: Strategy update and implications for baseline</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 Rather than providing a full summary of each of the reports outlined above and at Appendix 1, the key issues and messages of most relevance have been drawn out in Box 3 below.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conserve and enhance natural habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
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<td>• Protect, improve and sustainably use water resources</td>
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<td>• Maintain and improve air quality</td>
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<td>• Respond to climate change by reducing carbon emissions and adapt to the likely impacts of climate change</td>
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<td>• Promote and encourage the development of renewable and low-carbon decentralised energy sources</td>
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<td>• Make the best use of previously developed land provided it is not of high environmental value</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage the sustainable use of natural resources</td>
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<td>• Reduce waste generation and achieve the sustainable management of waste, addressing it as a resource and looking to disposal as the last option</td>
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<td>• Achieve a wide choice of high quality homes to address the requirements of the community</td>
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<td>• Tackle the overall shortage of affordable housing by increasing supply</td>
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<td>• Create inclusive and mixed communities and tackle social exclusion wherever it exists</td>
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<td>• Promote and enhance existing town centres encouraging a wide range of services accessible to all</td>
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<td>• Promote diversified and adaptable agricultural sectors whose farming achieves high environmental standards</td>
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<td>• Protect and enhance historic and cultural landscapes with particular attention given to designated areas</td>
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<td>• Maximise the benefits of tourism and the economic contribution it makes to rural areas</td>
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<td>• Reduce the need to travel wherever possible especially by car and promote more sustainable transport choices</td>
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<td>• Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
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<td>• Where possible, avoid flood risk to people or property, considering it on a catchment wide basis and recognising that flood risk will increase with climate change</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve the health and well-being of people and reduce inequalities in health</td>
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• Encourage healthy lifestyles and develop high quality, sustainable and accessible sport, recreation and leisure facilities
• Reduce crime and fear of crime
• Ensure the skills of the workforce match existing and potential business opportunities
• Ensure high and stable levels of employment
• Encourage sustainable economic growth and competitiveness

Box 3: Summary of messages from other plans and programmes

2.6 The District Council has also engaged in on-going discussions since 2007 with local communities, businesses and organisations such as Oxfordshire County Council (key responsibilities for transport, education, social care, and minerals and waste planning), NHS Oxfordshire (health), Thames Water and the Environment Agency (sewerage, water supply, flooding and the water environment in general), to ensure that the scope and level of detail within the SA framework is appropriate.

Collecting Baseline Information (A2)

2.7 The collection of baseline information allows us to identify the characteristics of the areas likely to be affected through the Local Plan and also helps to establish what the implications would be of not implementing the Local Plan i.e. the ‘business as usual’ scenario. Throughout the preparation of the SA and Local Plan we have collected a large amount of baseline information\(^2\). Much of this was collected in December 2009, is set out in the SA scoping report and has not changed due to the frequency of monitoring certain statistics. Many of the characteristics described below for example are based on information collected during the 2001 census and new comprehensive information will not become available until detailed census figures are published (only the initial ‘high-level’ census results have been released so far).

2.8 Below we provide a brief summary of the key baseline information along with some updated information on the local economy, health and well being, house prices and availability. Some baseline information, particularly in relation to housing and the economy is updated on an annual basis by the planning policy team through the preparation of the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Other information has emerged through the publication of new strategies and policy documents which the Local Plan has close regard to. These are summarised in Table 5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Update and Implications for Baseline Information</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2010/11</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The most recent AMR provides up to date information on the local economy, housing market and environmental conditions. This is a particularly important source of information as it indicates how conditions in the District have been affected by various factors such as the recession and ongoing economic challenges.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>West Oxfordshire Housing Needs Assessment Update, 2011</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Updated information in relation to the local housing market</td>
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\(^2\) see [www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/LDFsustapprevidbase.cfm?frmAlias=/LDFappraisal/](www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/LDFsustapprevidbase.cfm?frmAlias=/LDFappraisal/) for a full list
### Strategy Update and Implications for Baseline Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>West Oxfordshire Health Profile 2012</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Annual health summary published by the NHS provides up to date information on a range of health indicators for West Oxfordshire.</td>
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<th><strong>Kirkham Landscape Planning Review of Strategic Development Options (October 2012)</strong></th>
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<td>Additional landscape studies have been undertaken to assess the potential landscape impact of strategic development sites in Witney and Carterton.</td>
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<th><strong>Gypsy and Traveller Study</strong></th>
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<td>Joint study with Cherwell and South Northamptonshire Councils, to determine the scale of need for gypsy and traveller pitch provision and the level of annual provision required within each local authority area.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Retail Study Update 2012</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Study to determine whether new shops and improvements to retail provision are required within the main shopping destinations in West Oxfordshire. Study provides information required to determine proposals for future shopping development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Older Persons Housing Paper (2012)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background paper looking at how the needs of an ageing population in West Oxfordshire will affect the planning strategy for the area, particularly in terms of housing and care provision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Summary of Development and Infrastructure Strategic Modelling (October 2012)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional evidence was required as a result of the Cogges Link Road decision, to identify alternative strategic transport infrastructure requirements to support planned growth at Witney.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Updated Demographic Projections (2012)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Updated housing projections have been prepared for the District based on the information released from the 2011 census in order the help inform the development of a local housing target.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5: Evidence base update

### Location and connections

2.9 West Oxfordshire is a largely rural district to the west of Oxford and adjoining Gloucestershire, and Warwickshire – see Figure 1. With a population of almost 105,000 and an area of 71,500 hectares (276 square miles), it is one of the least densely populated areas in the South East. Dispersed across the District are around 130 separate towns, villages and hamlets. 40% of people live in the two largest towns of Witney (28,000) and Carterton (16,000). Nearly 60% of the 81 parishes contain less than 500 residents.

2.10 Oxford to the east is the regional hub, a designated growth point, and the focus for the District’s main transport connections. Major housing and employment growth is also planned for Bicester, Didcot, and Swindon a regional hub to the south west. To the west is Cotswold District, primarily a rural area, and similar in character to West Oxfordshire.

2.11 Main transport connections reflect the focus on Oxford and London. Rail services connecting to Birmingham and London pass through a small part of the eastern fringe of the District. The Cotswold line passes through the largely rural central part of the District, connecting several small towns and villages with Hereford in the west and Oxford and London in the east. Witney and Carterton, the two largest settlements, are connected to Oxford by high frequency bus services. Other bus services operate throughout the rural area with varying frequencies but many require ongoing public subsidy.
2.12 A large number of people commute out of West Oxfordshire to work, particularly to Oxford and the employment locations in the Abingdon and Didcot area. Many journeys continue to be made by private car and the number of people and distance people travel to work by car increased between the 1991 and 2001 Censuses. Commuting creates congestion on major routes, particularly the A40, A44 and A415 as well as within towns. As a result of traffic congestion, central areas of Chipping Norton and Witney have been identified as failing national air quality standards. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been designated in these towns and the reduction and re-routing of traffic has been identified as the appropriate actions.

2.13 The rural nature of West Oxfordshire and proximity of regional and sub-regional growth centres presents significant challenges for achieving sustainable development. The Local Plan must locate housing and employment development in a way which reduces the need to travel by private car and unnecessary long distance commuting. As a mainly rural area with limited public transport provision the strategy must recognise that many journeys will continue to be made by private car.

2.14 Many of the smaller villages lack a shop and school and are and linked mainly by a network of country lanes. There are only three towns of any appreciable size and population - Witney (28,000) Carterton (16,000) in the south and Chipping Norton (6,500) in the north. Opportunities to use previously developed land to accommodate the development needs of the District are relatively limited with most growth having taken place in the past on allocated greenfield sites. This is expected to continue in the future.
Population

2.15 The population of West Oxfordshire is expected to increase over the plan period as a result of future housing and economic growth. The District has a high proportion of older people at present and this trend will further increase, pushing the peak population age in 2031 to the late 60s (See Figure 2). The ageing of the population is also a key factor affecting a reduction in household size, with more homes being occupied by fewer people in the future.

2.16 As the population ages, this will have implications for housing provision, healthcare, the economy and transport.

Figure 2: Natural change in West Oxfordshire. Population aged 15 and over (2016-2031)

Housing needs

2.17 There is a considerable need for more affordable housing in West Oxfordshire. Over the last ten years house prices have increased faster than the increase in wages. The cheapest (lower quartile) housing in the District is now more than 9 times the lowest earnings. Although house prices have declined slightly recently, the recession has increased demand for affordable housing and housing support. Whilst there are over 5000 affordable homes within West Oxfordshire, managed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), there are currently some 2,075 households on the waiting list for affordable housing, of which 1,738 are in housing need (September 2012). There are an additional 429 existing housing association tenants on the transfer list seeking to move of which 321 are in housing need. The Oxfordshire Housing Market Assessment found both affordable housing and properties available to rent are limited, particularly in rural areas. Significant levels of housing to meet the specific needs of the elderly are also required.

2.18 The draft Local Plan seeks to deliver 5,500 new dwellings between 2011 and 2029 around 35% of which will be affordable. There are few large previously developed sites remaining in the District, such as derelict factory sites, where significant numbers of homes can be built. Other than the redevelopment of MOD housing in Carterton, the majority of future
development is likely to be on greenfield sites. About 2,500 homes have recently been developed on former agricultural land on the edge of Witney and Carterton, the District’s two larger towns.

Population and Health

2.19 The health of people in West Oxfordshire is generally better than the England average with lower levels of deprivation as indicated by the Index of Multiple Deprivation for the District. There are parts of the District that fall within the most deprived 40% lower super output areas in England in terms of health inequalities, although there is little difference between life expectancy of people in the most and least deprived areas. Life expectancy throughout the District is higher than the England average at 80.2 years for men and 84.1 years for women. Early death rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke continue to fall, although childhood obesity is a growing problem with 14.4% of year 6 pupils classified as obese.

Gypsies and travellers

2.20 There are 10 authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in West Oxfordshire, 2 in the northern half of the District and 8 in the southern half. Other than one site at The Furlong in Standlake which is owned and managed by Oxfordshire County Council, all sites are privately run. There are 5 sites for travelling show persons in the District which are all privately owned.

2.21 In addition to the authorised sites, there are approximately 13 unauthorised pitches in the District. A need for additional pitches was identified through the partial review of the South East Plan in 2009, although with the proposed abolition of the plan, it is intended that further work will be carried out through 2012 to determine the level of need more accurately.

Community infrastructure

2.22 On national measures of multiple deprivation, the area appears to score favourably, reflecting a generally high level of affluence (Figure 3). However, on certain specific issues such as access to housing and services, some areas of the District are highlighted as amongst the most deprived in the country. 38% of areas in rural West Oxfordshire are ranked in the worst 10% in England for accessibility to services. The lack of access to services is of particular relevance for those living in relative poverty and in West Oxfordshire the majority of people claiming pension credit live in rural areas. Where public transport is limited, those without access to a car are particularly at risk of social exclusion.
2.23 There is a continuing trend towards the loss of rural services, shops and pubs as many face economic problems which can lead to closure. This reflects changing shopping habits, and new ways of providing services such as through the internet. Village shops and pubs however represent an important part of community life and are an essential service for some residents. There is a need to support rural communities to maintain their vibrancy, and several have undertaken parish and town plans to identify priorities for development. Under the Localism Act, Neighbourhood Plans are likely to be prepared in some areas of the District.

2.24 The main towns and larger villages provide a focus for the provision of services (schools, health services, shopping and leisure facilities). Previous housing growth has put pressure on the capacity of their services and facilities. In Witney there is little capacity in existing primary and secondary schools to accommodate further growth. How to meet future post-11 education needs, in particular, is a key challenge for the town. Carterton is one of the few places in the district with some primary school capacity although flexibility is needed to cater for service personnel. Primary schools elsewhere are generally lacking capacity to take any significant increase in pupil numbers. New development will need to make provision for new/improved services and facilities as well as address transport problems. Notably, the draft Local Plan is supported by a draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identifies the infrastructure improvements needed to support future growth over the plan period.
The Local Economy

2.25 The local economy is diverse and performs relatively well, even in the current challenging economic climate. Around three quarters of people work in the service sector. Manufacturing retains a significant presence and there are several manufacturing and engineering firms linked to the biotechnology, healthcare and automotive sectors, and characteristic of the Oxfordshire high technology economy. Some businesses have links to RAF Brize Norton which is strengthening its role as the major air transport military base and makes an important contribution to the economy of the Carterton area.

2.26 The main retail centres are generally vibrant and the quality of the natural and built environment and attractions such as Blenheim Palace are a significant draw for the tourist economy. The rates of new business formation and growth are reasonable and survival rates for new businesses in the district are also good. Employment in agriculture has continued to decline. The land based sector will face further challenges through changing subsidies and climate change, indicating the likely need to continue to diversify the rural economy.

2.27 Economic activity rates are high at approximately 84.6%, the fifth highest economic activity rate in the South East. This indicates that there is little potential to expand the resident labour force, although the 2001 Census identified a significant outflow of 18,000 workers from the District. The proportion of people claiming unemployment benefit (Job Seekers Allowance) is now around 1.4%, (July 2012) a significant increase on 2008 levels but significantly lower than regional (2.5%) and national (3.8%) averages. West Oxfordshire has a relatively skilled workforce with no major skills gaps identified although in 2010, 45% of businesses reported recruitment problems. Wages for workers in the District are lower than for those living here, highlighting the outflow of managers and professionals to higher paid jobs elsewhere.

2.28 Employment is generally focussed in the main towns, in large employment areas, but there are many small businesses, often in converted farm buildings, throughout the towns, villages and in the open countryside. The West Oxfordshire Economy Study Update (2012) identified no major gaps in the range of business property types available, although some shortage of good quality small industrial units was identified. The stock of industrial premises was also identified as soon to become dated in relation to modern needs. A need for further employment land has been identified to provide flexibility in the land supply, to enable modernisation of the existing building stock, provide opportunities for investment and seek to reduce out-commuting.

High Quality Environment

2.29 West Oxfordshire has a rich variety of habitats supporting a range of wildlife (Figure 4). There are numerous important conservation sites - Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Woodland, Local Wildlife Sites. About 4% of the District falls within sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. The condition of protected sites within the District is good with 100% of SSSIs in the District in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, meeting Natural England’s national public service agreement target. However, much of our wildlife lives outside the network of somewhat isolated nature reserves and protected areas. There is a need to enhance and extend habitats to develop networks. A series of Conservation Target Areas have been identified where the restoration and enhancement of habitats would have the greatest benefit.
2.30 West Oxfordshire has a rich archaeological and architectural heritage. There are 3,200 listed buildings (including Blenheim Palace a World Heritage Site), 50 conservation areas and 16 parks and gardens of special historic interest. One third of the countryside is also recognised nationally for its landscape quality falling within the Cotswolds AONB. Land on the eastern edge of the District is within the Oxford Green Belt. Opportunities to accommodate major development without a significant adverse impact on the special character of West Oxfordshire are therefore relatively limited – an issue that is recognised in the level of growth identified for the District in the South East Plan.

2.31 Several rivers flow through West Oxfordshire including the Thames on the southern boundary and its tributaries the Windrush and Evenlode rivers which flow through the western and central parts of the District. These rivers and their floodplains are also important corridors for biodiversity, provide opportunities for recreation and form part of the setting of many towns and villages. Surface water quality is generally good and most rivers have shown improvements over the last few years although phosphate concentrations are a concern on the River Evenlode and River Glyme.

2.32 Flooding is a key issue with severe flooding events affecting many communities in 2007 from several sources including fluvial flooding and surface water run off. Large parts of West Oxfordshire are within natural and functional floodplains (see Figure 5).

2.33 West Oxfordshire contains some extensive sand and gravel and limestone resources in the southern part of the District in particular, the extraction of which needs to be managed to protect environmental quality and help ameliorate flood risk. Significant extraction of sand and gravel has already occurred and continues in the Lower Windrush Valley with after uses presenting opportunities for leisure and tourism as well as creating opportunities for nature reserves. This is however an area with a rural road network and where extraction can significantly impact on local communities.

2.34 In terms of air quality, there are two areas within the District that are not meeting objectives for air quality management in Witney and Chipping Norton. These areas are not meeting targets for nitrogen dioxide concentration due to high levels of traffic and congestion on local roads. There is a significant degree of car dependency in West Oxfordshire due to the rural nature of the District. Air quality management plans have been set up to identify means of improving air quality and to improve traffic flow in areas currently affected by poor air quality.

Climate change

2.35 The UK Climate Projections scenarios confirm that the South East will be one of the most severely affected regions by climate change. Greater extremes in temperature, more storms and extreme weather events (e.g. torrential rainfall, heatwaves) are predicted. Planning has a significant role to play in mitigating the effects of and adapting to the inevitable impacts of climate change. In the past this has focussed on reducing the need to travel but in the future buildings will need to be more energy efficient, use decentralised, low carbon or renewable energy sources and be designed and located to be resilient to more extreme weather events and increased risk of flooding. This has considerable implications for the design and location of new development and addressing climate change through the prudent use of natural resources is a key element of the draft Local Plan.
Figure 4: Protected biodiversity sites in West Oxfordshire
Figure 5: Environmental constraints in West Oxfordshire
’Business as usual’ scenario

2.36 The SEA Directive requires the SA report to consider the likely environmental impact on the district without the implementation of the Local Plan under a ‘business as usual’ scenario. Appendix 2 provides the detailed sustainability appraisal of the draft Local Plan policies and provides a commentary under each policy section on the likely impact of not having the policy in place.

2.37 The evolution of the baseline position under the business as usual scenario is likely to result in predominantly negative outcomes for the district, particularly in relation to meeting local housing needs and delivering environmental improvements.

2.38 Although the previous adopted Local Plan has been relatively successful in guiding development in the District and protecting the character of the area, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed through the new Local Plan such as the lack of affordable housing, high levels of people commuting to work outside of the District and poor access to services in rural locations.

Identifying Sustainability Issues and Problems (A3)

2.39 From the baseline position described above, it has been possible to identify a series of key sustainability issues facing the District which have influenced the policies in the emerging Local Plan and have been taken into account in the development of the SA framework (see Stage A4). These issues were agreed through consultation with key stakeholders on the SA scoping report (December 2009) (see stage A5) and are summarised below.

| S1 | Like many areas the District has an ageing population. As the population ages, more people may require increased support in terms of housing, healthcare and transport. Demographic changes, including an ageing population, are also resulting in smaller households. |
| S2 | House prices in West Oxfordshire have increased at a faster rate than the increase in wages making it more difficult for local people to enter the housing market. This has resulted in rising levels of housing need. |
| S3 | General levels of health in the District are high but specific health issues such as obesity have increased in prominence nationwide and are a particular concern in children, indicating a need to change our diet but also increase physical activity. Although a rural district with large areas of attractive countryside, rural communities can find that, outside the rights of way network, access to public open space is limited. |
| S4 | Levels of unemployment in the District are typically low. Low skills levels are apparent in certain areas of the main towns of Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton and may have implications for future economic growth. |
| S5 | There is a low level of crime and fear of crime but speeding vehicles, violent crime and antisocial behaviour remain issues of concern. |
| S6 | Outside of the main towns of the District public transport accessibility is generally poor. Certain groups without access to a car, such as older people on lower incomes, young people, lone parents and those experiencing mental health problems may be particularly at risk of social exclusion as a result. An ageing population presents increasing challenges as the elderly are highlighted as a particular group least likely to have access to a private car. |
The number of people travelling to work by car has increased and the distance people travel to work has increased. The District has several congestion problems. The A40 between Witney and Oxford is seen as one of the County's worst congestion problem.

Air quality objectives are not being met at Bridge Street, Witney and Horsefair, Chipping Norton as a result of traffic congestion in these streets.

Many of the larger previously developed sites suitable for redevelopment have now been developed and in a rural district the opportunities to use brownfield land are limited. Beyond 2012 further urban extensions on greenfield sites may need to be provided. Such urban extensions may be relatively sustainable if the infrastructure required to support them is provided and efficient use is made of the land. It should also be noted that whilst there is the presumption that previously developed land should be developed before Greenfield land, some previously developed land may not be appropriate for development due to wider sustainability considerations such as their amenity or biodiversity value.

Although the proportion of waste being recycled or composted is increasing the amount of waste being produced also appears to be increasing although this may reflect increases in collection.

Although data on carbon emissions is limited, responding to climate change and reducing carbon emissions through increased energy efficiency and increasing the supply of renewable and low-carbon decentralised energy sources is seen as a key challenge.

Significant climate change is now thought to be unavoidable and is expected to result in more frequent extreme weather events. As such there is a need to secure new development and infrastructure which is resilient to the effects of climate change particularly as buildings and infrastructure may have a 20-100 year life span.

There is a network of relatively isolated sites of particular importance for biodiversity in the District, which in the context of climate change would benefit from expansion and linkage to provide more sustainable biodiversity management units. The status of some priority species, notably water voles and farmland birds, has declined in recent years. Farmland birds have declined largely as a result of some agricultural practices.

The District has a rich archaeological and architectural heritage which along with the natural beauty of the District's countryside contributes to a high quality landscape recognised in national designations such as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These assets also present an irreplaceable resource for education, leisure and tourism. Meeting the development needs of the community whilst maintaining a high quality landscape, including the conservation and enhancement of areas, sites and buildings that contribute to the archaeological, architectural and natural heritage, and promoting access to historic assets and the countryside remains a continuing challenge.

The economy of West Oxfordshire appears prosperous with low unemployment levels and high levels of economic activity. A key challenge is to maintain this prosperity and ensure sustainable economic growth, maintaining the Quality of Life for all residents.

The District contains some considerable sand, gravel and limestone resources, the extraction of which needs to be managed to protect environmental quality, with particular regard to archaeological sites and remains, landscape impacts, after-use and traffic impacts.
There are some significant rivers flowing through the District, including the Thames along the southern boundary of the District, the generally biodiversity rich Windrush which runs through Witney and Burford and the Evenlode running through the agricultural areas of central West Oxfordshire. In the context of climate change extreme weather events may increase the risk of flooding from these rivers. The quality of the water in these water courses may affect habitats of international importance at Oxford Meadows.

There are two sites of particular importance for nature conservation in close proximity to the District, Port Meadows SAC and Cothill Fen SAC. These are at risk of harm from air quality deterioration, water availability and quality degradation and recreation pressure.

**Box 4: Sustainability issues and problems in West Oxfordshire**

**Developing the SA Framework (A4)**

2.40 The purpose of Stage A4 is to develop the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Framework which sets out the sustainability objectives to be used in assessing the potential impacts of the Local Plan.

2.41 The sustainability objectives are set out in Table 6 below. They were identified through Stages A1 – A3 outlined above and agreed in consultation with stakeholders through Stage A5. More information on the preparation of the SA framework can be found in the SA Scoping Report; [http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/7316-2445.pdf](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/7316-2445.pdf). The sustainability objectives have been tested against the new National Planning Policy Framework, and were found to all remain relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Sub-objective (Does the plan or proposal...?!)</th>
<th>Sustainability issues covered</th>
<th>SEA topic</th>
<th>Monitoring Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home | • Seek to increase affordable housing provision  
• Provide high quality sustainably constructed housing  
• Provide a mix of housing to meet the current and future needs of the community | S1, S2, S11, S12 | Population and human health | I1: Residential completions by settlement category  
I2: Proportion of new dwellings meeting CSH standards  
I12: Annual residential completions (District)  
I14/a: Residential completions, type and tenure by sub-area  
I15/a/b/c: Affordable housing completions |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Sub-objective (Does the plan or proposal...?)</th>
<th>Sustainability issues covered</th>
<th>SEA topic</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities | • Protect human health  
• Support healthy and active lifestyles  
• Improve accessibility to the countryside  
• Improve access to healthcare and other services, particularly in rural areas | S3, S6 | Population and human health | I25: Total recreation / leisure completions  
I31: Developer contributions for GI enhancements  
I31a: GI assets lost to new development  
I35: Refusals on basis of environmental considerations  
I11: Annual community infrastructure floor space |
| 3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities | • Tackle social exclusion wherever it exists  
• Maintain or increase the vitality of town and village centres and communities  
• Provide opportunities for cultural, leisure and recreational activity | S3, S6 | Population and human health | I8: Money derived from new development as contribution to CIL  
I25: Total area of leisure and recreation permissions by location  
I26: Total floor space of retail / leisure / office development permitted by sub-area  
I28: changes within primary shopping frontages  
I31: Developer contributions secured for green infrastructure enhancements |
| 4. Improve education and training | • Seek to provide infrastructure to improve education and skills | S4 | Population and human health | I8: Money derived from new development as contribution to CIL  
I11: Annual community infrastructure floor space |
<p>| 5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime | • Seek to ensure safe and supportive communities | S5 | Population and human health | I37: Crime rate by ward |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline Sustainability Objective</th>
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<th>Sustainability issues covered</th>
<th>SEA topic</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities | • Reduce the need to travel  
• Improve accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling access  
• Maintain and improve accessibility by car  
• Reduce traffic congestion | S6, S7, S8 | Population and human health | I31: Developer contributions secured for green infrastructure enhancements  
I36- Location of all development in relation to service centres, larger settlements, roads, cycle network, railway, local bus routes etc. |
| 7. Improve the efficiency of land use | • Maximise the use of previously developed land provided it is not of high environmental value  
• Use land efficiently | S9 | Material assets | I116: Number of residential conversions to non-residential uses  
I117: Size, number and location of existing housing which is subdivided / extended to provide additional dwellings.  
I126b: Total floorspace of retail / leisure / office development permitted outside settlement boundary.  
I36: Location of all new development in relation to service centres, larger settlements, roads, cycle network, railway, local bus routes etc. |
| 8. Reduce waste generation and disposal | • Facilitate the reuse, recycling and recovery of waste | S10 | Material assets | I12: Proportion and location of new dwellings achieving > Code Level 4.  
I14: Recycling Levels in the District |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Sub-objective <em>(Does the plan or proposal...?)</em></th>
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</table>
| 9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality | • Reduce road congestion and negative impacts on air quality, to ensure all areas meet air quality objectives  
• Limit exposure to poor air quality | S7, S8, S18 | Air, climatic factors | I31: Developer contributions secured for green infrastructure enhancement  
I35: Number of applications refused on basis of environmental protection considerations.  
I36: Location of all new development in relation to service centres, larger settlements, roads, cycle network, railway, local bus routes etc. |
| 10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts | • Reduce the need to travel  
• Promote the development of renewable, low-carbon, and local energy sources  
• Seek to increase the energy and water efficiency of buildings through sustainable design and construction  
• Take into account the likely impacts of climate change and use sustainable drainage solutions | S11, S12 | Climatic factors | I1: Annual proportion of residential and non-residential development built within each category of settlement.  
I2: Proportion and location of new dwellings achieving > Code Level 4.  
I31: Developer contributions secured for green infrastructure enhancement  
I32: Total capacity of renewable energy generation secured through new development (capacity, type and location)  
I34a: Number of applications refused on basis of flood risk by type. |
<table>
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<tr>
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| 11. Protect and improve soil and water resources | • Seek to maintain and improve water quality  
• Ensure that new development has the necessary water (including water efficiency, waste water and sewerage infrastructure)  
• Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land  
• Seek to bring contaminated land back into beneficial use through remediation | S17, S18 | Soil and water | 18: Money derived from new development as contribution to CIL  
19: Proportion of new development providing direct infrastructure improvement  
I30: Total number of applications refused on basis of biodiversity impact.  
I35: Number of applications refused on basis of environmental protection considerations. |
| 12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding | • Seek to avoid development in flood risk areas  
• Take into account the potential impacts on climate change  
• Promote the use of sustainable drainage solutions | S11, S12, S17 | Climatic factors, material assets | I34: Number of applications permitted in flood zones 2 and 3 by type  
I34a: Number of applications refused on basis of flood risk by type. |
| 13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity | • Avoid loss or damage to biodiversity or geodiversity  
• Maintain or enhance areas protected or managed for nature conservation and seek to extend such areas having regard to the ‘target area’ approach | S13, S18 | Biodiversity, flora and fauna | I29: Number of applications granted within project areas.  
I30: Total number of applications refused on basis of biodiversity impact  
I31: Developer contributions secured for green infrastructure enhancements |
<table>
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</table>
| 14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment | • Conserve and enhance areas, sites and buildings that contribute to the natural and cultural (including archaeological and architectural) heritage of the District  
• Maintain or enhance landscape character as defined by the character assessments and appraisals  
• Promote access to and enjoyment of the District’s historic environment and countryside. | S14, S16 | Landscape and cultural heritage | I5: Total number of applications granted within the Cotswolds AONB  
I6: Number of applications granted within conservation areas.  
I7: Proportion of development in district refused on basis of landscape / historic character impact. |
| 15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment | • Seek to provide a range of employment opportunities appropriate to the skills of the community  
• Support vibrant market towns and a sustainable rural economy | S4, S15 | Population and human health | I21: Total area of employment land permitted (whole district)  
I23: Total area of floorspace permitted for rural diversification by sub-area  
I26: Total floor space of retail / leisure / office development permitted by sub area. |
2.42 The sustainability objectives listed above have been used to test the Local Plan objectives and options to ensure that they properly reflect the sustainability principles developed in the preparation of this appraisal. A series of options for the scale and distribution of development have been tested through earlier iterations of the sustainability appraisal and these are illustrated in more detail through Stages B2 – B5.

2.43 The SEA Directive requires an analysis of the likely significant effects on the environment, including secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium, and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. These effects are also considered through stages B2 – B5 of this report.

2.44 A simple scoring system has been developed in order to summarise the detailed sustainability appraisal findings in a clear and succinct manner and is illustrated in Table 7. To add further clarity, each scoring symbol has a corresponding colour which is used in some aspects of the appraisal, to highlight key sustainability issues more clearly, particularly where alterations to policies are suggested.

| ++ | Major positive – the option contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective |
| + | Positive - the option contributes to the achievement of the objective |
| +/- | Neutral - Some positive and some negative impacts |
| - | Minor negative - the option would detract from the objective |
| -- | Major negative - the option would detract significantly from the objective |
| ? | Uncertain - the option is expected to have no effect on the objective or the effects of the option may depend on other factors or there is insufficient information available to make an assessment. |
| 0 | No Impact |

Table 7: SA scoring system
Compatibility of SA Objectives

2.45 As part of Stage A4, the compatibility of the sustainability objectives with each other has been assessed. Several tensions or incompatibilities are apparent as indicated in Figure 6 below. These are between those objectives which have the potential to increase housing, commercial and transport development (objectives 1, 6, 15, and 16) and the environmental objectives (objectives 8-14). It is not considered that these tensions can be wholly resolved through amending the objectives. In some cases tensions may be resolved through the development process. For example whilst development schemes can potentially adversely affect wildlife, they can provide opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement. Finding the appropriate balance between the social, economic and environmental objectives is a key challenge in the decision making process. As such, this method can be used to test plan objectives against sustainability objectives as the plan objectives can be amended to minimise social, environmental and economic tensions where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Matrix of internal compatibility

Consulting on the Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal (A5)

2.46 As a minimum, the SEA Directive requires 5 weeks consultation on the scope of a sustainability appraisal with the statutory environmental bodies, (The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage). The consultation period on the West Oxfordshire SA scoping report ran from the 23rd March 2007 to 27th April 2007. An LDF update notifying consultees of the scoping report consultation was also sent to some 300 consultees on the LDF consultation database which includes other statutory bodies such as Parish Councils and a wide range of professional and community based organisations.
In total, 6 responses to the draft scoping report were received. A summary of comments is outlined at Table 8 below, along with a summary of actions taken to address these.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation and Summary of Comments</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural England</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number of detailed comments were</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made particularly in relation to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Appendices. In particular it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was suggested that further detail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should be included in the baseline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on areas designated for their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental value, priority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habitats and species, protected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>species, conservation target areas,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential harm and opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for enhancement of statutory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildlife sites and biodiversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issues generally such as the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fragmentation of habitats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment Agency</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several further documents were</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suggested for inclusion in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1. Recommended that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further information be added</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the baseline data (Appendix 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the network of natural habitats,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and contaminated land. Recommended</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that an additional Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue is identified for adapting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the effects of climate change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and that an indicator on adapting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to climate change is established.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cotswolds Conservation Board</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Board noted the inclusion of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Cotswold Management Plan and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONB Landscape Character Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had been included in Appendix 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support noted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Theatres Trust</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleased to see that Objective 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>includes the sub-objective to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Provide opportunities for cultural,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leisure and recreational activity’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support noted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Oxfordshire County Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological Services**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted that the process is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outlined in a clear fashion but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is not a sense of the distinct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characteristics of West Oxfordshire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which the historic landscape,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both urban and rural, is part. The</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summaries of PPG15 and 16 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1 do not fully reflect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the purpose of these documents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should also be reference to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Heritage White Paper and the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Sites and Monuments Record.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest an additional sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issue to include the historic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment, both rural and urban,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separate from landscape issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further information has been added</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with respect to the historic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment in Appendix 2 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relation to the historic and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landscape assets of West Oxfordshire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to provide a greater appreciation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of its distinctiveness. Appendix</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 has been amended and includes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further documents and Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue S14 has been amended to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further include historic environment issues. It is considered however that the historic environment and landscape character are inextricably linked.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further information related to the archaeological and architectural heritage of West Oxfordshire has been included in the review of relevant documents and baseline information. The sustainability issues and objectives have been amended to further reflect architectural and archaeological considerations.

Table 8: Summary of consultation feedback on SA scoping report

Section Three: Appraisal of the Draft Local Plan

3.1 This section of the report illustrates how the Local Plan options have been developed, refined and assessed through consultation and Sustainability Appraisal. There are six ‘sub-stages’ B1 – B6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Stage B of the SA process

3.2 Set out below is a summary of these different stages and how they have been applied to the Local Plan.

Testing the Local Plan objectives against the SA framework (B1)

3.3 The draft Local Plan includes a series of core objectives. These have been assessed against the SA objectives identified in Stage A4 above and the results are set out in the matrix below (Table 10)

3.4 The matrix demonstrates that the Local Plan objectives generally score positively against the sustainability appraisal framework, particularly in relation to economic development objectives and the creation of healthy and inclusive communities. The objectives for the delivery of large scale development such as those to meet the housing needs of the community inevitably demonstrate a degree of potential conflict, particularly in relation to the efficient use of land and environmental protection objectives of the SA framework.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Plan Objectives</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home.</td>
<td>Generally positive in relation to most SA objectives. Neutral impact in relation to biodiversity and landscape character as the impact of development is likely to be mitigated by the design of development, potentially enhancing the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improving education and training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improve the efficiency of land use.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reduce waste generation and improve air quality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CO2: Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet local housing needs

There is potential for this objective to cause negative impacts in relation to biodiversity and landscape character, particularly if the housing need arises in environmentally sensitive areas. Negative impacts may also arise in terms of the efficiency of land use, as the level of housing need and demand in the District coupled with the lack of previously developed land is likely to necessitate the development of greenfield sites although the use of appropriate densities will help to ensure that where Greenfield land is needed, it is used efficiently.

CO3: Ensure the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.

There are significant positive implications particularly in relation to economic objectives and the creation of thriving and inclusive communities. The negative impact in relation to the efficient use of land is due to the shortage of brownfield land in the district available to accommodate housing growth although the use of appropriate densities will help to ensure that where Greenfield land is needed, it is used efficiently.

CO4: Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people and in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices, including those wishing to self build as well as homes to meet the needs of older

There are positive impacts, particularly on objectives relating to housing, health and thriving communities. The potential negative impact on the efficiency of land use is due to the shortage of suitable previously developed land in the district although the use of appropriate densities will help to ensure that where Greenfield land is needed, it is used efficiently.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CO5: Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.</strong></td>
<td>+ ++ ++</td>
<td>Good overall positive score. The protection of the natural environment, the provision of jobs and decent affordable housing are all important elements in creating healthy, safe and inclusive communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CO6: Ensure that land is not released for new development until</strong></td>
<td>+ ++ ++</td>
<td>Generally positive. Ensuring that all necessary infrastructure is in place to support development will have positive implications for environmental protection and the creation of sustainable communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CO7: Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of</strong></td>
<td>+/- ++</td>
<td>Generally positive particularly against health and accessibility objectives and those relating to air quality and climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>public transport.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CO8: Achieve sustainable economic growth which improves the balance</strong></td>
<td>+/- ++</td>
<td>Generally positive particularly against economic / communities objectives. Improving the balance also positive in relation to climate change and air quality objectives, as it seeks to reduce the level of commuting out of the district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>employment opportunities, removes potential barriers to investment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>and provides flexibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO9: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy</td>
<td>+/− + + + ? + ? +/− +/− +/− +/− ++ ++ ++ ++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO10: Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve the centres.</td>
<td>+/− + ++ ? ++ ++ + ? + + +/− ? +/− + ++ +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO11: Maintain or improve where possible the health and well being of the District’s residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.</td>
<td>+/− ++ ++ ++ + ++ ? ? + + +/− +/− +/− +/− +/− +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO12: Improve access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire</td>
<td>+/− ++ ++ ? ? ++ ? ? + + ? ? + + ++ + +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO13: Conserve and enhance the high environmental quality of West Oxfordshire with</td>
<td>? + + ? ? ? + + + ++ + ++ ++ ++ + +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive against economic objectives and environmental protection and enhancement. Landscape and historic character are key factors supporting the local tourism economy.

Positive mainly against economic, communities and accessibility objectives.

Positive mainly against communities and accessibility objectives.

Generally positive against communities, biodiversity and landscape.

Generally positive against environmental objectives. High quality environment is an economic asset and valued by local
protection and promotion of its diverse landscape, biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and its local cultural, heritage and environmental assets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO14: Reduce the causes of and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Generally positive against environment and accessibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO15: Achieve improvements in water and air quality</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>This objective scores positively in relation to the sustainability objectives, particularly those related to the natural environment and the health and well being of communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO16: Minimise use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Generally positive however the use of renewable energy generators in historic settlements and in the countryside have the potential to cause a negative impact on historic and landscape character in the district, as they may appear as an intrusion into valued landscape and townscape. This will however be dependant on the location, nature and design of any individual proposal. Impacts are generally positive particularly in relation to environmental protection objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO17: Improve the sustainable design and construction of new development, including improving energy efficiency, water efficiency and water management</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Generally positive against climate change and air quality related objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CO18: Ensure that new developments are located and designed to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of our towns and villages, as well as contributing to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>++</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>++</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Mainly positive against environmental objectives, particularly landscape character and historic environment, a key part of local community identity.

Table 10: Testing conformity between Local Plan and SA objectives
Developing the Local Plan options, predicting and evaluating the effects of the options and potential mitigation and maximisation of benefits (B2-B5)

3.5 Stages B2 – B5 relate to the development of the Local Plan options including in particular, the testing of different alternatives and an assessment of their potential impact on the sustainability objectives set out previously. In order to shape the Local Plan policies effectively and to ensure that they represent the most sustainable option, a number of stages have been completed through which different policy and growth options have been tested and refined. The stages of the Local Plan and SA process completed to date are summarised in Box 5 with further detailed information set out below.

Issues and Options (March 2008)

The first stage in the process was an issues and options consultation which identified the key issues facing the District and a range of broad spatial options for development as well as a number of key theme based questions designed to stimulate discussion about the future development of the area.

Interim position statement (February 2009)
http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/consult.ti/CSInterimFeb09/consultationHome

The interim position statement built on the findings of the Issues and Options consultation by presenting an overview of the Council’s likely approach to tackling the key issues facing West Oxfordshire particularly housing and employment strategies as well as the response to climate change.

The document presented a range of updated information, particularly in relation to housing and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process used to identify potential housing sites in the District. On the basis of the evidence and information available at the time, a draft approach for the basis of the Local Plan was set out.

Preferred Approach (February 2010)

This document built on the earlier consultation and set out the Council’s preferred approach to a number of issues. It was accompanied by a sustainability appraisal to assist in the consultation and the further development/ refinement of alternative options. The SA is available at http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/gf2.ti/f/193986/3446853.1/pdf/-/Core%20Strategy%20Preferred%20Approach%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20print%20version%20with%20maps.pdf.

Each section of the SA reflected a chapter of the Preferred Approach to enable the systematic appraisal of options but with particular regard to;

• The settlement strategy
• Economic strategy and
• Strategic development areas for the main settlements.

Draft Core Strategy (January 2011)

The Draft Core Strategy built upon the preferred approach and set out a detailed draft policy structure for the future development of the District. The draft strategy was accompanied by a sustainability appraisal which illustrated how the policies were derived from a series of options and how these options performed against the SA objectives. The SA is available at http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/8119-3892.pdf
Box 5: Development and appraisal of options completed to date

3.6 Throughout these various stages, a wide range of options have been consulted upon and tested through the Sustainability Appraisal process in order to identify the most appropriate and sustainable strategy for the District.

3.7 The purpose of this section of the SA report is to summarise the different options that have been tested and to explain why some have been taken forward whilst others have not. This helps to provide a clear audit trail of the decision making process and evolution of the Local Plan.

3.8 The main options that have been consulted upon and tested throughout the development of the Local Plan relate to the following issues:

1. Overall Settlement Strategy
2. Level of Housing Growth
3. Delivery of Affordable Housing
4. Level of Employment Growth
5. Directions of Growth at Witney
6. Directions of Growth at Carterton
7. Growth at Chipping Norton

3.9 Further information on how these various options have evolved is set out below.

**Overall Settlement Strategy**

3.10 Various options on the overall settlement strategy for the District have been assessed throughout the development of the Local Plan. These include:

- ‘Witney Focus’: Concentrate development at Witney
- ‘Three Towns’: Concentrate development at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton
- ‘Dispersal’: More dispersed development amongst a variety of towns and villages but still including development in Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton
- A new village
- Concentration of development along transport corridors

3.11 The two latter options of a new village and concentrating development along transport corridors were effectively ‘scoped out’ by the Council for various reasons, although comments were still invited on these options as well as any other options consultees wished to put forward.

3.12 At Issues and Options (2008) a distinct preference was expressed by respondents for the ‘Three Towns’ option (i.e. most development to be concentrated at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton) although there was a recognition that environmental and infrastructure constraints would present barriers to development in some areas.
3.13 45% of respondents ranked this option as their first preference compared to 30% supporting the concentration of development solely at Witney. There was also a degree of support for providing some development in smaller settlements, in order to sustain the villages and hamlets of the district.

3.14 At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken and assessed the potential impacts of the three main settlement strategy options outlined above (excluding the two options that had been scoped out earlier on).


3.16 The Sustainability Objectives used to assess the settlement strategy were filtered to select the most relevant criteria for the appraisal. Objectives relating to crime and fear of crime, waste generation and disposal and efficiency of land use were not included in the appraisal.

3.17 The results are summarised in Table 11 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Witney focus</th>
<th>Three towns</th>
<th>Dispersal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment, biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Sustainability appraisal summary of preferred approach settlement strategy

3.18 As can be seen from the summary, both the ‘Three Towns’ option and the ‘Witney Focus’ option perform well in sustainability terms. However, it was concluded that the Three Towns option is preferred as it would better meet affordable housing needs across the District and provides the potential for the other main towns to address infrastructure needs.

3.19 It was concluded that a more dispersed strategy is likely to necessitate significant expenditure on new or improved infrastructure (which could prove extremely difficult to secure within a reasonable timescale). Furthermore, many schools in the rural area are at
capacity but the levels of housing development necessary to support a new school would be inappropriate and out of scale for many communities.

3.20 It was also considered that a dispersed strategy would provide the least potential for travel by sustainable modes and is likely to have the most adverse affect on rural roads and the character of the landscape, with many settlements within the Cotswolds AONB and Conservation Areas.

3.21 In addition to the findings of the SA, consultation responses suggested a general preference for the ‘Three Towns’ option. The option was therefore taken forward into the draft Core Strategy (2011) and formed the basis of draft Core Policies CS1 – Overall Spatial Strategy, CS2 – Settlement Hierarchy and CS4 – Amount and Distribution of Housing. It was also reflected in the draft Core Policies specific to Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.

3.22 These policies are set out in full in the draft Core Strategy (2011) available at https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/8005-4271.pdf

3.23 A further SA report was published alongside the draft Core Strategy (2011) and reaffirmed the findings set out in Table 11 above.

3.24 Since the draft Core Strategy (2011) was published there have been a number of changing circumstances which have had to be taken into account in preparing the draft Local Plan (2012) including the announcement by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) that some its land in central Carterton could be made available to the open market and the decision of the Secretary of State to reject the compulsory purchase needed for the Cogges Link Road (CLR) scheme at Witney to go ahead.

3.25 Officers have re-run the sustainability appraisal having regard to these circumstances and it is not considered that they have any impact on the previous decision to take forward the ‘three towns’ approach, indeed if anything, these circumstances further justify the need to address growth at the main towns. This approach has therefore been taken forward into the draft Local Plan through a number of policies including primarily Core Policy 2 – Locating Development in the Right Places, whereby the majority of growth will be steered towards Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton with more modest growth elsewhere.

**Level of housing growth**

3.26 In terms of the level of housing growth, at the Issues and Options stage (2008), the number of new homes needed was dictated by the then emerging South East Regional Plan, which identified a total housing requirement of 7,300 dwellings in the period 2006 - 2026. Table 12 below taken from the Issues and Options paper sets out the additional housing needed over and above existing commitments at that time to meet the South East Plan requirement (i.e. 3,570 homes).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Central Oxon (Part)</th>
<th>Remainder of West Oxon</th>
<th>Total West Oxon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE Plan (Panel recommendations)</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>7,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completions 1 April 06 – 31 Dec 07</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>1,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitted Dwellings still</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.27 Because the South East Plan specified the level of housing to be provided within the District, no other options were put forward or tested (i.e. higher or lower) although various options were proposed as to how the number of houses identified should be accommodated within the District (see below).

3.28 At the Interim Approach stage (2009) and Preferred Approach stage (2010) the level of housing proposed to be provided was also based on the South East Plan although the figures were updated to take account of recent commitments (i.e. planning permissions).

3.29 In light of the potential revocation of the South East Plan, the draft Core Strategy (2011) was informed by a local demographic projection independently commissioned by the Council (https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/7979-4251.pdf). The projections suggested that there was a need to deliver an additional 4,300 homes in the district between 2011 and 2026. Coincidentally this was broadly in line with the quantum of development originally envisaged over that period through the South East Plan (taking account of the 3,000 or so homes built in the period 2006 – 2011).

3.30 This level of housing growth was reflected in draft Core Policy CS4 – Amount and Distribution of Housing which required 4,300 new homes to be provided between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2026.

3.31 Because the plan period has been rolled forward from 2026 to 2029 the housing target has been updated. The initial results of the 2011 Census have also been made available and have been factoried in to a further set of housing projections to help inform the development of a local housing target. Three different ‘scenarios’ have been prepared, a ‘natural change’ scenario, an ‘employment-based’ scenario and a ‘South East Plan’ based scenario.

3.32 The ‘natural change’ scenario considers the amount of planned housing to 2016 and then calculates how many additional homes would be needed to accommodate ‘natural growth’ in the period to 2029. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 4,000.

3.33 The ‘employment based’ scenario considers planned growth to 2016 and then calculates how many homes would be needed up to 2029 in order to sustain the peak in the District’s workforce predicted to occur at 2016. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 6,700.

3.34 The ‘south east plan’ based scenario considers planned growth to 2016 and then rolls forward the residual south east plan requirement on a pro-rata basis to 2029. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 5,500.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Plan allocated sites expected to be commenced or built by 2011</th>
<th>210</th>
<th>300</th>
<th>510</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortfall in identified provision</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>1,640</td>
<td>3,570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Level of housing growth proposed at Issues and Options stage

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3.35 Whilst housing projections such as these, give a good indication of likely future housing requirements, there are a number of other factors that must be taken into account including evidence of housing need and demand, national household projections, economic needs, the availability of suitable land for housing, the need to improve affordability and take account of supporting infrastructure. A further key consideration is the ‘sustainability’ of the level of growth that is being planned for and for this reason, the three scenarios outlined above have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal to identify the best performing option in sustainability terms.

3.36 A summary of the appraisal is included in Table 13 below with the full assessment attached at Appendix 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Low Growth (4,000)</th>
<th>Medium Growth (5,500)</th>
<th>High Growth (6,700)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improve education and training</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improve the efficiency of landuse</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reduce waste generation and disposal</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: SA summary of housing growth options

3.37 The summary table above illustrates that the medium growth option delivers the most positive sustainability outcomes, providing sufficient housing to support the necessary economic growth in the district through the duration of the plan, while limiting the impact on the historic and landscape character of the district, particularly at the rural / urban fringe as a result of less greenfield land being needed than under the higher growth option. The medium and high growth options will deliver a significant amount of affordable housing but the low growth scenario is less effective in achieving this objective. All options will result in a range of positive and negative outcomes in relation to air quality, climate change, natural
resources, flood risk and biodiversity and will be dependant on other relevant policies in the Local Plan to mitigate the potential impacts of development.

Delivery of affordable housing

3.38 Housing affordability is a key issue for West Oxfordshire and a number of different options for increasing the supply of affordable housing in the District have been put forward to date.

3.39 At the Issues and Options stage (2008) consultees were asked to comment on whether the Council should continue its current planning policy approach (i.e. that set out in the adopted Local Plan) and whether housing sites should be allocated in the villages for affordable housing only. The consultation responses were largely in favour of improving the delivery of affordable housing throughout the district, to meet local needs and to reduce the mean population age by encouraging young people to continue living in the area. The current approach to affordable housing delivery was supported although it was considered that the policies for rural exceptions sites should be relaxed to increase the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas. An approach that enables the delivery of market housing alongside affordable housing in rural areas was seen as a means of incentivising land owners to release land for house building. In terms of allocating land in villages for affordable housing only, it was felt that there needs to be a consistency of approach to land within and outside the Cotswolds AONB.

3.40 Options for affordable housing provision identified at the Interim Approach stage (2009) included the following:

- Identification of further opportunities for redevelopment and intensification within existing housing estates owned by registered social landlords
- Secure additional rural exception sites in accordance with Local Plan Policy H12
- Identify as many sites as possible through the LDF process which can provide both market and affordable housing
- Increase the proportion of affordable housing to be provided on market sites above current levels
- Widen the range of sites where affordable housing is to be provided
- Seek financial contributions towards the provision of affordable housing from other development including non-residential.

3.41 The Council’s favoured approach was presented as a requirement for up to 50% affordable housing on all ‘qualifying’ sites (i.e. in the main towns 15 dwellings or more and in the rural areas, 2 dwellings or more). Mixed views were expressed through the consultation in relation to the affordable housing target. Some consultees felt that a 50% target was appropriate for delivering affordable housing and meeting local needs. Others considered the 50% target to be too high and that it should be brought down in line with national and regional strategies.

3.42 At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) the level of affordable housing provision was reduced to 40% and the threshold for provision was reduced to a net gain of a single dwelling, reflecting viability work published in 2009.

3.43 Consultation responses suggested that this target was too high and that it should be brought down in line with the South East Plan. The threshold for affordable housing delivery was also considered to be too low and that the policy allowed little flexibility overall, particularly as viability of delivering affordable housing will differ from site to site. The need for more affordable housing to meet local needs was however recognised once again.

3.44 In the draft Core Strategy (2011) the level of provision put forward was at least 50% on undeveloped (Greenfield) sites and on other types of land (previously developed) at 35% in Witney and Carterton and at least 40% elsewhere.

3.45 Consultation responses suggested that the level of affordable housing should be increased to meet identified local needs but this should not be to the detriment of the community and character of the area. The delivery of affordable housing is seen as a key element of retaining young people within rural settlements of the district and in securing the future viability of these settlements and their local services and facilities. There was a significant level of objection expressed amongst land agents and organisations however, that felt a 50% target for on site affordable housing is too onerous and unrealistic. Responses suggest a 50% target is not viable and will restrict the number of small sites coming forward for development.

3.46 Taking account of the responses received and the viability work that has been undertaken, the draft Local Plan includes Core Policy 8 – Affordable Housing, which requires the provision of 35% in Carterton, 40% in Witney and 50% elsewhere in the District. The threshold for provision is a net gain of one or more dwellings. Importantly, the policy has been amended to allow for financial contributions to be made in lieu of on-site provision for schemes of 1-5 dwellings (net) with anything of 6 or more dwellings being required to provide affordable housing on site unless there are exceptional circumstances. This provides additional flexibility for those wishing to develop small-scale sites. The results of the SA of Core Policy 8 are set out in the matrix attached at Appendix 2.

Level of employment growth

3.47 Various options have been proposed in relation to the level of employment growth to be delivered by the Local Plan.

3.48 At Issues and Options (2008) three main options were proposed:

- Indigenous growth
- Steady growth
- Higher growth


3.50 The greatest level of support was received for the ‘steady growth’ scenario with the provision of an extra 30ha of employment land over the next 20 years.
3.51 At the Interim Approach stage, the initial options were expanded as follows:

- **Indigenous Growth**
  - Provision of up to an additional 10ha of new employment land (40ha in total taking account of existing commitments of 30ha)
  - Focus on indigenous growth to broadly match new labour supply

- **Steady Growth (60ha in total)**
  - Provision of an additional 30ha of employment land (existing commitments of 30ha)
  - Focus on supporting indigenous growth and business start ups whilst catering for a modest level of inward investment

- **Higher Growth (80ha in total)**
  - Provision of an additional 50ha of new employment land (existing commitments of 30ha)
  - Support indigenous growth but more active encouragement of inward investment

- **Allocate a strategic area for employment in the Local Plan**

- **Continue and expand criteria based policies for new employment sites**

3.52 Detailed consultation responses to the interim position statement can be viewed at: [http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/consult.ti/CSInterimFeb09/questionnaireVotes?qid=745059](http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/consult.ti/CSInterimFeb09/questionnaireVotes?qid=745059)

3.53 The responses to the consultation showed that there was support for the emerging approach to economic development, with the majority of growth being focussed on the main towns and larger villages. The smart growth approach to modernising and intensifying existing employment sites was also seen as an appropriate means of addressing the imbalance between residential and employment development in the district. Growth in employment opportunities is seen as a key factor in maintaining the vibrancy of towns and in reducing the level of out-commuting

3.54 At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) four main options were put forward:

- **Indigenous Growth**
- **Steady Growth**
- **Higher Growth**
- **Small-Scale Dispersal**

3.55 These options were assessed through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The Sustainability Objectives used to assess the economic strategy were filtered to include those that were most relevant and the results are summarised below.
3.56 The sustainability appraisal demonstrated that the ‘steady growth’ and the ‘small scale dispersal’ scenarios provide the most positive impacts against the SA framework, with fewer negative impacts. A SWOT analysis was undertaken alongside the SA of the employment options to determine the positive and negative impacts of each option.

3.57 The steady growth option reflects the approach that had led to a relatively successful economy to date and was broadly consistent with the regional and sub-regional planning and economic strategies. The indigenous growth option places greater emphasis on growth in small businesses, retail and tourism, reduces pressures on the labour supply and infrastructure and minimises new land requirements.

3.58 The option of providing more flexibility for small scale dispersal also scores positively if safeguards are included to limit the impact of excessive dispersal of employment development on the rural character of the area. This was consistent with the findings of the issues and options consultation where there was general support for pursuing the Steady Growth scenario and also support for expanding the policy approach, allowing provision of small employment sites in smaller villages to further promote rural diversification.

3.59 In light of the above, the Council’s ‘preferred approach’ was presented as being a combination of the Steady Growth and Small Scale Dispersal options.

3.60 For the draft Core Strategy (2011) as with the preferred options, four main options were tested in the SA and this again found that the ‘steady growth’ and ‘small-scale dispersal’ options performed most favourably.

3.61 These options were also well-supported through earlier consultation and formed the basis of a number of draft core policies including CS6 – Witney Strategic Development Area, CS15 – Existing Employment Sites and CS16 – Farm and Country Estate Diversification.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Indigenous Growth</th>
<th>Steady Growth</th>
<th>Higher Growth</th>
<th>Small Scale Dispersal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the efficiency of land use</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity, landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: SA summary of Preferred Approach economy options
3.63 The preferred approach has been carried forward into the draft Local Plan through Core Policy 11 – Land for Business. The policy has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, the results of which are attached at Appendix 2.

Directions of growth at Witney

3.64 Having regard to the overall settlement strategy discussed above, various options have been proposed in relation to the potential direction of growth at Witney.

3.65 At Issues and Options (2008) views were sought on the following options:

- North of Witney
- North-east
- East of Jubilee Way
- East of Cogges
- West
- South of A40

3.66 Most consultees favoured land to the west of Witney, this area having previously been identified as a reserve site in the adopted Local Plan (2006).

3.67 Further views were sought at the Interim Approach stage (2009) on the following options:

- North of Witney
- North-east
- East
- South
- West
Figure 7 above shows the location of the strategic development options in relation to the existing built up area of Witney.

As was the case at issues and options, most support was expressed for the development of land to the west of Witney.

At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) the five options were subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. The Sustainability objectives used to test each of the growth options were filtered to select those that were most relevant. Options were filtered on the basis that they were covered by other objectives or because they were detailed design considerations that could not sensibly be considered at this stage. The results are summarised in Table 15 below.
Table 15: Summary of Preferred Approach- Witney strategic development options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well being and reduce inequalities. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3.72 Consultation responses to these options can be viewed at [http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/inovem/consult.ti/CSPreferredApproach/consultationHome](http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/inovem/consult.ti/CSPreferredApproach/consultationHome)

3.73 The SA concluded that land to the west of Witney represents the most sustainable and deliverable option to meet housing and other needs. The SA also demonstrated that it has the potential to deliver positive benefits to sustainable economic growth and competitiveness in the town, through its close links with existing employment development to the West of Witney. The site forms part of a weak landscape structure and is below the crest of the ridge between the upper and lower Windrush valley and so there would be less significant landscape impact. Also, because of the potential scale of development on this site, there will be opportunities for new educational facilities and infrastructure improvements to be delivered through new development. This option also received the most support through public consultation.

3.74 A further SA was undertaken in support of the draft Core Strategy (2011) and reaffirmed the findings summarised above. This was reflected in draft core policies CS4 – Amount and Distribution of Housing, CS5 – Strategy for Witney and CS6 – West Witney Strategic Development Area.

Further Testing of Witney Strategic Development Areas

3.75 Following the decision of the Secretary of State not to allow the compulsory purchase order (CPO) needed for the Cogges Link Road (CLR) scheme at Witney to go ahead, it has been necessary to re-appraise the various options for growth at Witney. This is particularly pertinent to land at east Witney which was previously ruled out from further consideration partly as a result of the ‘severance’ that the CLR would have created. It is however also relevant to north and west Witney because of the knock-on transport implications of the CLR decision and the need for a suitable alternative or combination of alternatives to be identified. A detailed comparative site assessment of land at east, north and west Witney has
been undertaken and is available separately. The Sustainability Appraisal has also been re-run for these options. Land to the north east and south of Witney has not been re-appraised through SA or subject to detailed site appraisal because it is considered that the Cogges Link decision has no significant bearing on the previous assessment which concluded that development at north east of Witney would have significant adverse landscape impacts and that development on land to the south would result in unsustainable urban sprawl, be dependant on car travel and would create a poor level of residential amenity.

Re-appraisal of North Witney Option

3.76 As land to the north of Witney continues to be promoted by the developer and also has the potential to deliver a strategic transport alternative to the CLR (the West End Link) this option has been subject to further SA, the results of which are illustrated below.

3.77 The North Witney scheme comprises a total of approximately 58.6 hectares with the potential to accommodate up to 1,500 dwellings, a new primary school, local centre and the provision of a new West End link across the River Windrush.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities / Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Challenges / Negative Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Site is reasonably well related to existing services and facilities as well as some public transport links</td>
<td>• Topography and impermeability of the built area may act as a deterrent to walking and cycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relatively limited impact on historical character of Witney</td>
<td>• Development would require extensive off site infrastructure provision including new river crossing in an environmentally sensitive area, with great risk and complexity to delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construction of second river crossing would deliver significant wider benefits</td>
<td>• Site not conveniently related to main employment areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential to deliver a good number of affordable homes</td>
<td>• Parts of site located in areas of flood risk and therefore sequentially less preferable to other site options not affected by flooding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commitment given to sustainable construction</td>
<td>• Potentially significant landscape impact through the scale of development being proposed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: SWOT analysis of North Witney strategic development option
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well being and reduce inequalities. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>The proposed development is predominantly residential but also includes the provision of a local centre and new school improving access to community facilities in this area. There may be some additional job opportunities associated with the local centre depending on the mix of uses. The location of the site means that it would support some local shops and employment areas as well as the Town Centre which is within reasonable distance although the local topography and impermeability of the built area may act as a deterrent to walking and cycling. The ability to access existing town centre and local services via sustainable means will have a positive impact on the health and well being of residents in this part of town. The eastern part of the development site could integrate well with the town in landscape terms, with existing residential development on two sides. Significant revisions to the proposed extent of the development on the larger part of the site would be required to protect the separate identity of Hailey and Poffley End. Provision of new community facilities and open space would be accessible for use by new and existing communities. The principal wider benefit of the proposed development would be the provision of the new river crossing although such a project has inherent risk, cost and complexity attached to it. The land required is also in the floodplain and therefore sequentially less preferable to other options that are not affected by flooding.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>The development would include the provision of a new primary school and is located in close proximity to existing educational provision.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>The site is reasonably well related to existing services and facilities within the town centre, at Madley Park and along Hailey Road which are accessible via pedestrian and cycle links. The site enjoys reasonable public transport access although premium bus services are not immediately available. The site is not conveniently located for the town’s main employment areas.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nature of Effect</strong></td>
<td><strong>SA Score</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>Development in this location will increase pressure on the local road network and according to recent traffic modelling, notwithstanding the proposed West End Link could result in an increase in vehicular movements in the Bridge Street area of town, which is currently designated as an Air Quality Management Area. There are also concerns about the delivery of the river crossing in the short – medium term with other potential alternatives identified as delivering greater benefits and not being located in the floodplain. There are a number of existing footpaths to the south and east of the site. Cycle routes are located to the south between Crawley Road and the town centre and to the east through and around the Madley Park development. The development would provide for improved pedestrian and cycle links.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>There are no known contamination or land stability issues associated with this site and it is not located within a minerals consultation zone. The site does however contain areas of both principal and secondary aquifers which are important as a groundwater resource as well as supporting surface water flows and wetland ecosystems. Care must be taken in the appropriate use of SUDs techniques to protect the groundwater resource.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>Most of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) with a small portion located in flood Zones 2 and 3. The site is also subject of flood warning area in the ‘central valley’ as a result of flooding events in 2007. Large areas in the locality of the site are at significant risk of flooding associated with the River Windrush and the North Witney site forms part of the catchment for the Hailey Road drain which has a history of significant flooding. The Hailey Road drain is culverted and therefore has limited capacity as demonstrated during the 2007 flood event.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of this site would include the incorporation of flood risk mitigation measures which would reduce local flood risk. However, as part of the site and the West End Link needed to bring the site forward, are located in the floodplain, the site is sequentially less preferable than other alternatives not affected by flooding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>Hedgerows in the northern part of the site are considered to be of local ecological importance. Those in the south are poorer. There are records of protected species nearby. The land that is set aside for the proposed West End Link needed to bring this land forward is environmentally sensitive being within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity assets within the development sites should be a key consideration in delivering new development.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 17: SA of North Witney strategic development option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>The northern part of the site is of high landscape sensitivity, typically enclosed, small scale wolds, with farmland and farmsteads carved out of the Wychwood Forest. The land forms part of the landscape buffer between Hailey and Poffley End and Witney’s town edge estates. There is high intervisibility and long distance views from higher northern parts of the site across the town and to the north across the Wychwood uplands. A reduced amount of development to that which has been promoted could possibly be accommodated without significant adverse landscape and visual impact. However, this would render the delivery of the significant transport infrastructure needed for this scheme to come forward, potentially unviable. There are no known heritage assets that would be directly affected by development in this location although development of the site would need to take into account the setting of listed buildings at Downhill and Middlefield Farms. The bulk of the route proposed for the West End link road lies within and adjacent to the Witney Conservation Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>Other than the opportunities available in the town centre, access to employment opportunities is relatively limited, with the main employment sites at Downs Road and Station Lane situated across the other side of the town. There are some small estates nearby including the West End Industrial Estate. New employment opportunities delivered on site would depend on the mix of uses proposed in the local centre. No business land is being promoted as part of the development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Re-appraisal of East Witney option

3.78 The East Witney option comprises two separate parcels of land; Cogges Triangle and Cogges South. The site promoter originally suggested that Cogges Triangle could deliver around 350 homes with a further 100 to be provided on Cogges South. More recently it has been suggested that the two sites could accommodate 500 – 600 dwellings between them with the majority to be provided on Cogges Triangle. The promoter has suggested that the sites have the potential to deliver a range of benefits including in particular the delivery of the Shores Green Slip Roads scheme (one of the identified alternatives to the Cogges Link Road). Other potential benefits include improved pedestrian links, potential provision of a new primary school (although the County Council have confirmed that the proposed level of development does not warrant a new school) land for allotments, potential park and ride and community woodland.
Opportunities / Positive Impacts

- Sites have the potential to link effectively into existing pedestrian and cycle routes connecting development with existing services and facilities.
- Creation of community woodland may deliver community and environmental benefit.
- Sites benefit from close proximity and sustainable access to the town centre.
- Premium bus services operate nearby along Oxford Hill and local bus routes may be extended to serve new development.
- Delivery of the Shores Green Slip Roads will help to reduce town centre congestion and improve traffic flow in busy parts of the town.

Challenges / Negative Impacts

- Sites comprise an area of some landscape sensitivity particularly Cogges South and the higher parts of Cogges Triangle.
- Nearby primary schools at capacity thereby requiring capacity improvements.
- The Cogges South site is partly within the floodplain and therefore sequentially less preferable to other site options not affected by flooding.
- Noise from A40 is a consideration for development in this location.

Table 18: SWOT analysis of East Witney strategic development option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well being and reduce inequalities. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>The location of the sites provides the opportunity to integrate with existing communities at Cogges. Both sites are relatively limited in size although there is the potential to provide some additional community facilities on the Cogges Triangle site in particular. Good connections to existing pedestrian and cycle routes mean that the sites benefit from sustainable access to a wide range of services and facilities including GP surgery, leisure facilities and the town centre. Potential provision of improved pedestrian links has the potential to further improve access to local facilities. There will be some potential amenity impact arising from noise generated by traffic on the A40. This will require mitigation through appropriate design and layout. The creation of the community woodland will contribute to local green infrastructure for the benefit of the local community although its suitability in this location will need to be further considered in light of recent landscape advice.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>Nearby schools are at capacity so development in this location would be required to contribute towards increasing capacity in the local area. Although the developer has indicated that land would be set aside for a primary school, development of the scale proposed would not warrant on-site provision. Good accessibility to existing secondary schools. Although a contribution to secondary school provision would be sought from development in this location.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>The east sites have the best access by all modes to GP surgeries and best access by walking and cycling to supermarkets and the town centre. They also have good access to secondary schools compared to some other site options. There are opportunities to link to excellent existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure as well as opportunities to potentially deliver improved access across the River Windrush to the Station Lane area of town. Sites may be served by an extended local bus service and are in relative close proximity to high frequency premium bus services to Oxford.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>Strategic scale development in this location would create some additional pressure on the local road network. Any new development in this part of the town would therefore need to be complimented by sufficient improvements to transport infrastructure to mitigate the potential impact of development and improve road traffic conditions in the local area. Development to the East of Witney will be required to deliver the SGSR which recent transport modelling suggests will, in combination with the proposed Down’s Road junction, help to draw traffic away from the Town Centre and the Air Quality Management Area as people choose to use the A40 for cross town and long-distance trips instead of travelling through the town centre unnecessarily. Further improvements to junctions throughout the town will be required to improve the flow of traffic in all areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>Environment Agency maps indicate the presence of secondary aquifers across both sites and although these do not preclude development from taking place, special care will be required in the use of SUDS in these locations. The Environment Agency has advised that no development should take place within 10m of drains on the Cogges South site and within 100m of the River Windrush to avoid harm to aquatic environmental environments It is understood that the Cogges South site is potentially Grade 2 (very good quality) agricultural land.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>The Cogges Triangle site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and therefore performs well in terms of the sequential test to selecting development sites. The slope of the land means that sustainable drainage measures will be needed to address surface water run-off issues. The Cogges South site falls partly within the floodplain and is therefore sequentially less preferable to other site options not affected by flood risk.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>No part of the Cogges Triangle site is subject to any formal protected biodiversity status although there are records of Badgers on site. The site is comprised of improved and semi-improved grassland and arable land with intact species rich hedgerows present in the area. The Cogges South site is more sensitive in terms of ecology with medium-high biodiversity value. The site contains Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats and forms part of the Lower Windrush Valley Conservation Target Area. There are also many records of protected and notable species on site.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>Recent landscape evidence suggests that development on Cogges Triangle would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms subject to a number of landscape design objectives including development being kept below the 95m AOD contour, and the safeguarding of key views including those from the cemetery. Development within the Cogges South area could potentially result in significant damage to the Windrush Valley and key views across it. There is some evidence of historic interest on the two sites which would need to be given further consideration if development were to go ahead.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>The scale of development proposed limits the potential to provide new business land and the site promoter is suggesting residential development only. The sites do however enjoy good access to local employment opportunities in the town centre which could be further enhanced through improved pedestrian and cycle links.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: SA of East Witney strategic development option
Re-appraisal of West Witney Option

3.79 The West Witney scheme comprises a total of 73.4 hectares including highways land, to include 1000 dwellings, an employment area of 10 hectares, a local centre, new primary school and possible secondary school facility, allotments and the provision of a new all movements junction onto the A40 at Downs Road.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities / Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Challenges / Negative Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No constraints in terms of vehicular access to the site.</td>
<td>• Noise from the A40 may present an amenity issue for residents without sufficient mitigation measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of the site will deliver A40 junction improvements leading to significant wider benefit.</td>
<td>• Slight potential for existing land contamination but likely to be able to be remediated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Well located in relation to existing employment opportunities and would provide additional opportunities also.</td>
<td>• Site is relatively distant from town centre services and facilities compared with other strategic development options however the permeability of the site towards key destinations is excellent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Site located in an area of low flood risk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited impact on biodiversity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited impact on landscape and heritage assets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: SWOT analysis of West Witney strategic development option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well being and reduce inequalities. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>The site is relatively distant from the town centre compared with the other options. However, it is close to a good network of footpaths and cycleways and the permeability of the area through to key services and facilities is excellent. This will encourage residents to walk and cycle to access key local services. The proposed development is predominantly residential but will also include a local centre and primary school with potential for a secondary school if needed. The location of the site means that it would support existing employment areas to the north of the site. Significant planned improvements to local green infrastructure including enhanced footpaths and cycleways will benefit the health and well being of local residents.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>The delivery of a new primary school and potential secondary school in the area will be valuable contributions to educational infrastructure in the town. There may also be some additional training opportunities associated with the 10 hectare employment element of the scheme.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</strong></td>
<td>The site is relatively distant from the town centre, indoor recreation facilities and secondary education, although there are a range of services and facilities at Edington Square that are within walking and cycling distance from the site. The site is located in close proximity to the 233 bus route linking the area with the town centre and diversion of the premium S1 service into the site as proposed will provide very good public transport access to Carterton, Oxford and Witney Town Centre.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</strong></td>
<td>The scale of development proposed will clearly result in an increase in the overall level of traffic in the area. However, the delivery of the Downs Road junction will provide enhanced accessibility to the A40, drawing traffic away from the centre of Witney and thereby helping to improve air quality and reduce congestion.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protect and improve soil and water resources</strong></td>
<td>The site is predominantly comprised of grade 3b agricultural land with some woodland. This will not present a constraint to development in this area. There are no known issues of water quality in the area and the Environment Agency has not raised any objections to the development of the land.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</strong></td>
<td>The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is therefore sequentially preferable to other options in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Surface water from the proposed development will be directed to the proposed sustainable drainage systems. A flood alleviation pond has been proposed upstream of the Main Road culvert to alleviate existing flood issues in Curbridge.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</strong></td>
<td>No part of the site is subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designation and the only protected species records relate to Badgers in 1999 and 2005. Neither Natural England of the Environment Agency has objected to development of the site although clearer information on the potential impact on Port Meadow (SAC) has been requested. This is however an issue that is applicable to all strategic development sites and is not considered a constraint to development. A separate HRA report looking at this issue has been made available alongside this SA report.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</strong></td>
<td>There are no known heritage assets that would be directly affected by development in this location and a programme of archaeological investigation has not revealed the presence of any important features. The sensitivity of the landscape is moderate to low due to the scale of the landscape and the land uses of the area. There is however higher visual sensitivity on the more elevated parts of the site. In overall terms, recent landscape evidence suggests that development in this location would be acceptable in landscape terms subject to a number of landscape design objectives.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maintain high and stable levels of employment
Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness

In addition to the residential aspect of the development, 10ha of land has been proposed for employment purposes, thereby generating significant potential for inward investment and job creation.

The location of the site and the delivery of the A40 junction would strongly support existing employment areas to the north of the site.

Table 21: SA of West Witney strategic development option

3.80 Table 22 below summarises the re-appraisals of the three main options and illustrates that West Witney remains the most sustainable option for accommodating new development in the town when compared with the re-appraised North and East options. Although the West Witney site is relatively distant from the town centre it has good pedestrian and cycle links and access to premium bus services. It is in close proximity to existing employment provision and can provide significant increases in employment whilst delivering a new junction on the A40 to benefit existing businesses in that area. The site is of lower environmental sensitivity than the other options and has greater potential to improve local community infrastructure with the provision of new educational and other community facilities benefitting existing and new residents alike. Land to the east of Witney scores particularly well in relation to accessibility to services and facilities, being in very close proximity to the town centre and representing a genuinely sustainable location for development. There are some concerns about potential landscape and heritage impact on the more elevated parts of the site and in the Windrush Valley which could be reduced by scaling back development from that which has been proposed by the site promoter. The delivery of the Shores Green A40 junction improvement is predicted to reduce the volume of traffic through Bridge Street with associated benefits to air quality likely to follow. Land to the north of Witney is not as accessible as the eastern option to the town centre and has a number of environmental sensitivities including flood risk and landscape, and in particular the potential impacts associated with the delivery of the West End Link Road which is needed to bring the site forward. Even with this new link road the amount of traffic predicted through the Bridge Street/West End junction is expected to increase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Re-appraisal North</th>
<th>Re-appraisal East</th>
<th>Re-appraisal West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve health and well being and reduce inequalities. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22: Comparative assessment of Witney strategic development options
3.81 Having regard to the SA and a more detailed comparative site assessment that has been carried out alongside, the draft Local Plan (2012) identifies land at West Witney and land at East Witney to deliver 1,000 homes and 300 homes respectively. This combination of options is intended to deliver sufficient housing in the area to meet the needs of the population, while delivering the necessary highways infrastructure required to improve traffic flow, reduce air pollution and improve accessibility.

3.82 Both options score well in SA terms and where potential issues have been identified, these have been addressed through appropriate mitigation within the relevant policies. These policies have been subject to further SA and the findings are set out at Appendix 2.

Directions of growth at Carterton

3.83 Having regard to the overall settlement strategy, various options have been proposed in relation to the potential direction of growth at Carterton.

3.84 At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) four options were put forward:

- Option 1 – No major new expansion
- Option 2 – Northern extension
- Option 3 – Eastern extension
- Option 4 – Western extension
3.85 Option 1 was to limit any major expansion of the town to the existing land already allocated for residential development, a key priority within the town being the planned redevelopment of large areas of MOD property at REEMA North and Central.

3.86 Options 2, 3 and 4 considered the potential for significant outward expansion of the town to the east, north and west (each with about 1,000 homes and supporting facilities including new primary school). The four options were each tested through a Sustainability Appraisal the results of which are summarised in Table 23 below. Again, the Sustainability objectives used to test each of the growth options were filtered to select the most relevant. Options were filtered on the basis that they were covered by other objectives or because they related to detailed design considerations that could not sensibly be considered at this stage.
3.87 The full SA of the Carterton strategic development options from the preferred approach stage (2010) can be viewed at:

3.88 In summary, the SA demonstrated that of the four options, the eastern option was the most accessible and provides the best potential for integration with the town. It did however raise potential negative impacts in relation to potential impact on the historic character of neighbouring Brize Norton village which would need to be taken into account through any development. Although the site to the west of the town would provide a large, readily developable area of land, it was considered that development here would represent a significant incursion into the open countryside and would result in significant landscape impact. Development in this location would not be well integrated with the physical fabric of the town being separated by the Shill Brook valley which clearly marks the edge of the existing town. Land to the north of the town has potential for a large development area but it the most constrained of the options due to the distance from existing services and facilities and the potential negative impact on the rural road network.

3.89 The preferred approach was presented as being to develop either land to the west or east of Carterton with land to the north being considered a less sustainable option due to the constraints presented by the rural road network, accessibility to services and proximity to a working quarry.
3.90 Consultation responses can be viewed at

3.91 The consultation findings clearly demonstrated a preference for no further expansion at Carterton with 40% of respondents stating a preference for this option. In this regard, although the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has recently stated that some of its land could be made available for open market housing in the middle of Carterton, it will still be necessary to allow some development on the edge of the town to meet the overall housing requirement for the Carterton sub-area.

3.92 A further SA was undertaken in support of the draft Core Strategy (2011) and found that land to the north is the most constrained and that development within the town has the least adverse environmental impact but may limit long-term potential for growth.

3.93 Land to the east and west were considered to have a number of advantages and disadvantages and performed similarly when assessed against the SA objectives. This was reflected in draft Core Policy CS7 – Strategy for Carterton, which continued to identify both land to the east and west as potential options for growth.

Re-appraisal of Carterton Strategic development Areas

3.94 In light of further information submitted by land agents and other key stakeholders in relation to sites at Carterton, the main site options have been subjected to a further re-assessment through this SA. The option for no major expansion has not been re-assessed as it was tested effectively through earlier stages of the SA process. Although of lesser environmental impact, this option limits the ability to deliver new infrastructure and housing in the town, particularly affordable housing. Importantly, even with the DIO land in the centre of town being potentially made available to the open market, some development on the edge of Carterton will still be necessary.

3.95 Reflecting previous appraisals, the objectives considered in the assessment have been filtered to include those most relevant to the comparative appraisal. The noise impact on development has not been considered for example, as there is unlikely to be a significant difference between the sites in relation to this objective. The accompanying ‘Assessment of Strategic Site Options’ background paper provides a detailed assessment of the sites against related criteria.

Re-appraisal of Carterton Option 3- Eastern Extension

3.96 The site lies to the east of Monahan Way, north of Carterton Road and south of Burford Road, Brize Norton. The original option tested for this site was based on the provision of 1,000 dwellings however, most recently the developer has suggested a scheme of around 700 dwellings including a primary school, local centre, sports pitches, allotments, flood compensation areas, extension to Kilkenny Country Park and the provision of a long-term buffer to the east of the site. This smaller-scale proposal has therefore been considered through the SA and the results are summarised below.
**Opportunities / Positive Impacts**

- Site has no access restrictions or constraints.
- Excellent accessibility to a range of services and facilities as well as employment and public transport.
- Site located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) with potential to reduce local flood risk from surface water run-off.
- No significant ecological constraints on site.
- Site relates well to the built up area of Carterton.
- Relatively low landscape impact compared to other site options.
- Opportunity to create a green buffer to Brize Norton forming an extension to the Kilkenny Lane Country Park.

**Challenges / Negative Impacts**

- Ensuring that an appropriate buffer is provided to safeguard potential impact on the setting of Brize Norton village.
- Potential noise is a consideration for development in this location.
- Minor aquifer requires careful consideration in selecting appropriate SUDs techniques.

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### Table 24: SA summary of East Carterton growth option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
<td>The delivery of affordable housing on site would be policy compliant. The exact level of provision would be determined on the basis of adopted policy. The draft Local Plan seeks 35% affordable housing on sites at Carterton.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>The site is well related to the existing built up area of Carterton and would provide safe and convenient access to existing services and facilities within the town. Additional services and facilities delivered as a result of development on this site would provide benefits for the immediate and wider community.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>Development would include the provision of on-site primary school provision and would have good access to existing educational facilities in the town including Carterton Community College.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>Development on this site would benefit from safe and convenient access to existing facilities within Carterton and excellent local public transport links with premium bus services running next to the site. Development of this site would be expected to contribute to a wide range of local off-site infrastructure including phase 2 of Carterton leisure centre and the provision and maintenance of long-term open space between Carterton and Brize Norton. Although predominantly residential, the development would also include a mixed use local centre, primary school, sports pitches, allotments and open space for the benefit of the immediate and wider community.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve efficiency of land use Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>The site is not located within a minerals consultation zone and minerals in this area are uneconomic to extract due to their depth. The site lies within a ‘minor aquifer, high groundwater vulnerability zone’ and therefore consideration would need to be given to the use of sustainable drainage. Soil is classed as Grade 3 (moderate/good) in the agricultural land use classification</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding

The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is therefore sequentially preferable to sites located in Zones 2 and 3. The eastern boundary of the site is covered by some surface water risk and Brize Norton village suffered flooding during the summer of 2007. The developer proposes to include ‘flood compensation areas’ to the south west and north west of the development area to mitigate the effect of increased runoff arising from the development. 

Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity

An ecological assessment completed for the site concludes that the site has low biodiversity value apart from the hedgerows on site which should be retained.

Development of the site has potential to deliver ecological improvements through the extension of Kilkenny Country Park as a contribution to the South Cotswolds Valleys Conservation Target Area.

Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment

There are no known archaeological sites or features directly associated with this site. There are a number of listed buildings in Brize Norton to the north and east of the site although these are not considered to be in such close proximity as to present a constraint to development.

Although the site is visually exposed, it is already subject to a range of urban influences such as the airbase which is in relatively close proximity. Landscape evidence suggests that the site can be developed on a small scale with a substantive landscape transition zone (extension to Kilkenny Lane County Park) to limit the visual impact, maintain a visual gap and without wider landscape harm.

Maintain high and stable levels of employment

The location of the site ensures that it would support the nearby employment areas as well as the town centre. In terms of job creation, the development would result in some additional opportunities associated with the proposed local centre. The number of jobs would however depend on the mix and nature of uses.

Table 25: SA summary of Carterton East growth option

Re-appraisal of Carterton Option 4 – Western Extension

3.97 The site comprises 128 hectares of land to the west of Upavon Way, north of the B4477 Alvescot Road with proposals to deliver 1,000 dwellings, a mixed use centre including employment, primary school, community and leisure facilities, an ‘ecological park’ along the Shill Brook valley, allotments, sports facilities and play areas.
Opportunities / Positive Impacts

- Site is in close proximity to existing services and facilities including the town centre, although is physically separated by the Shill Brook.
- The area has good public transport accessibility with potential to divert a premium bus service to serve the development.
- The local road network has capacity to accommodate increase in traffic arising from development of the site.
- Development would incorporate flood risk mitigation measures and ecological improvements.
- Development would incorporate a local centre and new employment opportunities.

Challenges / Negative Impacts

- Significant transport infrastructure improvements required to access site over the Shill Brook.
- Site is less well related to existing employment opportunities than land to the east of Carterton.
- The site has no current cycle infrastructure and disjointed pedestrian links to key destinations.
- Part of the site is located within Flood Zone 3a and is therefore sequentially less preferable to other site options.
- The Shill Brook is ecologically sensitive and development in this location would require careful consideration.
- Development in this location would represent a major expansion into the open countryside which is of high landscape value and sensitivity.
- Development would represent a major change to the settlement fabric and the relationship between the Shill Brook valley and the built up area.

Table 26: SWOT assessment of West Carterton growth option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
<td>The proposed level of affordable housing is 35% with an additional 15% of housing provided to meet the housing requirements of specific groups, e.g. key workers and elderly. This is consistent with the draft Local Plan target for Carterton.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Development would provide a number of wider benefits to the local community including an ecology park and wildlife centre associated with the Shill Brook as well as potential flood alleviation measures, a new school and additional open space provision. The site is located in close proximity to existing services and facilities within Carterton however is not well-related to the built area by virtue of the physical separation created by the Shill Brook which clearly marks the edge of the town.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>The site is close to Carterton Community College as well as a number of local primary schools, most notably St. Joseph’s within easy walking distance. The developer proposes to provide a new primary school as part of the development.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>The site is located in close proximity to existing services and facilities within Carterton town centre which is approximately 1.6km from the centre of the site. Carterton Community College and a number of local primary schools are within convenient walking distance although employment areas such as Ventura Park and the West Oxfordshire Business Park are more than 2km from the centre of the site. Development in this location will require the construction of river crossings</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
over the Shill Brook to provide convenient access to existing town centre facilities by car, foot and bicycle. A range of on-site facilities would be provided including a new local centre and primary school.

**Improve efficiency of land use**

**Protect and improve soil and water resources**

The site is not located within a Mineral Consultation Area. There is likely to be White Limestone underlying Forest Marble although Oxfordshire County Council has concluded that working of the White Limestone is unlikely to be economic due to its depth. Historic landfill site in the area requires further investigation. The land classed as Grade 3 agricultural land and sits over a minor aquifer.

**Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding**

Part of the site is within Flood Zone 3a (high probability of flooding) and as access to the site would require built structures within this area, the site is sequentially less preferable to areas in Zones 1 and 2. Although the Shill Brook has flooding issues downstream, the Environment Agency has no objections to development in this location subject to the implementation of SUDs to reduce run-off to below greenfield run-off rates. Any development adjacent to the Shill Brook will require a Stage 3 Flood Risk Assessment.

**Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity**

The development offers the potential for positive impacts through the creation of the Ecological park and developer contributions to conservation work in the wider conservation target area. This area requires sensitive management to meet the targets of the conservation target area however, and any development that encroaches onto the Shill Brook has potential to adversely impact on the ecological value of the watercourse.

**Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment**

With appropriate buffers, development would not encroach into the landscape setting of Shilton or Alvescot, however, the site sits within an area of high landscape sensitivity and intervisibility, with development representing a major incursion into the open countryside. Development in this location would split the open wolds landscape in this area in two and would appear as an alien intrusion into the landscape.

There is high intervisibility between the edge of Shilton and the wider open wolds and development would be visible on the skyline, increasing the perception of Carterton expanding towards Shilton. Recent landscape evidence suggests this site is the poorest performing option in terms of landscape impact.

**Maintain high and stable levels of employment**

**Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness**

Developer submissions for this site suggest that 3ha of employment land would be provided as part of the mixed-use area, therefore resulting in some new employment opportunities within the development area. The development would also result in employment opportunities associated with the proposed local centre and employment area. The number of jobs would depend on the detailed mix of uses.

---

**Table 27: SA summary of West Carterton growth option**
3.98 There are two other options for growth on the edge of Carterton which have either been promoted or have evolved through the process but have not yet been assessed through a process of Sustainability Appraisal. These include:

Option 5 - North of Carterton at Kilkenny Farm (1,000 homes)
Option 6 - North of Carterton (David Wilson Homes) (300 homes)

3.99 These options have been tested using the same methods as the other Carterton options, firstly by determining the strengths and weaknesses of each of the individual sites and by then applying the Sustainability Appraisal framework to them. The full assessment of each is set out below.

Option 5 – Development to the North of Carterton at Kilkenny Farm

3.100 The site, currently utilised for agricultural purposes comprises 100 hectares of land to the north of Kilkenny Lane and south of Burford Road and land to the south of Burford Quarry. The development of this site could accommodate up to 1000 dwellings along with a local centre and employment opportunities, a primary school, playing fields and woodland provision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities / Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Challenges / Negative Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Site located in low flood risk area with potential to reduce surface water run-off although is located at the head of a delicate catchment.</td>
<td>• Significant highways infrastructure improvements will be required to provide access which could change the character of Burford Road and attract further traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No significant ecological constraints on site.</td>
<td>• Site is not well related to existing services, facilities and employment opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Site is not constrained by noise, contamination or land stability issues.</td>
<td>• Poor public transport access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Large site with potential to deliver additional local job opportunities and community facilities.</td>
<td>• Proposed scale of development would have an adverse impact on landscape character and would form a major intrusion into the open countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Development in this location would be poorly integrated with the town.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28: SWOT assessment of Kilkenny Farm growth option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effects</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
<td>Affordable housing will be delivered on site in accordance with the adopted Local Plan policy. The draft Local Plan identifies a target of 35% for Carterton.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Large scale development of the site would facilitate the provision of a new school and other community facilities but is likely to prove difficult to integrate with existing development to the south. Development at this location would be a satellite and poorly integrated with the town.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>Potential to deliver on site primary school provision, however the site is not as well related to existing schools as the other site options.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>The site is poorly related to existing services and facilities. Kilkenny Lane Country Park and some additional facilities such as local football club are within walking distance, although local employment opportunities are more distant from the site. Local bus services are limited and would require re-routing to provide an acceptable level of service to development on this site. There are opportunities for walking and cycling in the locality by extending and utilising links to the south of the site, although currently, these local green links are not lit or overlooked.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve efficiency of land use</td>
<td>More than half of the site is within a minerals consultation zone although there is unlikely to be an economically workable deposit of white limestone within the Kilkenny Farm site. The majority of land is grade 3 agricultural land but part grade 2 and therefore very good quality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) although there are local recorded incidences of surface water flooding. The site is however at the head of a delicate catchment in relation to flood risk. Development may result in displaced flood risk elsewhere in the locality and increased pressure on the existing undersized drainage system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>Habitats present are of negligible or local ecological value although the Environment Agency has recommended further survey work to inform possible mitigation requirements in relation to Great Crested Newts. Development of the site may provide an opportunity to enhance biodiversity through habitat creation and management. Burford Quarry and land to the west are designated as a local geological site.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>There are no designated historic assets on site and the western extent of the proposed development is approximately 800m from the Shilton conservation area. The northern part of the site is typical of the Open Wolds landscape and is of high sensitivity. The lower portion of the site is less sensitive and is more enclosed by vegetation but part of it intrudes into the setting of Brize Norton village. Large scale development would have an adverse landscape and visual impact and would present a major intrusion into the open countryside. A smaller development could be accommodated with reduced impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>The site is poorly related to existing employment opportunities within the town which is further compounded by the limited public transport access in the area. Development of the site could result in the creation of local job opportunities but these would be largely dependant on the nature of the local centre and employment area proposed. The location is not considered particularly suitable for new employment land provision either.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29: SA summary of Kilkenny Farm growth option
Option 6- North Carterton (David Wilson Homes)

3.101 The site comprises 23 hectares of land to the north of land that is currently allocated for 200 dwellings in the Local Plan, to the east and west of Swinbrook Road. The site has been promoted as having potential to accommodate up to 300 dwellings as well as open space provision as an extension to the existing adopted local plan allocation of 200 dwellings to the south.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities / Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Challenges / Negative Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Site access could be provided from the Shilton link road to be provided as part of the proposed housing allocation to the south.  
• Site is reasonably well related to existing services and facilities including the town centre, primary schools and Carterton Community College.  
• Site is within walking distance of bus stops providing local routes.  
• Good potential links with current pedestrian and cycle infrastructure within Shilton Park and towards town centre via Swinbrook Road.  
• Site located in area of low flood risk.  
• No significant noise, contamination or land stability issues. | • Diversion of premium bus services unlikely due to size of proposed development site  
• There is some ecological / biodiversity interest on site  
• Impact on Shilton conservation area is a key consideration and requires scaling back of proposals to reduce impact.  
• Potential negative landscape impact of the proposed extent of development in this area, which would need to be scaled back. |

Table 30: SWOT assessment of North West Carterton growth option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>Nature of Effects</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
<td>Affordable housing will be delivered on site in accordance with the policy at the time of a planning application for the site however the size of the site means the amount of new housing provided including affordable housing would be less than the other larger site options.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Any development in the southern and eastern parts of the site would relate well to the existing settlement as an extension of the approved development to the north of the town however the scale of development proposed has the potential to impact on the existing community at Shilton. Development offers the potential to create an extension to the Kilkenny Lane Country Park although, beyond this, the relatively small scale of the development reduces the scope for delivering additional infrastructure for wider community benefit.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>The site is located in close proximity to existing education provision. Although the scale of proposed development does not warrant the provision of a new school, contributions towards improving existing provision would be required.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>The site is reasonably well related to existing services and facilities including Carterton town centre, and employment and education opportunities within the town are located within walking and cycling distance as are a range of local bus services which can be accessed through Shilton Park or along Upavon Way. Access to premium bus services is however more limited. There are good opportunities within the locality to link the site into existing pedestrian and cycle routes. There is the potential to generate more traffic passing through the Shilton Park development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve efficiency of land use Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>The site lies outside the 350m buffer of the nearby Burford Quarry and will therefore have no effect on local mineral workings. The proposed development of the site at 40 units per hectare represents an efficient use of the land available.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and falls outside the flood affected areas recorded in July 2007. Drainage from the site has potential to feed into the existing Shilton Park system.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>The western boundary of the site abuts the eastern boundary of the South Cotswolds Valleys Conservation Target Area. There are records of protected habitats and species within and adjoining the site. There is an area of important calcareous grassland in the south-eastern corner of the site. The developers own ecological report suggests the impact upon key ecological features could be high.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>There are no designated heritage assets on site although the western boundary of the site abuts the Shilton Conservation Area with development as proposed having a potentially negative impact. The site lies across two landscape areas with the western part open, exposed and rising and forming an important part of the landscape setting of Shilton. The southern and eastern portion of the site is well contained and relates well to the existing settlement. Recent landscape evidence recommends that development should be confined to the less sensitive part of the site.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>The small scale of the development site limits the potential for delivering on site employment opportunities. The site relates reasonably well to the existing settlement with existing employment opportunities within relatively close proximity.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 31: SA summary of North Carterton (David Wilson Homes) growth option**

**REEMA North and REEMA Central**

3.102 Following the MOD’s announcement that some it’s land in the centre of Carterton which had previously been reserved for service families, could be made available to the open market, the draft Local Plan (October 2012) identifies land at REEMA North and Central for the provision of 400 (net) homes. This option was previously tested under the no major new expansion scenario and has also been subject to further SA testing in Appendix 2 (Core Policy 32)
3.103 Table 32 below summarises the sustainability appraisal results of the four main options for growth on the edge of Carterton. It is clear from the comparative analysis that the land to the east delivers the most positive sustainability impacts and the least negative outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
<th>East (700)</th>
<th>West (1,000)</th>
<th>Kilkenny Farm (1,000)</th>
<th>North (David Wilson Homes) (300)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education and training</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve efficiency of land use</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32: Comparative assessment of Carterton strategic growth options

3.104 The eastern option has excellent accessibility which will encourage walking, cycling and use of bus services and the site can integrate well into the existing settlement. Through the incorporation of a landscape buffer to Brize Norton village forming an extension to the Kilkenny Lane Country Park, the landscape impact of development in this location will be relatively limited. Land to the west of Carterton would result in significant adverse landscape impact being a major incursion into open countryside. The accessibility of the site is reasonably good but is dependent on the provision of significant built infrastructure across the Shill Brook. Although development would offer the potential for ecological benefits, it would also require built development within an ecologically sensitive area located within a high risk flood zone. The site is therefore sequentially less preferable to other site options on flood risk grounds. Land at Kilkenny Farm has a poor relationship to existing services and public transport and would be poorly integrated with the town. The proposed development would also have significant adverse landscape impact unless scaled back significantly. Land to the north of Carterton (David Wilson Homes) is reasonably well related to existing services but access to public transport is not as strong as other site options. Furthermore, development as proposed would have an adverse landscape impact, intruding into the setting of Shilton village and there are potential adverse biodiversity impacts. The size of the site also limits the ability to deliver additional affordable housing.
3.105 The draft Local Plan (2012) identifies a combination of site options including a strategic site at REEMA North and Central (400 homes) and a strategic site at East Carterton (700 homes). This combination of sites has been selected to ensure that the required scale of housing growth is delivered alongside the necessary infrastructure to support the community, without causing significant harm to the landscape and historic character of the area, and to ensure that new development integrates well with and supports the town.

3.106 The scale of development to the east of the town has been drawn back to respect the setting of Brize Norton Village. The extension of Kilkenny Country Park will provide a sufficient landscape buffer, respecting the historic setting of Brize Norton village and contributing to the local green infrastructure and ecological network. Reducing the scale of development in this location further would sacrifice the ability to deliver further community infrastructure, particularly a new primary school.

3.107 The redevelopment of the REEMA sites within the town will deliver welcome regeneration and improved living conditions for this part of the town. It will deliver a significant amount of new housing without any further encroachment into the open countryside, thus protecting the landscape character of the area and the setting of surrounding settlements.

3.108 The combination of strategic sites will deliver 1,100 new dwellings at Carterton with a substantial proportion of affordable housing, supporting the needs of the local community as well as supporting the role of the town itself as a service centre.

**Growth at Chipping Norton**

3.109 Opportunities for significant expansion in Chipping Norton are relatively limited due to the landscape constraints of the Cotswolds AONB. Development at Chipping Norton is also constrained to some extent by the allocation of an air quality management zone in the town centre. The town sits astride the A44 and the A361, a heavily used lorry route passing through the town centre.

3.110 At the Preferred Approach stage (2010) land on the eastern fringe of the town was subjected to sustainability appraisal. This area lies outside the Cotswolds AONB, although the capacity for new development is constrained by the landscape character of the area.

3.111 The results of the earlier SA are summarised below with the SA objectives having been filtered accordingly.
Relevant Sustainability Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chipping Norton East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve health and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thriving and inclusive communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve education and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce flooding risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High and stable levels of employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sustainable economic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33: SA summary of Chipping Norton strategic growth option

3.112 The summary demonstrates that development to the east of Chipping Norton is considered to be sustainable although the impact on landscape character and the historic environment of the town and surrounding countryside should be carefully managed and mitigated.

3.113 The site is also on the Oxford side of the town, which should help to minimise the amount of through traffic generated from new development affecting the town centre and the air quality management area.

3.114 Having regard to the above, the development of land to the east of Chipping Norton was presented as the Council’s ‘preferred approach’. Concern was however expressed through the consultation about the impact on the rural landscape arising from new development to the east of the town, the impact on the historic character and heritage assets in the area and the over-expansion of the town boundary.

3.115 The SA of the draft Core Strategy (2011) found that land to the east of Chipping Norton offers the most potential for large-scale development on the edge of the town. Draft Core Policy CS8 – Strategy for Chipping Norton whilst identifying the number of new homes to be provided did not explicitly state where this should take place.

3.116 Since the previous draft strategy was published, work has begun on a new Neighbourhood Plan for Chipping Norton. In light of this, the draft Local Plan (October 2012) does not allocate a strategic site at Chipping Norton, rather it identifies an overall number of new homes to be provided (600 in the Chipping Norton sub-area) and allows for these to be delivered through the Neighbourhood Plan which will be the subject of a separate Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in due course. The SA of the overall strategy policy for Chipping Norton is set out at Appendix 2.
Appraisal of current planning policies (B4 / B5)

3.117 The development strategy and policies presented in the draft Local Plan (October 2012) have been developed and refined through previous rounds of consultation and sustainability appraisal. In order to ensure that each of these policies conforms with the SA framework and that they will cumulatively deliver positive impacts throughout the district, in conformity with one another, a full sustainability appraisal of each of the policies has been undertaken. The detailed findings of this appraisal are broken down by each policy and are contained within Appendix 2. The appendix also discusses a 'business as usual' scenario for each policy, which essentially acts as an alternative to that policy setting out the implications of not having it in place.

3.118 Table 34 below presents a summary of the detailed sustainability appraisal findings and illustrates how well the draft Local Plan core policies perform against each of the sustainability objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Policies</th>
<th>Sustainability Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP1 CP2 CP3 CP4 CP5 CP6 CP7 CP8 CP9 CP10 CP11 CP12 CP13 CP14 CP15 CP16 CP17 CP18 CP19 CP20 CP21 CP22 CP23 CP24 CP25 CP26 CP27 CP28 CP29 CP30 CP31 CP32 CP33 CP34 CP35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Table 34: SA summary of draft Local Plan policies
Summary of Sustainability Impacts of the Local Plan

3.119 The summary of the full Sustainability Appraisal illustrated in Table 34 clearly demonstrates how the positive and negative impacts of the Local Plan policies combine to deliver an overall cumulative impact against the sustainability objectives for the District. These impacts are largely positive, particularly in relation to Sustainability Objectives 1, 2 and 3 for the delivery of affordable housing, improving the health and well being of communities and promoting thriving and inclusive communities.

3.120 There is potential for the Local Plan to cause some negative outcomes however. Objective 7 exhibits a number of neutral impacts indicating that there are both positive and negative outcomes. This is primarily due to the volume of greenfield land required to accommodate the additional housing required in the plan. Objective 9 exhibits a similar pattern in relation to the impact on air quality, primarily as a result of the likely increase in vehicle movements associated with increased residential development.

3.121 There are however a range of measures built into the draft Local Plan to mitigate the potential negative impacts of these policies. The effective implementation of specific polices relating to the protection and enhancement of the historic and natural environment for instance, will mitigate the potential negative impacts of increased development in the District. Transport policies also seek to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport where possible and deliver various new highways infrastructure to help alleviate traffic congestion and improve air quality in the most sensitive areas of the main towns.

3.122 The majority of the effects arising from the implementation of the Local Plan will be permanent although a number of impacts, particularly those relating to the construction of new development will be temporary in nature.

Short Term / Temporary Impacts

3.123 There is likely to be substantial residential development in the short to medium term, particularly around Witney as housing allocations remaining from the adopted Local Plan are built out. This will result in local impacts including the loss of greenfield land although the housing supply in the area will increase, addressing local needs for affordable and market housing. Preliminary works are also likely to commence around other strategic development areas as land is prepared for construction.

3.124 There is the potential for some negative amenity impacts to arise from the construction process, such as noise, reduced air quality and visual impact. Such short term impacts will only be temporary however and will dissipate once the construction process is complete.

3.125 The implementation of local infrastructure improvements such as the introduction of the A40 junction west of Witney and the improvements to the Shore’s Green junction will improve local traffic flows and enhance accessibility for key employment areas in the district.

3.126 The adoption and implementation of the Local Plan will provide greater certainty to communities and other local stakeholders about the type and location of development that will be acceptable. This may result in further development coming forward in the short term.
and policies in the plan seek to ensure that sustainable development is permitted in line with national policy.

**Medium Term Impacts**

3.127 In the medium term, much of the strategic development in the district will have commenced. The shape of the major settlements will begin to evolve with the potential negative impacts on landscape and historic character becoming more evident. Such impacts are likely to be temporary in nature however, as the design of new development and introduction of landscaping features will soften the impact of development once established.

3.128 Highways and infrastructure improvements that have been prioritised in both the sub area strategies and the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will have been established resulting in improved traffic flows and improved air quality in certain parts of the district.

3.129 The housing supply in the district will continue to improve, addressing local housing needs through increased affordable housing supply and the provision of accommodation for the elderly.

3.130 The provision of community infrastructure will also improve with the development of educational establishments to address locally identified needs.

**Long Term / Permanent Impacts**

3.131 In the long term, many of the negative impacts that have arisen in the short and medium term will have been mitigated. An enhanced green infrastructure network will improve local biodiversity through habitat creation, will reduce the landscape impact of the built environment by screening new development and will provide better opportunities for new communities to walk and cycle to access essential services and facilities.

3.132 The effects of the Local Plan will be more apparent in the long term as increased development, particularly affordable housing and employment provision will continue to address local needs. The character of settlements within West Oxfordshire will evolve further with the establishment of new communities on the edge of settlements.

3.133 The cumulative and synergistic impacts of the Local Plan are also likely to become more apparent later in the plan period. An increase in the overall quantum of development may result in increased car journeys and higher overall carbon emissions, particularly if residents continue to commute to work outside of the district. New development will however be built to higher sustainability standards and opportunities for walking and cycling will be improved to address the main causes of climate change. It is also hoped that the provision of new business land will help to reduce current levels of out-commuting. Synergistic impacts will arise if increased carbon emissions combine with existing air quality problems in the main settlements, to further degrade the environmental quality in these areas. This may have a negative impact on the health and well being of residents in these areas however it is anticipated that the proposed strategic transport infrastructure improvements will help to address this.
Cumulative Impacts

3.134 The draft Local Plan provides a comprehensive policy framework for the delivery of sustainable development in West Oxfordshire. The policies will deliver a range of positive effects, particularly in relation to delivering development in sustainable locations, meeting local housing needs, providing enhanced employment opportunities, protecting the distinctive, high quality landscape and historic character of the area and protecting and enhancing biodiversity and other natural assets.

3.135 A number of potential negative impacts have been identified in relation to the Local Plan. The main conflicts are between objectives for the delivery of new development and those seeking to protect the environment:

- An increase in the overall quantum of development in the district, particularly at the main service centres may lead to an increase in the level of traffic generated within town centres, causing further deterioration of air quality in air quality management areas.
- Population expansion and an increase in the overall level of development in the district may contribute to the causes of climate change.
- The high quality landscape character and historic environment of West Oxfordshire is potentially at risk from the impacts of modern development.

3.136 Where these potential negative impacts exist, they will be mitigated through implementation of relevant policies within the Local Plan, as set out under the key social, environmental and economic themes of the strategy. Appropriate measures have been incorporated into these policies through the Sustainability Appraisal and consultation process to ensure that they will sufficiently mitigate the potential negative impacts that may arise.

3.137 Table 35 below provides a summary of the likely cumulative impacts of the policies in the draft Local Plan and the likely effects of these on social, environmental and economic conditions in the West Oxfordshire.

3.138 Each sustainability objective is considered against the 6 key policy areas of the draft Local Plan in order to summarise the expected effects succinctly. Each of the policy areas and the individual policies associated with each policy area are listed in Box 6 below for reference.
### Overall Strategy
- CP1- Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CP2- Locating development in the right places
- CP3- Prudent use of Natural Resources
- CP4- High Quality Design
- CP5- Supporting Infrastructure

### Providing New Homes
- CP6- Amount and Distribution of Housing
- CP8- Affordable Housing
- CP10- Travelling Communities
- CP7- Type and Mix of New Homes
- CP9- Existing Housing

### Sustainable Economic Growth
- CP11- Land for Business
- CP13- Re-use of Non Residential Buildings
- CP15- Local Services and Community Facilities
- CP12- Supporting the Rural Economy
- CP14- Sustainable Tourism
- CP16- Town Centres

### Environmental and Heritage Assets
- CP17- Landscape Character
- CP19- Public Realm and Green Infrastructure
- CP21- Flood Risk
- CP23- Historic Environment
- CP18- Biodiversity
- CP20- Decentralised & Renewable or Low Carbon Energy Development
- CP22- Environmental Protection

### Transport and Movement
- CP24- Transport and Movement

### Strategy at the Local Level
- CP25- Witney Sub-Area Strategy
- CP27- West Witney SDA
- CP29- Carterton Sub-Area Strategy
- CP30- Carterton Town Centre Strategy
- CP26- Witney Town Centre Strategy
- CP28- East Witney SDA
- CP31- East Carterton SDA
- CP32- REEMA North & Central SDA
- CP34- Eynsham / Woodstock Sub-Area
- CP33- Chipping Norton Sub-area Strategy
- CP35- Burford / Charlbury Sub-Area

Box 6: Local Plan policy groupings
Table 35: Summary of cumulative / synergistic and indirect effects of the Local Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objectives</th>
<th>Policies that combine to deliver cumulative/synergistic/indirect effects</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++</td>
<td>The majority of the Local Plan policies will deliver significant positive outcomes in relation to this sustainability objective, particularly the overall strategy, housing policies and the strategy at the local level. All of these policies are geared towards increasing the supply of housing and directing residential development to the most sustainable locations. The economy and town centre policies will deliver a neutral impact overall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructed and affordable home</td>
<td>Providing New Homes: ++</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Economic Growth: +/-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Environmental &amp; Heritage Assets: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategy at the Local Level: ++</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>All Policy Areas: ++</td>
<td>Policies will deliver positive impacts against SA Objective 2 and cumulatively, will have significant positive implications for improving the health and well being and reducing inequalities in the district. The delivery of good quality affordable housing, the protection and enhancement of the environment and ensuring that people have accessible jobs and services are all important elements in meeting this objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>All Policy Areas: ++</td>
<td>Policies in the Local Plan will have significant positive implications for promoting thriving and inclusive communities both individually and cumulatively. The sub objectives for this element of the SA relate to tackling social exclusion, increasing the vitality of communities and improving opportunities for leisure and recreational activity and each section of the overall strategy will contribute in some way to meeting at least part of the headline objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improve education and training</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++</td>
<td>A number of policies did not relate to this sustainability objective and were scoped out of the SA process. Those policies that are relevant scored positively against the objective, particularly those that focus on strategic development areas and those relating to sustainable economic growth. These policies will cumulatively deliver significant positive results for improving education and training by delivering new educational establishments alongside residential development, by ensuring that residential development is located in close proximity to existing services and by delivering new employment with potential training opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing New Homes: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Economic Growth: ++</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental and Heritage Assets: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transport &amp; Movement: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategy at the Local Level: ++</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Maintain low level of crime and fear of crime</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++</td>
<td>More than half of the policies were scoped out of the appraisal against this objective as they were not relevant. Policy CP4 scored best against the objective as this sets out the requirements for reducing crime and fear of crime in the design of all development. The local level strategy scored neutrally against this objective as although no reference was made to community safety, it was assumed that the overarching design policy (CP4) would apply to all development in these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing New Homes: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Economic Growth: +</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA Objectives</td>
<td>Policies that combine to deliver cumulative/synergistic/indirect effects</td>
<td>Effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++  Providing New Homes: +  Sustainable Economic Growth: +  Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++  Transport &amp; Movement: ++  Strategy at the Local Level: ++</td>
<td>The environmental and heritage assets policies have little relevance to this objective and the majority of these were scoped out of the appraisal. Enhanced Green Infrastructure provision however has the potential to improve linkages with services and facilities by sustainable means. All of the relevant policies will cumulatively deliver significant positive outcomes against this objective by improving linkages with services and facilities via a range of modes of transport and in the case of the local strategies, deliver improved services and facilities to support new development. CP 15 will help to ensure the provision and protection of local services and community facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Improve the efficiency of land use</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: +/-  Providing New Homes: +/-  Sustainable Economic Growth: ++  Environmental and Heritage Assets: +  Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>Policies exhibit mixed scores against sustainability objective 7. Policies relating to sustainable economic growth scored well as they primarily focus on concentrating development within defined locations and the re-use of existing units. As there is a shortage of suitable previously developed land for new development in the district however, the cumulative impact of policies to deliver new housing will be that more greenfield land will be required to accommodate it. These policies will have a cumulative negative impact as a result, although the overall approach to design and density of development will help to ensure that where Greenfield land is needed, the most efficient use of the land is made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reduce waste generation and disposal</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++  Providing New Homes: +  Sustainable Economic Growth: +/-  Environmental and Heritage Assets: +  Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>The cumulative impact of the Local Plan policies against this sustainability objective are likely to be neutral, with the incorporation of sustainable design and construction methods into new development (to reduce waste and encourage recycling) likely to be balanced by the overall increase in the quantum of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++  Providing New Homes: +/-  Sustainable Economic Growth: +/-  Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++  Transport &amp; Movement: ++  Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>The environmental and heritage assets policies will deliver the most significant cumulative benefits against this sustainability objective as they ensure the protection of natural habitats and provide enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the ability of the environment to clean the air through natural processes. The policies that guide housing and economic development in the district, although neutral in most cases, have potential to cumulatively cause negative impacts against this objective, as they continue to focus the bulk of development in the main settlements where traffic congestion and air quality is already an issue. Sufficient mitigation measures are built in to ensure that existing problems aren’t exacerbated and improvements are made where possible. Policies such as CP24 encourage the use of sustainable transport and seek to deliver key highway improvements to improve the flow of traffic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA Objectives</td>
<td>Policies that combine to deliver cumulative/ synergistic/ indirect effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++ Providing New Homes: +/- Sustainable Economic Growth: +/- Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++ Transport &amp; Movement: + Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>The overall strategy and policies relating to environmental and heritage assets will deliver the most significant positive benefits against SA objective 10. The overall strategy ensures that all development is designed sustainably and that it is located appropriately so as to reduce dependency on private transport. The protection of environmental assets will maintain the ability of the natural environment to absorb greenhouse gas emission with an improved green infrastructure network better enabling species to adapt to climate change. Increasing vegetation coverage will help keep the district cool with rising global temperatures and will enable the local environment to respond to increased levels of flood risk. The neutral impacts in relation to the creation of new homes, employment development and the local area strategies are a result of the overall increase in the quantum of development and associated population increase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: +/- Providing New Homes: - Sustainable Economic Growth: + Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++ Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>The Local Plan will deliver an overall neutral impact against this sustainability objective, largely as a result of the volume of greenfield land required to accommodate new development in the district. The housing policies score negatively due to the shortage of available previously developed land to accommodate such development. Such negative impacts are mitigated however by the positive scoring environmental and heritage assets policies which will ensure that development is steered away from the best and most versatile agricultural land and other natural environment assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: + Providing New Homes: + Sustainable Economic Growth: +/- Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++ Strategy at the Local Level: +/-</td>
<td>It could be argued that the overall quantum of development has the potential to impact on flood risk, however the flood risk policy and overall strategy which apply to all development seek to ensure that development is steered towards lower risk areas and that all new development includes flood risk mitigation measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: + Providing New Homes: +/- Sustainable Economic Growth: + Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++ Transport &amp; Movement: + Strategy at the Local Level: +</td>
<td>The Local Plan policies score well in relation to protection and enhancement of biodiversity, largely due to the crossing cutting nature of this objective and ongoing references to biodiversity protection and enhancement through many of the policies. The housing policies score less well in relation to biodiversity due to the large volume of greenfield land required to accommodate residential development and the potential impact on habitats that may result, however appropriate mitigation will be sought.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA Objectives</td>
<td>Policies that combine to deliver cumulative/synergistic/indirect effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: + Providing New Homes: +/- Sustainable Economic Growth: + Environmental and Heritage Assets: ++ Transport &amp; Movement: + Strategy at the Local Level: +</td>
<td>The landscape and historic character of West Oxfordshire are key assets for the District attracting people to live and work in the area and attracting visitors and investment to the District. As a result, the protection and enhancement of these assets is a key aim of the strategy and is addressed through all policy areas, to score positively against this objective. The provision of new homes scores neutrally as the majority of residential development will take place on the edge of settlements, affecting the character of both settlements and the countryside although any potential negative impacts will be mitigated through good quality design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++ Providing New Homes: + Sustainable Economic Growth: ++ Environmental and Heritage Assets: + Transport &amp; Movement: + Strategy at the Local Level: ++</td>
<td>All policy areas score positively against the objective to maintain high and stable levels of employment in the district, particularly the policies on sustainable economic growth which promote further development of land for employment and support for the rural economy, tourism and town centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>Overall Strategy: ++ Providing New Homes: + Sustainable Economic Growth: ++ Environmental and Heritage Assets: + Transport &amp; Movement: + Strategy at the Local Level: ++</td>
<td>All policy areas score well against the objective to promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness in the district. The overall level of housing, including the provision of affordable housing will enable the retention of a skilled workforce and the development of modern employment spaces in sustainable locations, will enable businesses to expand and provides potential to attract new businesses to the area.</td>
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</table>
Mitigation

3.139 As shown in Table 35, most of the negative impacts of the Local Plan will be mitigated by the safeguards that have been incorporated into the relevant sections of the strategy. Appropriate measures have been incorporated into these policies through the sustainability appraisal and consultation process to ensure that they will sufficiently mitigate the negative impacts that may arise from new development in the district.

3.140 The model policy for the presumption in favour of sustainable development (CP1) was revised as a result of the SA undertaken at Appendix 1, removing the reference to dealing with applications ‘without delay’. This is to ensure that all applications in the district are dealt with within an appropriate timescale, taking account of all relevant information and evidence that may have a bearing on the outcome of the application.

3.141 Certain impacts such as the loss of greenfield land will be difficult to address and effective master planning exercises will be required to ensure that strategic development sites are well integrated into the existing settlement framework and that any potentially negative impacts on the countryside are minimised.

3.142 Although most of the negative impacts will be mitigated through the cross cutting nature of policies, a strong degree of partnership working with other organisations will also be required, to ensure that appropriate supporting infrastructure such as that which has been identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is delivered in a timely and effective manner.

3.143 The significant effects of these policies will be monitored and measured against the baseline position that was determined through Stage A of the SA process. Further information on monitoring is included in Section Five.
Section Four: Next steps

4.1 The draft Local Plan will be subject to further consultation in November/December 2012. This SA report has been published alongside to ensure that that the policies and proposals contained therein are accurate, fit for purpose and that they satisfy the social, environmental and economic needs and aspirations of the District as a whole.

4.2 Representations on both the draft Local Plan and the SA report will be taken into account and the Council will look to formally publish the proposed submission draft Local Plan in spring 2013. It will then be formally submitted to the Secretary of State in early summer 2013.

Section Five: Monitoring

5.1 A series of monitoring indicators have been developed as part of the SA framework and are presented in Table 6. Detailed information relating to each of these indicators will be collected on an annual basis and presented in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) through which the performance of policies and the impact on social, environmental and economic conditions in the district will be assessed.

5.2 Appendix 3 of the draft Local Plan presents a delivery and monitoring framework linked to each of the core policies and spells out the range of delivery mechanisms, delivery partners, monitoring indicators and timescales linked to each policy.

5.3 The objectives and policies of the Local Plan may be periodically reviewed depending on the findings of the AMR.
APPENDIX 1  List of relevant plans and policies

Plans and programmes at the international, national, regional and local level with implications for the LDF have been identified, in order to set the context for the Local Plan and to identify the baseline conditions for the district. These are listed below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan or Programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Quality Framework Directive (92/62/EC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (1979)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (92/43/EC, The ‘Habitats Directive’)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (1979)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directive to Promote Electricity from Renewable Energy (2001/77/EC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU Sixth Environmental Action Programme</td>
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<td>EU Strategy for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>European Biodiversity Strategy (COM(98)42)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyoto Protocol: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)</td>
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<td>Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)</td>
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<td>Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance (1971)</td>
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<td>Waste to Landfill Directive (99/31/EC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO World Heritage Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change. Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG2: Green Belts</td>
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<td>PPS3: Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth</td>
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<td>PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</td>
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<td>Plan or Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG8: Telecommunications</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological conservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG13: Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft PPS15: Planning for the Historic Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG16: Archaeology and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG17: Planning For New Open Space, Sports And Recreational Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for Tourism – Good Practice Guide (to replace PPG21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS22: Renewable Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG24: Planning and Noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS25: Development and Flood Risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Quality Strategy (DETR, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health Public Service Agreement – national targets</td>
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<td>DFES PSA targets</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Our Countryside the Future, Rural White Paper (DETR, 2000)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Code for Sustainable Homes (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006)</td>
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<td>A Climate of Change (Local Government Association 2007)</td>
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<tr>
<th>DCMS The Historic Environment a Force for Our Future December 2001</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting and creating built and natural environments that encourage and support physical activity (NHS, 2008)</td>
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<td>Climate Change Act 2008</td>
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<td>Regional</td>
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<td>Integrated Regional Framework, SEERA, 2004</td>
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<td>South East Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East of England), 2009</td>
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<td>South East Regional Housing Strategy, 2006 onwards South East Regional Housing Board.</td>
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<td>South East Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Learning and Skills Council Local Strategic Plan</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Cotswolds AONB Management Plan</td>
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<td>Rural Development Programme Draft South East Implementation Plan 2007-2013 Rural Development Service</td>
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<td>Farming and Food Our Healthy Future: Delivery Plan for Sustainable Farming and Food in the South East and London, GOSE, 2003</td>
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<td>No Time to Waste – Regional Waste Management Strategy (Proposed Alterations to RPG9) SEERA 2004</td>
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<td>South East Social Enterprise Strategy - Social Enterprise: Its business but not as we know it-providing an enabling framework for social enterprise in the South East, SEEDA 2003</td>
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<td>Thames Waterway Plan 2006-2016 (River Thames Alliance)</td>
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<td>River Basin Management Plan Thames River Basin District 2009</td>
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<td>South West</td>
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<td>Draft Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
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<td>Cotswold District Local Plan 2001-2011</td>
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<td>Cherwell District Council</td>
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<td>Non-Statutory Cherwell Plan 2011</td>
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<td>Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011</td>
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<td>Stratford upon Avon Local Plan Review 1996-2011</td>
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<td>Gloucestershire Structure Plan 1991-2011</td>
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<td>Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011</td>
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<td>Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016</td>
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<td>Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006-11</td>
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<td>Framework Accessibility Strategy (Part of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006-11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxfordshire 2030: A partnership plan for improving quality of life in Oxfordshire.</td>
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<td>No Time to Waste The Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Strategy Oxfordshire Waste Partnership August 2006</td>
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<td>Oxfordshire Schools Organisation Plan 2004-2009</td>
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<td>Bus Strategy (Part of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006-11)</td>
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</table>
### Plan or Programme

(ONCF)

**Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, ONCF**

**Countdown 2010 – Rebuilding Biodiversity in Oxfordshire (ONCF)**

**Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 1996**


**Oxfordshire Children and Young Peoples Plan 2006-2009**

### Local

**West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2008-2011**

**West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership Community Strategy 2006**

**Shaping Futures: A Sustainable Community Strategy for West Oxfordshire (2008)**

**Building Futures: A Housing Strategy for West Oxfordshire 2004-2007**

**West Oxfordshire Social Exclusion Strategy**

**West Oxfordshire Economic Strategy 2004-2007**

**West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008**

**West Oxfordshire Environmental Management Strategy 2004-10**

**West Oxfordshire Homelessness Strategy 2003-2006**

**West Oxfordshire Contaminated land Strategy 2000**

**West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment 1998**

**Witney Landscape Assessment 2007**

**Carterton Landscape Assessment 2009**

**Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment 2009**

**Landscape Planning Review of Strategic Development Options 2012**

**Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site Management Plan**

**Solent Thames Archaeological Research Framework**

**West Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy: 2009-2012**

**West Oxfordshire Tourism Strategy: 2009-2012**
APPENDIX 2   Full appraisal of Draft Local Plan policies

NPPF Model Policy / CP 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The Planning Inspectorate has suggested that Local Authorities should include a model policy, to reflect the ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The SA of this policy, set out in the table below considers the implications for development in the District, if the model policy was included in the Local Plan word for word.

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with polices in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home</td>
<td>This policy aims to accelerate the delivery of sustainable development provided it is in accordance with the Local Plan and NPPF. Taking a positive approach to development and approving applications without delay has the potential to deliver positive impacts in relation to local housing delivery by speeding up decision making. Granting permission for residential development without delay may however hinder the ability of the Council to negotiate a sufficient proportion of affordable housing as a proportion of new developments and may result in poorer design and construction of development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities**

Neither the NPPF nor the West Oxfordshire Local Plan have direct responsibility for improving the health and well being of communities in the district, although they may have in-direct impacts through the provision of sufficient green, social and economic infrastructure, through policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.

3. **Promote thriving and inclusive communities**

The policy makes no reference to the creation of thriving and inclusive communities although the positive and ‘without delay’ approach to development may result in negative impacts for health and social inclusion. Promoting a market-led approach to development may result in the delivery of residential and economic development, in locations where community infrastructure may be more beneficial.

4. **Improve education and training**

Neither the NPPF nor the West Oxfordshire Local Plan have direct responsibility for improving educational attainment or training in the district, although they will have indirect impacts on this sustainability objective by delivering the necessary educational facilities.

5. **Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime**

The inclusion of this policy will do little to address crime and fear of crime in West Oxfordshire and by proposing a positive and ‘without delay’ approach to development, may in fact have a negative outcomes for social inclusion, by affecting the delivery of community facilities and infrastructure.

6. **Improve accessibility to all services and facilities**

The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should speed up the delivery of social infrastructure by providing certainty for developers and planners. Until the introduction of the CIL, this policy may have negative implications for the delivery of accessible services and facilities as the positive and ‘without delay’ approach to dealing with proposals may lead to less rigorous and beneficial S106 agreements being negotiated.

7. **Improve the efficiency of land use**

The positive and ‘without delay’ approach to development may result in the delivery of poorer development designs and layouts that make a less efficient use of the land, than if a more careful, negotiated approach was taken to determining proposals.

8. **Reduce waste generation and disposal**

This policy will have no direct impact on the amount of waste generated and disposed of in the district, although indirectly, through the sustainable design and construction of buildings, the reuse, recycling and recovery of waste may be encouraged.

9. **Reduce air pollution and improve air quality**

The rural nature of the district means that many residents are dependent on their cars to access services and facilities in the main centres. There are many problems with congestion and poor air quality in towns such as Witney and Chipping Norton and on the road network linking the district with surrounding conurbations. The positive and without delay approach to decision making may result in development going ahead without the necessary transport and green infrastructure being negotiated and put into place before development commences.
10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts

The NPPF promotes energy efficiency and notes that small scale renewable energy projects should be approved where their impacts can be made acceptable. The proposed without delay approach set out in this model policy may result in development taking place with lower levels of resource efficiency incorporated, than if a more measured approach to decision making where taken.

11. Protect and improve soil and water resources

West Oxfordshire is a rural district with extensive soil and water resources throughout the area. Although the water resources are managed by organisations such as the Environment Agency and Thames Water and large areas of the district are covered by minerals consultation zones, the positive and without delay approach may result in development in unsuitable and inappropriate locations without the necessary checks and consultations taking place.

12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding

The proposed positive and without delay approach may result in development being permitted where it might otherwise be rejected on flood risk or flood risk mitigation grounds, where a more measured and carefully negotiated approach were taken.

13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity

There is potential for this policy to result in negative outcomes in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity objectives, as the positive and without delay approach to decision making may result in less careful consideration being given to biodiversity implications than if a more careful and considered approach were taken.

14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment

The proposed positive and 'without delay' approach to development could have an overall negative impact on the historic environment, as planning permission may be granted for development where a more measured and negotiated approach would have reduced its impacts on the historic environment or landscape character or led to greater benefits for both

15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment

The positive and without delay approach to determining applications for economic development may accelerate the delivery of business development and new jobs creation in the district. It is important however to ensure that the delivery of new employment premises is balanced with the demand for premises and the availability of local labour to support new businesses to ensure that unnecessary business development does not take place in the wrong place at the wrong time.

16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness

This policy will enable the development of premises to support competitive business sectors and will support innovation and enterprise by enabling businesses to develop where markets and resources dictate. Such development should be balanced with the knowledge and skills of local communities however, to ensure that such innovation has a positive impact on local job creation and employment levels.
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The inclusion of the model policy as originally drafted has the potential to result in a wide range of potentially negative outcomes against local sustainability objectives, largely as a result of the way the policy is worded. Those elements of the policy that enable development to take place without delay and suggestions that the authority will always work proactively with applicants jointly, to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, may result in unnecessary development taking place in the wrong place at the wrong time. It is necessary to ensure all policies within the Local Plan are given due regard to ensure that local needs are met and that the social, economic and environmental implications of new development are fully considered.

Business as Usual Scenario
In the absence of an up to date plan or relevant policies, development in the district will be guided by the policies in the NPPF. The potentially negative impacts identified above could therefore come to pass if the default position is the NPPF which seeks to allow development ‘without delay’.

Mitigation:
Revisions to the policy wording that emphasise the importance of giving due consideration to all policies within the Local Plan and the removal of statements such as ‘without delay’ would significantly improve the performance of this policy against the sustainability objectives of the SA.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy CP2 determines the scale of development that is appropriate in the main service centres, rural service centres and villages of the District, enabling the delivery of strategic scale housing growth in sustainable locations, and the delivery of residential development throughout the district to meet local needs.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Access to healthcare and other services will be improved by enabling the development of community facilities within rural areas to meet local needs. The primary focus of such facilities will continue to be the main service centres in the District which provide convenient access via sustainable means for a large proportion of the District’s population. Focussing development within or adjacent to settlements will ensure the ongoing protection of the wider countryside, which will remain accessible to all.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Guiding development to the most sustainable locations and ensuring that development is provided to address local needs will promote thriving and inclusive communities. Existing service centres, both urban and rural in nature will be sustained and enhanced by the delivery of new housing growth and the formation of new communities. The vitality and viability of rural settlements will be preserved by ensuring that development of an appropriate scale is provided to meet local needs, addressing deprivation issues such as access to housing and services in rural areas.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The delivery of community infrastructure such as educational provision will be supported where it is required to meet local needs and where it would support the viability and vitality of settlements.</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Focussing services within or on the edge of the main service centres will make them more accessible to a greater proportion of the District’s population via sustainable means, as these centres are also the primary focus for local public transport. Footpath and cycleway provision already exists within the main settlements and strategic scale housing developments will be able to link into this to provide good access for new communities. The general principle of minimising traffic impact on the road network as a result of new development will mitigate the impact on local traffic congestion. There are however existing traffic congestion issues within the main service centres and significant increases in the level of growth within these areas may further exacerbate problems without sufficient transport infrastructure improvements.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The identification of strategic development sites within the primary service centres include the use of greenfield sites as there is insufficient brownfield land available to accommodate the required level of housing growth. The concentration of growth within the primary settlements ensures that development is not dispersed more widely throughout the District on remote sites that would increase the need to travel for services and facilities and costly utility infrastructure investment. The re-use of existing buildings is encouraged in smaller villages, hamlets and the open countryside to reduce the loss of greenfield land in rural locations.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Concentrating development within the main service centres will reduce the need for communities to travel long distances to access key services, reducing reliability on private transport. There is some potential as a result of this to reduce air pollution and improve air quality through this, although the main issues that currently exist in relation to air quality are focussed within the main service centres. Increasing the overall quantum of development within these areas may further exacerbate problems that already exist unless satisfactorily mitigated e.g. improved transport links, provision for walking and cycling etc.</td>
<td>±</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reducing the need to travel and use of private transport are key to addressing the causes of climate change. Avoiding development in areas that are at risk of flooding or that may cause flooding elsewhere are key to mitigating the impacts of climate change. The policy seeks to achieve these objectives.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The identification of strategic development areas within or on the edge of settlements will reduce the need for further dispersal of development throughout the countryside, reducing the potential impact on valuable soil and water resources. The limited availability of brownfield land and significant housing targets however, mean that substantial areas of greenfield land will be required to accommodate new development with the loss of some agricultural land. There is no reference within the policy to the need to protect soil or water resources although this is covered through other elements of the overall strategy.</td>
<td>±</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>This policy ensures that as a general principle, all development will be located to avoid areas at risk of flooding or that cause flooding elsewhere. As an overarching strategic policy, it is not necessary to stipulate the requirement for the use of SUDs as this is covered elsewhere.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The selection of appropriate strategic development sites has involved careful consideration of the biodiversity impact of new development including the presence of protected species and habitats. No further guidance is provided through the policy, in terms of the need to consider biodiversity and geodiversity impact when determining locations for new development.</td>
<td>±</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>The scale of development is a key element of this policy, stating that new development should be of an appropriate scale and type for the location and that it respects the character and distinctiveness of the settlement. Landscape and historic character are key considerations in determining the appropriate scale and type of development, although the strategic and overarching nature of this policy means that further guidance on these issues is not necessary.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Focussing the main bulk of development within the primary service centres will ensure that new communities have good access to a range of employment opportunities and will provide additional labour market resources for existing businesses. Facilitating development in the smaller service centres and villages in the District will enable rural businesses to expand and adapt their operations and enable new businesses to locate outside of the main service centres, supporting a sustainable rural economy.</td>
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A high quality environment and the availability of a highly skilled workforce are important in attracting competitive business sectors. The locational policy is important to promoting sustainable economic growth and competitiveness as it ensures that the bulk of the population is located in close proximity to local employment opportunities. Ensuring that development taking place outside of the main service centres is of an appropriate scale and respects the character of the area enables a degree of rural diversification where necessary, without significant impact on the special qualities of the area such as landscape and historic character, that are key drivers in the local tourism economy.

**Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects**

The overall policy for the location of development delivers significant positive sustainability outcomes, particularly in relation to creating thriving and inclusive communities and supporting the local economy. The strategy directs the majority of development to the main service centres ensuring that new communities have appropriate infrastructure to support their needs as well as a range of employment opportunities to support their economic wellbeing. The strategy also has potential to deliver a range of negative environmental impacts, primarily due to existing constraints that exist within the District. Problems of traffic congestion and associated air quality exist with the main towns and action will have to be taken to ensure that these problems are not worsened. The overall level of development proposed will result in a significant amount of greenfield development with potential negative impacts on landscape and historic character, biodiversity and soil resources unless properly mitigated.

**Business as Usual Scenario**

In the absence of an up to date plan, there is potential for new development to be dispersed more widely throughout the District away from the main service centres, particularly as there is limited availability of suitable land within the main centres to accommodate growth. Without a strategy to guide development to the most sustainable locations, there is potential for development to occur in less accessible locations, away from the provision of services and facilities and public transport links, as well as potential for unacceptable landscape and biodiversity degradation.

**Mitigation:**

The effective implementation of the natural environment policies within the Core Strategy will be key to ensuring that development protects and enhances sensitive parts of the District. All development should have regard to potential impacts on biodiversity, landscape and historic character as these are key elements that drive the local economy and make the District an attractive place to live and visit.
### Policy Number CP3: Prudent Use of Natural Resources

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>All new development will be required to meet high standards of sustainable design and construction with immediate effect. The policy clearly spells out how this will be demonstrated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>High environmental quality is important in determining the health and well being of communities and this policy clearly spells out how new development will be expected to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the District’s high quality environment.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The policy requires all development proposals to make the most efficient use of land and buildings, whilst having regard to the character of the locality and therefore scores positively against this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>This policy states that development proposals should minimise waste and make adequate provision for the re-use and recycling of waste. The use of BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes standards further emphasises the importance of waste minimisation in new development</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The efficient, prudent use and management of resources includes minimising energy demands and energy loss through design and minimising the use of non-renewable resources in development. This will have positive implications for improving air quality and reducing air pollution beyond the Local Plan area through reduced demand for energy generated through the burning of fossil fuels. The policy also requires development to be located where opportunities for travel by sustainable means are maximised.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The prudent use of natural resources will have significant positive implications for addressing both the causes and impacts of climate change. The effective application of the BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes standards in new development will ensure that the energy and water demand of development in the District are minimised, Development proposals are also required to minimise the risk of flooding through the use of sustainable drainage systems.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The policy focuses primarily on the protection of water resources and air quality but makes no reference to soil resources. The policy emphasises that new development should cause no deterioration and where possible achieve improvements in air and water quality, but in terms of land use, the only requirement is to minimise the use of land. There is no policy guidance to steer development away from the best and most versatile agricultural resources which may prove important with a limited availability of brownfield land in the District.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The policy scores positively against this objective by ensuring that development minimises the risk of flooding and makes use of appropriate sustainable drainage solutions.</td>
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</table>
The improvements to environmental quality delivered through this policy will have indirect benefits for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity in the district, through improvements to air and water quality. Habitats that are sensitive to changes in air and water quality, such Special Areas of Conservation will benefit from such improvements.

There is potential for the development of modern design styles to emerge through the implementation of higher sustainable design and construction requirements. The incorporation of such designs into the existing fabric of settlements and within the countryside may be a particular challenge, particularly as the landscapes and townscapes of the District are sensitive to change.

The provision of modern, sustainably constructed business premises could prove attractive to potential investors although the degree of impact is uncertain.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
This policy delivers significant positive outcomes, particularly in relation to reducing the environmental impact of development. Sustainable design and construction will address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with residential development as well as the volume of waste generated in construction. The policy will also ensure that the impacts of climate change already set in motion are mitigated e.g. through improved ventilation. There is a slight risk of negative sustainability impacts arising, in relation to the impact on the natural and historic environment as a result of modern design and construction methods although in reality other policies would serve to ensure any risk is mitigated.

Business as Usual Scenario
The prudent use of natural resources is currently covered by a range of Built Environment (BE) and Natural Environment (NE) policies in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 including general development standards, heritage protection, biodiversity conservation and amenity policies. Without the implementation of the new Local Plan, the NPPF will guide development but is less prescriptive, particularly in terms of standards for sustainable design and construction in new development. The implementation of CP3 will be more effective in reducing carbon emissions in the District and reducing the causes of climate change than the existing policy framework.

Mitigation:
The impact of development on the historic environment and landscape of the District can be mitigated by ensuring that modern design of buildings compliments the character of the area, The effective implementation of Policy CP4, High Quality Design will ensure that developers have close regard to the special qualities of the landscape in the design of new development.
### Policy Number CP4: High Quality Design

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This policy delivers significant positive effects against this sustainability objective as it ensures that all residential development demonstrates high quality, inclusive and sustainable design.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of high quality residential accommodation is important to the health and well being of communities. Healthy and active lifestyles are further supported through this policy by ensuring that development proposals enhance local green infrastructure including the provision of attractive, safe and convenient amenity open space and play space where appropriate.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The delivery of good quality and sustainable development in all parts of the District will ensure that people in all parts of West Oxfordshire have the opportunity to live in a decent home, partly addressing issues of deprivation relating to access to housing. Opportunities for recreation will be provided through green infrastructure enhancements and improvements to open spaces and play provision. The local environment is also a key factor in encouraging communities to integrate and this policy ensures that new development provides a safe, pleasant, convenient and interesting environment with high quality public realm.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>As part of the local environment and public realm enhancements required through this policy, development proposals should ensure that crime and fear of crime are reduced. The design and layout of buildings are highly important in reducing incidences of crime and fear of crime through natural surveillance for example.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Although not explicitly stated in the policy, the use of good design may include opportunities for improved walking and cycling.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>This policy will be a key consideration in the preparation of all development proposals and it is useful that this policy makes explicit reference to the efficient use of land and construction at densities that are relevant to the character of the area.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>New development will be expected to incorporate measures to make it easier to recycle waste through the implementation of sustainable building design as required by this policy.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The sustainable design of buildings shall incorporate measures to reduce energy demand with an indirect effect on air quality due to reduced energy consumption.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The policy requires development proposals to demonstrate resilience to future climate change particularly increased temperatures and flood risk. It therefore scores well against this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New development should incorporate the use of water conservation and management measures which will contribute to the protection of water resources. No reference is made to prioritising brownfield land or the protection of soil resources although this is addressed by other policies.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Flood risk mitigation is a key element of this policy as new development is required to demonstrate resilience to future climate change including flood risk.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New development proposals are required to preserve and enhance areas of environmental importance including habitats and biodiversity. Further benefits will be delivered through enhancements to the local green infrastructure network.

High quality design is central to the strategy for the District as it ensures that new development respects and contributes to local distinctiveness and the character and quality of the surroundings. The policy clearly states the requirements for new development to preserve and enhance areas, buildings and features of historic, architectural and environmental importance. There is a good level of signposting within the policy to ensure that developers take account of local design guides, landscape assessments, conservation area appraisals and AONB guidance documents.

The protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment are important in supporting the local tourism economy and supporting vibrant market towns as they are key things that attract people to the District. The delivery of appropriate employment land is also important in supporting the local economy and providing local employment opportunities, by ensuring that there is sufficient availability of quality business development to meet the diverse needs of local businesses.

The requirement for good quality design will apply to all development in the District and is central to the strategy for West Oxfordshire. The development of good quality employment land and premises is essential in attracting new business to the District and in supporting competitive business sectors, by ensuring that employment development is of a sufficient standard to meet modern business needs.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Policy CP4 scores well against all sustainability objectives particularly those relating to the creation of sustainable communities. The policy ensures that all development is designed and constructed to a high standard thereby supporting the health and well being of communities and ensuring that everyone has the chance to live in a decent home, supporting thriving and inclusive communities. Potential negative impacts may arise in terms of the impact on soil resources, primarily because the majority of new development in the District will be on greenfield sites.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without the implementation of policy CP4, the design of new development will be guided by the general development standards in the current Local Plan and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide which provides detailed guidance on all aspects of building design including use of materials, scale, layout and energy efficiency.

Mitigation:
In order to mitigate the impact of development on soil resources and on the development of greenfield land, it is essential that the quality of land has been fully assessed, particularly in the selection of strategic development sites. By testing a range of suitable alternative development sites for employment and residential uses, it will be possible to ensure that the best and most versatile agricultural land is safeguarded.
### Policy Number CPS5: Supporting Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The delivery of supporting physical and community infrastructure is essential for the delivery of high quality sustainable housing development that meets the needs of the community.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The health and well being of communities will be supported through the provision of community and green infrastructure, ensuring that communities have access to appropriate health care and that they have opportunities to lead healthy and active lifestyles through pedestrian and cycle access to key services.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Much of the deprivation that exists within the district relates to poor access to services and facilities. This policy not only ensures that new development will contribute to the provision of supporting infrastructure but resists the loss of existing services and facilities to prevent further isolation of communities, particularly in rural areas.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The provision of additional facilities to improve education and training in the District is supported through this policy. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will identify where specific educational provision needs to made and local development will make a contribution to its delivery.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No direct impact although the provision of certain types of social infrastructure including emergency services could help to reduce crime or fear of crime e.g. additional police facilities provided to cater for increased growth.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>This policy delivers significant positive outcomes against this sustainability objective as the primary means of guiding the delivery of supporting infrastructure in the District. All new development will support the delivery of infrastructure in the District in line with the requirements of individual proposals and the infrastructure delivery plan. The protection of local services in smaller settlements is key to preventing communities from having to travel long distances for essential facilities.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The provision of physical infrastructure is covered through policy CPS5 and includes waste management facilities. Improved waste management facilities in the District will reduce the level of waste sent to landfill through increased recycling and potential increased generation of energy from waste materials.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Improved transport infrastructure will reduce road congestion in the District and the associated problems with air quality and pollution. Strategic road improvements have been identified through the IDP and development in the District will make a contribution to the delivery of these projects. Non-strategic infrastructure such as the provision of footpaths and cycleways will reduce car dependency which will also have positive implications for local air quality.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Locating essential community and social infrastructure in close proximity to new development and protecting existing facilities, particularly in rural areas will reduce the need to travel. Reducing the need to travel to access services will partly address the causes of climate change, by reducing transport emissions, although more positive benefits are likely to be delivered through the design element of the overall strategy.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>Waste water treatment and water supply infrastructure are key elements of supporting infrastructure that will be delivered through new development in the District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td>Flood risk mitigation measures such as the use of SUDs are important elements of supporting infrastructure that will be required as part of development proposals through this policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td>Important areas for biodiversity may be protected and enhanced through the provision of green infrastructure, creating new habitats and addressing the isolation of sites through better green links and corridors. There are a range of green infrastructure needs identified through the infrastructure delivery plan which new development in the District will be expected to contribute towards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td>Landscape character may be enhanced through additional planting, improved networks of green spaces and woodland creation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td>A range of essential infrastructure has been identified through the IDP to support economic growth in the District. The delivery of this infrastructure will help maintain and attract further business development in the District, providing a range of employment opportunities and supporting the rural economy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td>The provision of appropriate social, community and physical infrastructure is essential in providing a healthy and productive workforce in the District and ensuring that businesses can operate effectively within the area. The IDP identifies a range of infrastructure required to support economic growth in the District and this policy ensures that all new development in the District contributes towards its delivery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects**

The delivery of sufficient supporting infrastructure is essential in ensuring the sustainability of new development, by ensuring that environmental impacts are mitigated and that communities have all of the necessary infrastructure to meet their needs. The availability and capacity of existing infrastructure and the availability of funding to deliver essential improvements are key considerations in determining the location and scale of development. This policy ensures all development proposals make a contribution to the delivery or enhancement of local infrastructure and that key regard is given to the infrastructure delivery plan, to avoid any negative environmental, social and economic impacts arising from new development.

**Business as Usual Scenario**

An important element of this policy is the reference to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which provides information on the current provision of essential infrastructure and the likely future requirements to support new development and demographic change. Without the implementation of CP5, the provision of supporting infrastructure will be delivered alongside new development and by individual infrastructure providers but in a less co-ordinated and joined up manner leading to the prospect of fewer overall benefits. Policy CP5 ensures that all development makes a contribution to the provision of appropriate supporting infrastructure.

**Mitigation:**
No further mitigation measures necessary
Policy Number CP6: Amount and Distribution of Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This policy clearly sets out how the required homes in the District will be distributed up to 2029. Although the primary focus of development will be the three main towns of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, a significant proportion of residential development will be steered to the rural service centres in accordance with policies CP2 and CP3. This will ensure that the housing needs of all communities are met.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of decent affordable housing is a key factor in improving the health and well being of communities.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Much of the social exclusion in West Oxfordshire relates to access to housing and services. Focussing housing growth within the main service centres will ensure that new communities have appropriate access to health care and other services. The provision of housing within smaller settlements will help support the vitality of village centres and provide affordable housing to meet the needs of local communities.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The strategy for the distribution of housing has been determined so that residential development is located in close proximity to existing services and facilities, to ensure that residents have good access to education and training institutions. Focussing larger scale growth within strategic development sites on the edge of the main settlements will facilitate the delivery of additional community infrastructure, including education facilities as part of mixed use developments.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The majority of housing growth will be focussed within the main service centres with the residual housing requirement to be directed to the rural service centres and villages. This will ensure that services and facilities are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and that local communities do not have to travel long distances to access essential services. Road traffic congestion is however a significant problem and directing major housing growth to the main service centres may further exacerbate this unless appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>This is a detailed design consideration and will be determined at the master planning stage, particularly in relation to strategic development sites. A limited supply of previously developed land in the district however is likely to result in a large degree of development on greenfield land and it will be important to ensure that such proposals make the most efficient use of the land through appropriate density of development.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No direct impact although locating most new housing in the main urban areas is likely to facilitate waste management.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Focussing the majority of housing development within the main service centres will reduce the need to travel for communities as they will be located in close proximity to a range of community services and facilities. The use of sustainable modes of transport will be encouraged for those working in locations outside the district. There are currently air quality management areas in place in both Witney and Chipping Norton so increased development within these areas may exacerbate these problems without appropriate mitigation measures.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The policy of focussing growth within the main settlements helps to reduce the need to travel. Locating development in close proximity to employment opportunities as well as a range of services and facilities will encourage communities to access them by sustainable means. Increasing the overall quantum of development however may increase the overall level of greenhouse gas emissions in the District both through domestic activities and a greater number of cars on the road.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The majority of housing development within the District will be located on greenfield sites, with relatively limited potential for re-use of brownfield land. All development within the district will be accompanied by supporting infrastructure, including all necessary waste water and sewerage infrastructure, in accordance with Policy CP5 and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>This policy will be applied in accordance with CP2 and CP3 which ensure that development is not located in areas of flood risk and that it makes appropriate use of sustainable drainage systems</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Increasing the overall quantum of development on greenfield sites in the District has the potential to cause harm to wildlife and habitats, particularly those that do not benefit from protected status. The ongoing protection and enhancement of wildlife and biodiversity resources is dependant the effective implementation of the overall development strategy for the District and other relevant Local Plan policies.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Increasing the overall quantum of development, particularly on the edge of historic settlements on greenfield sites has potential to impact on historic character and landscape character of parts of the District. Limiting the amount of development that is permitted outside of the District’s service centres will ensure that the impact on the wider countryside is minimised although the extent of development proposed by the policy has the potential to erode historic and landscape character to some extent.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Identifying the service centres as the primary locations for housing growth will ensure that the vibrancy of towns and villages is supported through increased demand for local services and facilities. The District’s service centres are also the primary location for much of the local employment provision providing a range of employment opportunities for new communities.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The availability of a skilled local workforce is key to attracting and supporting business in the District and attracting new investment to the area. Increasing the local housing supply and providing more affordable housing will help to retain a local workforce and reduce the skills leakage from the area.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The delivery of significant housing growth in West Oxfordshire is a key challenge facing the District, due to the environmental constraints that exist in the area. This policy delivers significant positive impacts in relation to objectives for the delivery of affordable housing and the creation of thriving and inclusive communities, although, due to the large volume of greenfield land required it will be necessary to ensure that the most efficient use of such land is made. The impact on soil resources and the efficient use of land in particular will be difficult to avoid as development extends into the countryside at the edge of settlements. Continuing to focus the bulk of residential development within the main service centres also presents some risk in terms of the effect on air quality unless properly mitigated.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without a policy guiding the amount and distribution of housing, development may occur in less sustainable locations without the necessary infrastructure to support it. Policy CP6 sets out minimum requirements for the level of housing growth to be delivered in each sub area along with information on the broad location of strategic development sites to accommodate the bulk of this growth. In the absence of a policy to guide this strategic level growth, there is potential for a shortfall against district’s housing target and also for the development of new residential accommodation in less sustainable, environmentally sensitive locations.

Mitigation:
The potentially negative impacts arising as a result of this policy will largely be mitigated through the effective implementation of CP4 High Quality Design, CP5 Supporting Infrastructure and CP17 Landscape Character and CP23 Historic Environment. Although significant areas of greenfield land will be required to accommodate the District’s housing growth, much of the impact will be mitigated by ensuring the design of the development is of sufficient quality so as to protect and where possible, enhance the character of the area. All development should have key regard to its environmental impact and a range of supporting infrastructure is identified in the infrastructure delivery plan (highlighted in CP5) to help new development assimilate into the local area.
## Policy Number CP7: Type and mix of new homes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This policy takes account of housing needs evidence and seeks to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of housing types to meet the current and future needs of the community.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of decent housing is a key component in ensuring the health and well being of communities in the District. Emphasis is placed on the design of housing to ensure that dwellings can be adapted to meet the changing needs of communities and the needs of people with disabilities. An ageing population brings different challenges in terms of ensuring the health and well being of sections of the community, and the provision of extra care housing is one way of addressing these challenges.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The provision of good quality housing in areas that people want to live is essential in creating thriving and inclusive communities. Much of the deprivation apparent in West Oxfordshire relates to access to housing, so ensuring the delivery of a mix of different dwelling types to meet different needs will go some way to addressing these inequalities and tackling social exclusion, particularly in rural areas.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The provision of appropriate housing to meet the current and future needs of communities, particularly the availability of extra care housing will promote the formation of safe and supportive communities.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The provision of a mix of dwelling types to meet the current and future needs of the District will attract people to continue living and working in West Oxfordshire with positive implications for the vibrancy of the local economy. The availability of a skilled workforce is key to supporting a sustainable rural economy and enabling local businesses to thrive.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The availability of a skilled workforce is important in attracting and supporting competitive business sectors to the District. Meeting the housing needs of the community will ensure that people want to live in West Oxfordshire and reduce the possibility of local skills being lost to other areas.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Delivering an appropriate mix of housing in the District is essential to meeting social and economic objectives for West Oxfordshire. Policy CP7 recognises how the demographic profile of the District will evolve through the duration of the Local Plan and seeks to meet the changing needs of the community over time, ensuring that more accommodation to meet the needs of an ageing population and other particular groups are delivered. This will have significant positive implications for the creation of sustainable communities as well as supporting the local economy. The provision of a good quality and mix of housing is essential in retaining a skilled workforce in urban and rural parts of the District, to support the needs of local businesses.

Business as Usual Scenario
The implementation of policy CP6 is an important factor in ensuring that the housing built in the District is appropriate to meet the needs of the current and future population. In the absence of sufficient policy guidance on this matter the mix of housing in the district may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the district’s ageing population and may continue to perpetuate the current predominance of larger properties that exists in the District.

Mitigation:
To avoid the dispersal of development throughout the wider countryside, the development of housing outside of the service centres will be based primarily on meeting an identified local housing need.
### Policy Number CP8: Affordable Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This policy seeks to increase the supply of affordable housing in the District. The supply of affordable housing to be delivered as a proportion of new development will vary across the District, having regard to the size and location of proposed residential developments. The policy seeks to maximise the delivery of affordable housing by ensuring that any residential scheme of one or more market dwellings triggers a requirement for affordable housing provision.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of decent, affordable housing is a key component in ensuring the health and well being of communities in the District.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The provision of a mix of different house types and tenures including affordable and open market housing is essential to the creation of mixed, thriving and inclusive communities. Much of the deprivation apparent in West Oxfordshire relates to access to housing, so ensuring that a high proportion of new housing is affordable will go some way to addressing these inequalities and tackling social exclusion, particularly in rural areas.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing across the District, including in rural areas where access to services and facilities is sometimes poor should have a positive impact in relation to this objective.</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The provision of additional affordable housing is important to sustainable economic growth.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The provision of additional affordable housing is important to sustainable economic growth.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The delivery of affordable housing is an important element of meeting sustainability objectives relating to meeting housing needs and promoting thriving and inclusive communities. The specific nature of the policy means that it is largely unrelated to the majority of SA objectives, however a number of positive impacts have been identified.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without such a policy in place the amount of affordable housing provided within West Oxfordshire is likely to be much less thereby failing to tackle the problem of housing affordability that evidence demonstrates currently exists.

Mitigation:
None identified.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The protection of existing housing will contribute to the overall housing supply in the District and is particularly important in rural communities where opportunities to provide new housing may be more constrained. Retaining existing properties will contribute to the overall mix of property available within local communities. The policy also seeks to encourage the re-use of empty properties within the District.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The quality of the housing mix in the District will be improved by permitting the loss of existing dwellings where they do not provide satisfactory living accommodation. Reducing the stock of poor quality housing in the District will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed home.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The re-use of existing residential property will make a contribution to the creation of thriving and inclusive communities by ensuring that the number of empty properties in the District is kept to a minimum. Maintaining properties in residential use, particularly in rural areas will help tackle social exclusion by contributing to the housing supply and meeting local housing needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ensuring empty properties are re-used could have a small positive impact in terms of reducing the opportunity for crimes such as vandalism.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This policy enables the loss of existing dwellings under certain circumstances, including when a proposal would make a positive contribution to local services and facilities. This may be particularly beneficial in more rural parts of the district where such services and facilities are not readily accessible by sustainable means. This policy is more closely aligned with the protection of housing however rather than aiming to deliver more accessible services and facilities.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The policy promotes the retention of existing residential dwellings and resists the loss of residential development to other uses. The sub-division of existing dwellings is permitted which will make a contribution to meeting the overall housing target for the District, although such a contribution is not likely to be significant. Substantial areas of greenfield land will still be required to accommodate the required level of growth, however ensuring maximum use is made of the existing housing stock is likely to have a positive, if relatively modest impact.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The protection and re-use of existing residential properties, particularly in service centres, will have a positive impact on reducing the need to travel and reducing the level of greenhouse gas emissions generated through transport, as housing is retained in close proximity to services and facilities. The level of greenhouse gas generated through the construction of new residential development will also be reduced albeit modestly.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The protection of existing housing for residential use is unlikely to limit the area of greenfield land required to accommodate the district's housing growth through the duration of the plan, however it could have small positive effect.

In some cases, existing dwellings may provide spaces for bat / owl roosting although this is likely to be more confined to older properties and those in a state of disrepair. Policy CP9 does however make provisions for the protection of ecology and protected species by ensuring that replacement dwellings do not have a harmful impact.

The policy seeks to ensure replacement dwellings and alterations, extensions and sub-divisions of existing properties do not cause harm to the local environment. Replacement dwellings will only be allowed where the original property is not of historical or architectural value.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The re-use and protection of existing housing in the district will contribute to the overall housing stock in the area, meeting housing needs and maintaining thriving and inclusive communities. Historic properties are a key element in defining the character of the district and protecting such property for its intended use will reduce the risk of this character from being eroded.

Business as Usual Scenario
Policy H8 of the Local Plan 2011 permits the sub-division of existing dwellings provided they are in sustainable locations and that the conversion would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. In the absence of an appropriate policy to guide such development, proposals may result in the loss of historic buildings that contribute to the character of area and the re-use of buildings in unsuitable locations. It may also lead to unsympathetic and inappropriate works being carried out to existing properties which could have a harmful effect on the character of the area.

Mitigation:
In order to reduce the risk of flooding to existing residential properties, flood mitigation measures should be introduced to existing residential areas where not previously incorporated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The provision of new and protection of existing plots, pitches and sites for the use of travelling communities is an important element of ensuring that the housing needs of all sectors of the community are met. The criteria set out within the policy ensure that such provision is within sustainable locations and reference to best practice guidance will ensure that any physical development is designed and constructed to an appropriate standard.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of official, authorised traveller sites will ensure that residents have access to essential infrastructure such as clean water and sewerage. The provision of such infrastructure is important in supporting the health and well being of travelling communities. The location of sites for travelling communities is a key consideration in this policy, particularly the need to locate sites in close proximity to community services and facilities, which will include the provision of healthcare. In addition to this, the availability of good pedestrian and cycle access will support healthy and active lifestyles, by encouraging communities to access services and facilities by sustainable means.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The provision of appropriate sites to meet the needs of travelling communities will address problems of social exclusion by improving their integration with the wider community. Ensuring that sites are provided in appropriate locations will reduce the potential for conflicts of land use.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The policy seeks to ensure that new sites are provided in locations that have good access to local services and facilities especially schools.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The provision of authorised sites through the policy should help to reduce the occurrence of illegal, unauthorised encampments.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Locating traveller sites within or near to existing settlements will ensure that communities have convenient access to local services and facilities by sustainable means, reducing the need to travel long distances to access essential provision.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The provision of sites for travelling communities is likely to be on greenfield land due to the limited availability of suitable brownfield sites in the District. There may be opportunities to extend existing sites to improve their capacity and reduce the further spread of development in the countryside. The size of traveller sites will be guided by the context of the location including the size of the population and density of local development, in line with government guidance, which will go some way to ensure that traveller sites utilise land effectively.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Locating sites in close proximity to existing services and facilities will reduce the need to travel with positive implications for road congestion and air quality.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Locating sites in close proximity to existing services and facilities will reduce the need to travel leading to a potential decrease in emissions from private transport. Sites are however unlikely to exhibit the highest standards of sustainable design and construction due to the nature of travelling communities and the type of accommodation that they use.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Locating sites in close proximity to existing services and facilities will reduce the need to travel leading to a potential decrease in emissions from private transport. Sites are however unlikely to exhibit the highest standards of sustainable design and construction due to the nature of travelling communities and the type of accommodation that they use.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The policy seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on environmental assets particularly the greenbelt, although a limited supply of previously developed land for such sites places pressure on existing greenfield sites to accommodate new development. Authorised sites will be supported by the necessary infrastructure including utilities for the transmission of clean and waste water.

The policy stipulates that new provision for travelling communities will not be permitted in areas of flood risk.

Regard will be given to the impact of new development on biodiversity and geodiversity by ensuring that it has no adverse impact on environmental assets.

The policy stipulates that any proposed development must not have an adverse impact on environmental or heritage assets and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

| 11 | The policy seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on environmental assets particularly the greenbelt, although a limited supply of previously developed land for such sites places pressure on existing greenfield sites to accommodate new development. Authorised sites will be supported by the necessary infrastructure including utilities for the transmission of clean and waste water. | +/- |
| 12 | The policy stipulates that new provision for travelling communities will not be permitted in areas of flood risk. | ++ |
| 13 | Regard will be given to the impact of new development on biodiversity and geodiversity by ensuring that it has no adverse impact on environmental assets. | + |
| 14 | The policy stipulates that any proposed development must not have an adverse impact on environmental or heritage assets and the character and appearance of the surrounding area. | + |
| 15 | 0 |
| 16 | 0 |

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Meeting the needs of travelling communities is important in promoting mixed, thriving and inclusive communities, by ensuring that provision for gypsies and travellers are properly met. The need for unauthorised settlements and the impacts that these bring in terms of environmental and social impacts will be avoided through the provision of good quality and well designed facilities for travellers. The potential negative impacts arising as a result of this policy are mainly in relation to the environmental impact including the potential use of greenfield land.

Business as Usual Scenario
There are currently a number of unauthorised traveller sites within West Oxfordshire. The absence of a clear policy to guide the location and standards of development on traveller sites may result in further unauthorised development taking place in unsustainable locations, with impacts on the character of the area and has implications for the formation of inclusive communities.

Mitigation:
Negative impacts arising as a result of this policy will be effectively mitigated through the implementation of polices in the Environmental and Heritage Assets section of the Local Plan.
### Policy Number CP11: Land for Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The delivery of new employment development within the most accessible parts of the District will ensure that a greater proportion of people are able to access work by sustainable means, (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport), supporting healthy and active lifestyles to a certain extent. Economic well being is important to the overall health and well being of communities and the provision of local job opportunities will ensure that people have access to employment close to where they live.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of most new employment land will be distributed to areas that are most accessible by the largest proportion of the population particularly Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. Improving accessibility to employment opportunities will help to reduce economic inequalities in the District. Further distribution throughout towns, villages and other rural areas will help to address issues of deprivation outside of the main settlements where access to employment opportunities and risk of social exclusion is more of an issue. The promotion of rural diversification and rural enterprise will also help. The protection of existing sites, where suitable and viable, will ensure that there is sufficient supply and flexibility in the employment land supply and ensure that any alternative uses are for the benefit of the community.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The protection and promotion of existing and new economic development in the District will provide new job opportunities where vocational training and skills development is likely to be a key element. The continued growth in particular specialist sectors such as biomedical equipment manufacture, engineering and motorsport may encourage local educational establishments to tailor courses to the needs of these professions.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The aim of this policy is to direct most economic development to areas with a local labour supply, within close proximity to existing and new residential development and to where it can deliver positive community benefits. This will ensure that job opportunities are accessible by all means and that the need to travel is reduced. Currently, a number of residents commute to work outside of the District and this policy may contribute to a reduction in the level of out-commuting in the interests of sustainable development.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The protection of existing employment sites for economic development will reduce the need for delivering future economic development on greenfield sites thus maximising the use of previously developed land. The provision of new employment land indicated by the policy will be in close proximity to existing economic development or will form part of comprehensive development schemes at the strategic development sites. New development will be directed to sites in or adjacent to towns and villages to reduce the extent of urban sprawl and to encourage the efficient use of land. Importantly the policy seeks to support proposals that will improve the effectiveness of existing business operations.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The delivery of new employment development and protection of existing land within the District will help to retain existing employers and attract new development into the District. Much of the air pollution in the District is caused by commuter traffic and congestion on local highways and the provision of local jobs should reduce the need for local residents to commute to work outside of the District.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Provision of local job opportunities can reduce the need to travel long distances to work and reduce car dependency. Development of new industrial units may increase overall greenhouse gas emissions though an increase in the overall level of development, although policies on sustainable design and construction will ensure that new development is built to high environmental standards.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>All new development in the District will be supported by the necessary physical infrastructure and will have regard to environmental constraints such as water quality. The redevelopment of existing sites may result in the remediation of contaminated land to ensure that existing employment land is kept in beneficial use. Focussing new development within existing settlements will reduce the need to expand into the countryside and avoid the development of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. The proposed employment land allocations are not BMV land except for land off London Road Chipping Norton.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Development in areas of flood risk is guided by the sequential test as set out elsewhere in the Local Plan. The proposed land allocations are within Flood Zone 1. Employment development is classed as less vulnerable development so some elements may be permitted in areas at greater risk of flooding. Increased risk of flooding as a result of new development will be mitigated through the use of SUDs as guided by other policies within the Local Plan and as such may reduce flood risk elsewhere.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The redevelopment of existing employment land and allocation of sites for strategic employment development will help to avoid the loss or damage to biodiversity and geodiversity resources. New allocations for strategic employment sites must avoid protected sites to demonstrate conformity with other Local Plan policies, particularly those relating to the natural environment and as such can contribute to delivering biodiversity improvements.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Any new development, particularly large scale employment land allocations as proposed by this policy have the potential to impact on the natural and historic landscape of the District. Impacts will be mitigated by ensuring that development is commensurate with the scale and character of the area and the design of new structures will be guided by the relevant policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This policy seeks to provide a range of employment opportunities appropriate to the skills of the community and to support vibrant market towns and a sustainable economy, in line with the SA objectives and the overall economic strategy set out in the draft Local Plan.

This policy aims to support, develop and attract competitive business sectors, enable enterprise and innovation and promote rural diversification, through the provision and retention of appropriate business premises in sustainable locations. It therefore has a very positive impact with regard to this objective.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Policy CP10 scores well against the sustainability objectives providing a positive framework for maintaining high and stable levels of employment and promoting sustainable economic growth and competitiveness. The efficient use of land in the District is promoted by directing economic development to previously developed or existing employment sites, encouraging improvements to their effectiveness and by incorporating new employment development into the strategic development sites. There are some potential negative impacts that may arise particularly in relation to the impact on the District’s landscape and historic character, increased flood risk and impacts on climate change.

Business as Usual Scenario
The working age population in the District will continues to grow until 2016 and demand for jobs will continue to increase. Without improving the balance of employment with the demand for jobs, a large number of people will continue to commute to locations outside of the District, further exacerbating current air quality and traffic congestion problems. Business development land is running out and new land allocations are necessary to ensure that the required 60 ha of employment land is delivered in the most sustainable locations over the period of the Local Plan to enable businesses to expand or relocate. As population forecasts indicate that West Oxfordshire will continue to have an ageing population in the future there is also a need to attract and retain people of a working age.

Mitigation:
The potential negative impacts arising from this policy will be effectively mitigated by the application of other relevant Local Plan policies, particularly those relating to the natural and historic environment, flood risk, prudent use of natural resources and high quality design.
### Policy Number CP12: Supporting the Rural Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This policy seeks to support the rural economy through a range of measures, including a positive approach to homeworking and flexible working practices such as ‘live work’. Although the policy does not consider new housing which is to be considered under housing policies, it contributes positively to the sustainability of new and existing housing.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Supporting the rural economy is an important factor in reducing inequalities and supporting the health and well being of rural communities as access to employment is key to supporting healthy and active lifestyles.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A strong rural economy will go a long way to creating thriving and inclusive communities in rural areas, with access to jobs and services maintained and the ability for existing rural businesses to strengthen and diversify their operations in sustainable locations. The policy stipulates that any proposals should seek to safeguard existing town and village centres. This policy will also help address issues of social exclusion, particularly where improved communications infrastructure such as high speed broadband is delivered.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The country estates in the area provide a valuable educational asset offering a wide range of educational resources to people in the District and beyond. This policy will enable estates to adapt by providing enhanced access to their resources, improving education in a broad range of subjects such as countryside management and local history. Farm diversification may bring about positive skills benefits through vocational training as well as the potential for setting up educational establishments if they make a positive contribution to the farm or country estate diversification.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Diversification in rural areas will provide accessible employment opportunities to parts of the rural community. The isolated nature of some of these operations may however result in greater need to travel for anybody associated with the diversified operations either as consumers, employees or suppliers. Many rural businesses are likely to be located away from services and facilities and would therefore be reliant on private transport in order to access them. Proposals for farm shops may provide accessible retail provision for rural communities, although the impact of such proposals on existing village or town centre shops will be assessed. The expansion of the rural broadband and telecommunications network will provide enhanced opportunities however for home working and remote communication for businesses thus reducing the need to travel.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The re-use and replacement of existing buildings will be permitted through this policy where it is required for diversification proposals thereby helping to ensure the most efficient use is made of existing buildings within the rural areas. New development will also be permitted in rural areas but the location of this will be guided by CP2 which seeks to locate development in the right places in terms of access to services and the impact on the character of the area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Increased business and industrial operations in the countryside (depending on the type of rural diversification) have the potential to have an impact on rural air quality. Significant business operations will continue to be guided to the main settlements in the district through both this and policy CP2, where transport connections are generally better. Business operations will be supported in rural operations but they are unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts on air quality and air pollution in the district indeed the provision of employment opportunities in the rural areas and positive approaches towards home working is likely to help reduce the need to travel.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>There is potential for positive impacts in relation to this SA objective particularly through reducing the need to travel, by providing better access to employment, services and facilities in rural areas, as well as through the provision of better telecommunications and rural broadband which will help people communicate and undertake business operations remotely. There is however potential for rural diversification to increase the need to travel in locations without access to sustainable modes. The sustainable design and construction of buildings is covered by other policies in the Local Plan which all new development should take account of.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New activities should not conflict with agricultural operations which should remain the dominant land use. There is potential for new development or activities associated with diversification to impact on the best and most versatile agricultural land although if agriculture remains the dominant land use, these impacts should not be significant. The isolated nature of some agricultural operations may result in operations being ‘off grid’ in terms of utilities infrastructure, although any diversification proposal should demonstrate that sufficient utilities provision is available to meet the needs of the operation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Development in areas of flood risk is guided by the sequential test as set out elsewhere in the Local Plan. Diversification proposals may arise in flood risk areas and proposals will be judged on their own merits. Land and buildings used for agriculture are classed as less vulnerable suggesting that they are appropriate development in areas with a higher probability of flooding provided that they do not increase flood risk elsewhere.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The re-use of existing structures and new buildings in diversification proposals are unlikely to have an impact on biodiversity in the District provided that guidance of Core Policy 18 is followed. Proposals for new buildings must have regard to local landscape appraisals, policy areas and guidance in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan which provide guidance on appropriate development, with specific reference to wildlife and biodiversity. Intensification of operations in rural areas could potentially have negative impacts on biodiversity through increased noise and disturbance although new development and the better management of country estates may bring about biodiversity improvements through the conservation and enhancement of natural assets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Diversification of farm activities and country estates will enable better balancing of economic activity with the conservation and enhancement of built and natural assets. By boosting the income of country estates, they will be able to deliver continued investment into the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of heritage assets. Proposals for diversification must remain compatible and consistent with the countryside location and new development must be located and designed to integrate with the landscape, having regard to local landscape appraisals and the Cotswolds AONB management plan. Improved tourism facilities as a result of farm and country estate diversification will promote access to and enjoyment of the District’s historic environment and countryside.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>By enabling homeworking, new rural business sites and farm and country estate diversification, rural businesses are able to start up and adapt to changing economic circumstances and market conditions helping to ensure their ongoing survival. Agriculture and tourism are important elements of the rural economy in West Oxfordshire. The ability of rural businesses to start up and adapt is important in maintaining stable levels of employment in the rural economy, particularly in the current challenging economic climate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>West Oxfordshire comprises a large and attractive rural area where enabling rural businesses of all types to start up and adapt is key to promoting sustainable economic growth and competitiveness, particularly in the challenging economic climate. Farm and estate diversification may also promote a sustainable tourism sector which focuses on the District’s historic and natural assets as an important element of the sustainable rural economy. Improved broadband in rural areas will be a significant asset to their competitiveness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Policy CP12 scores well on sustainability objectives relating to population and human health, particularly those focussing on local economic development and sustainable communities. There are potential negative environmental impacts that may arise as result of diversification proposals, particularly as much related development and intensification of operations will occur in rural areas which are less accessible by sustainable modes and sensitive to change, although these impacts are not likely to be significant as the policy requires proposals to be commensurate with the scale and character of the area.

Business as Usual Scenario
The current approach to rural business premises farm diversification in the District is guided by a range of policies in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 which are slightly more restrictive. These policies relate to the development of new and use of existing business premises as well as tourism, leisure and community facilities. There is a generally supportive approach to farm diversification in the District to enable the continuing viability of agricultural and rural enterprises. The new policy draws the individual elements of the Local Plan together to present an explicit statement of how the rural economy will be supported and where farm and country estate diversification is acceptable. Failure to offer positive support to rural enterprise in policy terms could lead to potential problems in the rural areas.

Mitigation:
The potential negative environmental impacts will be mitigated through the application of the natural environment and transport policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.
### Policy Number CP13: Re-use Non-Residential Buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The re-use of existing non residential buildings will be permitted for residential development when within service centres and villages in conformity with the spatial strategy. In the open countryside and small villages priority is given to business and community uses unless the proposal would meet a specific local housing need. Where residential development is permitted, it will be in buildings of substantial and permanent construction. Conversions for residential development will contribute to the overall housing target in the District, thus meeting the current and future needs of the community, although the contribution that such conversions make is not likely to be significant.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will provide opportunities for the location of community facilities, to meet the needs of local residents. The policy is also likely to lead to increased opportunities to access the countryside.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Residential use is permitted within service centres and villages and therefore where there are more services and facilities. In the open countryside and small villages priority for the re-use of existing buildings is given to employment, tourism and community uses, potentially providing opportunities for cultural, leisure and recreational activity. The re-use of vernacular buildings will ensure that historic buildings that contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place are maintained.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Priority for the re-use of existing non-residential buildings will be given to employment, tourism and community uses, which may contribute to the provision of education infrastructure in the district. There is also potential however for the conversion of buildings currently utilised for educational uses, to be converted to other uses although such proposals will also be subject to Core Policy 15.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Keeping buildings functional and in use will prevent their dereliction and stop them from becoming targets for antisocial behaviour. Empty and derelict buildings can have negative implications for people’s perceptions of crime and fear of crime and the re-use of buildings may address these negative perceptions.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Policy CP13 and the relevant supporting text indicate that the accessibility and isolation of a building and its proximity to key services and facilities will be important considerations in determining appropriate new uses. The re-use of non-residential buildings will be particularly supported where buildings are suitably located in regard to the level of accessibility to settlements, facilities and services. Residential use is permitted within service centres and villages and therefore where there are more services and facilities. This will reduce the need to travel and improve accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. Some re-use in more isolated areas is likely to be permitted however, particularly where it supports farm diversification or where it protects or enhances an historical asset.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will help to reduce the pressure on greenfield sites to accommodate new development and will maximise the use of previously developed land although the contribution of such buildings is likely to be relatively modest.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will help to reduce the amount of waste generated through the construction process.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The re-use of non-residential buildings will be particularly supported where buildings are suitably located in regard to the level of accessibility to settlements, facilities and services. Residential use is permitted within service centres and villages and therefore where there are more services and facilities. This will reduce the need to travel and improve accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. Some re-use in more isolated areas is likely to be permitted however, particularly where it supports farm diversification or where it protects or enhances an historical asset. The implications for air quality will depend on the scale of the building and the proposed use but are unlikely to be significant.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions arising from the construction of new buildings. The need to incorporate energy and water efficiency measures into proposals for the re-use of buildings, in order to improve their environmental sustainability will be considered through other policies. The location of development is a key element of this policy, in terms of the need to travel and to limit greenhouse gas emissions arising from private transport. Some re-use in more isolated areas is likely to be permitted however, particularly where it supports farm diversification or where it protects or enhances an historical asset.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will reduce the pressure on greenfield sites to accommodate new development and help protect the best and most versatile agricultural land in the District. Small scale development such as that covered by this policy is unlikely to require significant additional water resources.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Some existing buildings in the District may already stand in areas of flood risk. As such the re-use of certain buildings for particular uses may not be appropriate and will need to be assessed against the sequential test to flood risk development as detailed elsewhere in the Local Plan.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The policy states that ecological surveys will be required when considering proposals for re-use, as many redundant buildings in the District provide habitats for protected species. The re-use of buildings will reduce the need for development to encroach into the open countryside and reduce the threat of loss or damage to important biodiversity and geodiversity sites.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>One of the key aims of this policy is to secure the upkeep of vernacular buildings that make a contribution to the historic character of settlements and the wider landscape. The objective of the policy is not to prolong the life of buildings that are harmful to the high visual quality of the area. The re-use of non-vernacular buildings will be limited to sustainable locations where they make a contribution to farm diversification. Re-use of buildings will be strictly controlled where it would be harmful to the character of the area, particularly in the Cotswolds AONB. Priority is given to non-residential uses in the open countryside and small villages which are likely to be more sensitive to the rural context and heritage assets.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The re-use of existing buildings will better enable rural agricultural businesses to diversify their operations, to provide opportunities for employment to meet the skills of the community and supporting the rural economy. The priority for non-residential uses outside service centres will ensure that the re-use of appropriate buildings continues to contribute to the District’s stock of rural employment opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The ability to re-use buildings for new uses will enable the diversification of businesses. In the open countryside and small villages, priority is given to the re-use of buildings for employment, tourism and community uses, enabling enterprise and innovation on redundant sites, promoting sustainable tourism and encouraging rural diversification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects**
Policy CP13 will deliver significant positive effects particularly in regard to the protection and enhancement of the historic character of the district, the use of previously developed land and in terms of enabling rural businesses to diversify their activities. Enabling the re-use of buildings will deliver new housing in appropriate, sustainable locations and positive environmental benefits by reducing the energy and waste generated through the construction of new development and by reducing the volume of greenfield land consumed by new development.

**Business as Usual Scenario**
The circumstances under which buildings may be re-used are currently set out within the policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. The policies of the Local Plan have been effective in ensuring that non-residential buildings are converted for appropriate uses. The absence of a strong policy to guide the re-use of existing buildings may result in harmful or inappropriate development occurring in unsustainable locations, the retention of unsuitable buildings in areas of high landscape value and the degradation of historic assets. It is also likely to lead to pressure for the most high value uses such as residential, which could limit the opportunities to provide rural business, community and tourism opportunities.

**Mitigation:**
Potential negative implications could arise in relation to flood risk and climate change mitigation. These impacts will be mitigated through the application of related Local Plan policies.
### Policy Number CP14: Sustainable Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
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<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Projects supported through CP14 are aimed at protecting and enhancing the District’s natural leisure and recreation resources for the benefit of all. Sustainable tourism in West Oxfordshire has a distinct focus on the high quality landscape and heritage assets of the area. Enhancing tourism facilities in proximity to these assets will improve access to the countryside and support healthy and active lives.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The provision of enhanced tourism services and facilities may offer benefit to the wider community through their location within or close to existing settlements. Increased tourist spending will support the local economy through greater use of existing services and facilities, further supporting the vitality of town and village centres and local communities, which will be safeguarded through the application of the proposed ‘town centre’ first approach. Focussing sustainable tourism on the natural and historic assets of the District will provide greater opportunities for cultural, leisure and recreation activity.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The conservation and enhancement of natural resources, the support of projects such as the Windrush Valley Project and improved accessibility to heritage assets such as Blenheim Palace provide important educational resources, particularly in relation to raising awareness of the importance of the natural environment and heritage of West Oxfordshire.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New tourism development will be located within or in close proximity to existing settlements wherever possible, to provide good access to existing services and facilities, reducing the need to travel and to ensure that they are in the most accessible locations for public transport. Larger traffic generating attractions will be located in or adjacent to the main towns, to limit the transport impact on rural roads. Capacity constraints already exist however on the local road network and increases in visitor traffic may further exacerbate problems, particularly in town centres where congestion problems already exist in some places.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The location of tourist facilities within or close to existing settlements where possible will minimise the dispersal of development into the countryside. The re-use of existing buildings within the countryside where tourism development can be justified will reduce the need for greenfield development and represents an efficient use of previously developed land.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Further development within the District and increased recreational activity in the countryside is likely to increase the volume of waste generated in West Oxfordshire. Management of tourism development in the District should take account of the need to facilitate the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste as covered by the Sustainable Tourism Strategy.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is potential for existing traffic problems to be exacerbated however, particularly in the often congested air quality management areas in Witney and Chipping Norton, as more intensive uses are steered to the main urban areas. The policy however support proposals which utilise and enrich the natural and built environment and the negative impacts arising from increased volumes in traffic including degradation of air quality will be mitigated by locating tourism development close to existing settlements where possible, to encourage use of public transport and sustainable modes such as walking and cycling.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Much of the emphasis of CP14 is on the protection and enhancement of the natural environment which will have positive implications for mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing concentrations of greenhouse gasses. The location of tourism development close to existing services and facilities where possible will reduce the need to travel for existing residents and enable better accessibility via public transport.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Opportunities for ecological enhancements and nature conservation are sought through the policy, particularly in relation to the River Thames and Windrush Valley, ensuring the protection and enhancement of valuable water resources in the District. Restricting development in the countryside and encouraging the re-use of existing buildings will help to ensure that pressure for new development on the best and most versatile agricultural land is limited.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Policy CP14 encourages the location of tourism and recreation facilities around the District’s water resources although any such provision is not likely to impact on the ability of the natural environment to respond to flooding naturally. Acceptable development in flood risk areas is guided by the sequential test which restricts the development of certain land uses in areas of flood risk.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity resources is key to maintaining a sustainable tourist economy in West Oxfordshire. Support is given through the policy to tourism and leisure development which utilises and enriches the natural and built environment of the District. Development that supports biodiversity and the long term nature conservation objectives of the area will be supported.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The historic character of the area is also key to supporting sustainable tourism in the district. Tourism and leisure development which utilises and enriches the built environment and existing attractions of the District will be supported. Particular regard is given in the policy to the protection of the landscape in the Cotswolds AONB but the aim of the policy is to protect landscape quality throughout the District. The policy could therefore be strengthened by having regard to the Landscape Character Assessments for the District, particularly to guide development in the open countryside Core Policy 17 also seeks to conserve landscape character across the District.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Increased visitor spending will make a valuable contribution to the vitality of towns and villages in the District and will support the local economy by creating employment opportunities in the tourism sector. Tourism is a key part of the rural economy in West Oxfordshire and the policy is likely to have a positive impact in terms of the provision of additional employment opportunities in the rural areas.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A significant number of people within the District are employed in tourism related businesses. Further enhancing the tourism offer in the District will encourage further visitor spending in the area, supporting the local economy and providing further job opportunities in the tourism sector. Rural diversification is supported through the policy which will enable rural businesses to respond and adapt to changing economic circumstances.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
Sustainable tourism in West Oxfordshire focuses on some of the key elements that make the District a special place including the quality of the landscape, the heritage of the area and local biodiversity. As a result, the policy will deliver positive impacts against a wide range of sustainability objectives, particularly those relating to thriving and inclusive communities and the protection of natural resources, but also those that relate to a thriving local economy. Potential negative impacts relate to the level of waste generated, air quality and traffic congestion although these are likely to be mitigated through the application of other relevant policies.

Business as Usual Scenario
Tourism development in the District is currently guided by a series of polices in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. The introduction of the Draft Local Plan consolidates much of this policy guidance but ensures that the positive approach to encouraging tourism in the District remains, without reducing the level of protection afforded to those elements that make the district special. Tourists will continue to be attracted to the District to enjoy the landscape, biodiversity and heritage of the area, but in the absence of appropriate policy guidance, there is a risk of inappropriate development occurring in unsustainable locations, potentially harming the special qualities of the West Oxfordshire landscape.

Mitigation:
In terms of managing potential increases in the level of waste generated, the application of the sustainable tourism strategy and individual management plans relating to tourism sites in the district will have a greater role in reducing waste than the Local Plan can deliver. Requiring development to be supported by a waste management plan would help to mitigate impact and could be incorporated into this policy or one of the other policies within the plan.

Increases in traffic in the District and the associated impacts on air quality will be mitigated by improving walking and cycling access to tourism facilities and by targeting development to areas with the greatest public transport access. Transport infrastructure is a key constraint to further development in the District and improvements to this infrastructure may be required to fully address the impacts of increased visitor numbers to the District.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The availability of community facilities is important in promoting the health and well being of communities, by ensuring that accessible health and recreation opportunities are available to all. Protecting services in rural areas in particular is an important element of reducing social inequalities in West Oxfordshire.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The protection of community facilities in rural areas and the provision of facilities in accessible locations will help to ensure that problems of social exclusion related to health care and education are limited as far as possible. Policy CP15 avoids the loss of facilities unless alternative provision of equivalent suitability and accessibility is available. The policy also aims to ensure that centres remain vibrant, accessible and meet local needs. Meeting local needs is of particular importance in reducing social inequalities.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Educational establishments are key community facilities and the loss of such establishments will be resisted through this policy unless there is accessible and equivalent alternative provision. The educational needs of new and existing communities will be kept under review and their needs addressed in conjunction with partners including Oxfordshire County Council.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The development and retention of community facilities and local services is an important factor in promoting social interaction within local communities. Supportive communities that interact with one another are more likely to feel safe with lower incidences of crime and fear of crime.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>This policy aims to ensure that community services and facilities are located and maintained in locations that are accessible on foot and via public transport for the benefit of local communities. The provision of community facilities services and facilities within town, village and neighbourhood centres will ensure that they are accessible by all via sustainable means, reducing dependency on private modes of transport and reducing the need to travel unnecessarily.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The retention of community services and facilities in accessible locations is an efficient use of land although the provision of new facilities may require the take up of Greenfield sites.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>This policy aims to ensure that essential services and facilities for the benefit of the community are retained or developed in accessible locations, particularly those that are accessible by foot. Ensuring that communities are not dependant on private transport to access such facilities is likely to have a positive if relatively modest impact on air quality in the district.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>This policy aims to ensure that essential services and facilities for the benefit of the community are retained or developed in accessible locations, particularly those that are accessible by foot. Ensuring that communities are not dependant on private transport to access such facilities is likely to help reduce the level of carbon emissions generated by private transport in the district that contribute to climate change.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The retention of existing services and facilities in West Oxfordshire, particularly in rural settlements is an important element in maintaining the historic character of settlements as well as the cultural heritage of such locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Accessible services and facilities that support day to day life, particularly in rural communities are important in sustaining the rural economy and in retaining labour and skills within these communities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Retaining accessible services and facilities in rural communities is an important aspect of the rural economy which contributes to the tourism sector within the district. Resisting the loss of such infrastructure will help to maintain an attractive tourism base, particularly within the more rural settlements of the district.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Significant Effects**

Resisting the loss of community services and facilities and promoting new facilities will deliver largely positive outcomes against the West Oxfordshire sustainability objectives particularly in relation to the creation of inclusive and supportive communities and in supporting a sustainable rural economy. The policy does not preclude the conversion of existing community facilities to other uses but ensures where possible that services and facilities are retained and remain accessible for communities.

**Business as Usual**

In the absence of an up to date plan, decisions affecting the potential loss of community services and facilities would be guided by the National Planning Policy Framework. The thrust of the NPPF is to guard against the unnecessary loss of such services although it provides little guidance on how this should be achieved. The introduction of Policy CP15 provides greater certainty at all levels as to where the loss of services and facilities might be acceptable and what alternative provision should be made. Without it, there is greater risk of losing such facilities to the detriment of local communities in West Oxfordshire.

**Mitigation**

The introduction of the Community Right to Bid process should provide an additional mechanism for local communities to protect services and facilities that they feel are important to sustaining community life.
<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Supporting town, village and neighbourhood centres as the focus for shopping, leisure and community services and facilities will ensure that the necessary infrastructure to support health and well being and active lifestyles within communities remain accessible to people through out West Oxfordshire, whether they live in urban or rural areas. Partnership working with local businesses, residents and parish councils will ensure that such centres meet local needs.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Supporting town, village and neighbourhood centres as the focus for shopping, leisure, community facilities and services will ensure that they remain vibrant, as well as ensuring that necessary cultural, leisure and recreation facilities remain accessible to the West Oxfordshire population. One of the key areas of social deprivation in West Oxfordshire relates to access to services and facilities and ensuring that they remain in the most accessible locations is one way of addressing this. The definition of primary and secondary shopping frontages within the town centres will protect certain areas for shopping or other complimentary uses to support the vitality of town centres.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This policy makes a commitment for the Council, to work in partnership to promote and enhance security, accessibility and improvements to the public realm in town centres in West Oxfordshire. Such improvements will make a valuable contribution to maintaining low levels of crime and fear of crime in the district.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Town centres are the most accessible locations in West Oxfordshire as they are the focus for public transport, pedestrian and cycle links and they benefit from the provision of free car parking. Maintaining such centres as the focus for services and facilities will ensure that they remain accessible for all the community. There are however problems of traffic congestion within some of the towns and villages of the district. Encouraging people to continue using their cars to access goods and services is likely to exacerbate these existing problems. Highways measures are likely to be required to ensure that the traffic impact on town and village centres does not detract from the quality of these places along with the promotion of sustainable (non-car) modes of transport</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Significant new shopping and other town centre development will follow the ‘town centre first’ sequential approach, ensuring that the availability of suitable sites within town centre are explored as a priority for development, to prevent urban sprawl and the unnecessary dispersal of town centre uses in inappropriate locations. The identification of primary and secondary shopping frontages within the main towns will ensure that buildings within these locations are reused for appropriate town centre uses. The policy could be further strengthened by including reference to mixed-use development in appropriate locations which generally represent very efficient use of existing land.</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>Town centres are the most accessible locations in West Oxfordshire as they are the focus for public transport, pedestrian and cycle links and they benefit from the provision of free car parking. By continuing to focus the bulk of retail development and the provision of community facilities within the main town centres, problems of town centre congestion and poor air quality, particularly in Witney and Chipping Norton will remain unless mitigation measures are implemented. Enhanced and improved use of public transport and safe routes to walk and cycle will mitigate these problems, as will the provision of more localised provision in village and neighbourhood centres.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>The provision of retail and community facilities in accessible town centre locations will encourage people to use sustainable means to access them, reducing the need to travel by private modes and potentially improving air quality. There is no reference in this policy to the incorporation of climate change mitigation measures or the use of sustainable design and construction in the delivery of retail or community facilities however this is covered in Core Policy 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>Locating retail and community facilities within town, village and neighbourhood centres will limit development in inappropriate locations and reduce sprawl into the countryside, protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. Encouraging the re-use of existing buildings within already defined centres will ensure that the likely necessary water and waste water infrastructure is already in place.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td>The location of retail and community facilities within town centres will help to avoid the loss or damage to biodiversity and geodiversity on more sensitive and designated sites, priority species and habitats.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td>New development must be appropriate in nature and scale to the role of the centre where it is located. Preserving the role of town and village centres is important in conserving and enhancing buildings and areas that contribute to the cultural heritage of the district.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td>This policy supports the vibrancy and vitality of the District’s centres by resisting the loss of facilities that make a contribution to town and village life and promoting new facilities in appropriate locations. The provision of new services and facilities will be directed to existing centres and defined frontages to ensure that the continuing role of these centres is supported and is not eroded by out of centre development. Retail provision is an important element of economy, meeting local needs, enhancing the tourism offer and providing a range of employment opportunities for people.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Retail makes an important contribution to the local economy and also to the tourism offer of the District, particularly in the market towns and historic centres. Continued promotion and protection of these centres for such uses will continue to promote these competitive business sectors. Significant retail proposals outside of town centres will be subject to impact assessments to ensure that they don’t have a detrimental impact on the vitality of existing town centres.

Summary of Significant Effects
The protection and enhancement of town centres as the main focus for retail and service provision will deliver significant positive impacts over a range of sustainability objectives, particularly in relation to supporting economic growth and competitiveness and the creation of inclusive communities. Directing essential services and facilities to the most accessible locations will reduce inequalities by ensuring that all communities can access them by sustainable means. Focussing provision within centres will prevent their dispersal to less sustainable locations in the District and reduce the leakage of consumer expenditure and travel to other town centres. There is potential to exacerbate existing traffic congestion and associated air quality issues within town centres, without appropriate mitigation measures being taken into account to promote sustainable travel modes.

Business as Usual
The approach to town centres and the provision of community facilities in West Oxfordshire is currently guided by a range of policies in the existing Local Plan. This approach has been successful in maintaining the vitality and viability of the main centres and in restricting the development of retail and commercial uses outside of town centres. Without an appropriate policy to guide the location of retail and commercial development, there is a risk of development occurring in locations that could draw custom away from town centres thereby affecting their vitality. Policy CP16 also resists the loss of shops and community facilities from town centres. The absence of a policy to resist such a loss may be detrimental to communities as accessible services and facilities may be lost.

Mitigation
Further provision and enhancement of town centre and community facilities should be supported by appropriate sustainable transport and physical transport infrastructure improvements, to improve accessibility by sustainable means and reduce the impact of traffic congestion on town centres. This is the focus of Core Policy 24 and the detailed town centre strategies.
### Policy Number CP17: Landscape Character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of landscape character of West Oxfordshire is an important factor in determining the health and well being of communities in the District. The high quality and accessible natural environment encourage people in the district to lead healthy and active lifestyles by engaging in recreation activities in the countryside. The natural beauty of the area has a positive impact on the general sense of well being of people living in the area.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This policy scores well against this objective in terms of providing cultural, leisure and recreation activity to people in the District. The rural landscape is one of the key recreational resources in the District offering accessible green space to people and the protection and enhancement of the key features within the landscape will encourage people to continue accessing the countryside for recreational activity. The character of settlements and the surrounding countryside is also important in sustaining the vitality of towns and villages by making them attractive places to live and visit.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The preservation of natural habitats that contribute to the quality of the District’s landscape character make a positive contribution to improving local air quality through the removal of polluting gasses from the atmosphere.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is important in improving the environmental quality of the area and in addressing the causes of climate change. The preservation of woodland and trees ensure that the natural environment is able to absorb increased levels of greenhouse gas emissions, generated by human activity. The protection of open green spaces will enable better absorption of surface water, mitigating the impacts of increased flood risk that may arise as a result of climate change.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Water and soil resources are key features of landscape and environmental quality in the District that will be protected and enhanced through the landscape character policy. Special attention is given to specific project areas in West Oxfordshire such as the Lower Windrush Valley and the Windrush in Witney where the quality of the water environment is essential in supporting local biodiversity.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The protection of the countryside and other open spaces for their landscape quality has the dual benefit of maintaining greenfield absorption rates, maintaining the ability of the natural environment to absorb rainwater and respond to flood events.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>A key feature of the landscape character in West Oxfordshire is the quality and diversity of habitats in the area. The woodlands, meadows, rivers and hedgerows of the District make an important contribution to the landscape character but also support a wide range of wildlife. Protection of landscape character is intrinsically linked to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity in the District.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Policy CP17 delivers positively against all elements of this sustainability objective, aiming to protect and enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctiveness of natural and manmade features in the landscape.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>An important element of the rural economy is the quality and distinctiveness of the natural landscape, as it is a key feature that attracts people to live and work in the District as well as driving local tourism. The protection of landscape character in West Oxfordshire will make a valuable contribution to the attractiveness of places but there is a risk that the strict protection of the character of settlements may affect their vitality in the long run, by preventing necessary development such as affordable housing or business development from taking place.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of landscape character is important in promoting a sustainable tourism sector, as the quality of the landscape, particularly in the Cotswolds AONB is a key attraction for visitors. Ensuring that development takes account of landscape character should not preclude development from taking place but it should ensure that any development that is permitted is built to the highest standards and that it maintains and enhances the quality of the landscape.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Significant Effects**

The effective implementation of the landscape character policy through the West Oxfordshire Local Plan will deliver multiple social, environmental and economic benefits to the District. The quality of the landscape is one of the key drivers for change in the District, supporting the local tourist economy and attracting people to live and invest in the area as well as having a positive effect on the health and well being of communities.

**Business as Usual**

The landscape character of the district is currently protected and enhanced through a combination of policies in the Local Plan 2011, policies within the Cotswolds AONB management plan and guidance in the form of landscape character assessments for the district. The absence of such a policy framework will result in the potential degradation of the landscape and loss of features important to the character of the area with potential negative economic, social and environmental implications.

**Mitigation**

In order to ensure that this policy enables essential development to take place where necessary, it needs to be applied in conformity with CP4 with key regard to landscape character assessments and other policy guidance such as the AONB Management Plan.
## Policy Number CP18: Biodiversity

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local biodiversity and the quality and diversity of natural habitats have a positive effect on the health and well being of communities, by enhancing the quality of the landscape in which people live and providing a range of accessible green spaces for recreation and leisure activities. The protection of habitats, particularly along corridors such as the Windrush in Witney and accessibility along these corridors through the provision of Green Infrastructure networks, improves the ability of local communities to access the countryside from urban environments.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The protection of the high quality West Oxfordshire environment is important in creating thriving and inclusive communities, improving access to the countryside and the cultural, leisure and recreational opportunities that are available in the District’s diverse natural habitats.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Protecting and enhancing the District’s biodiversity assets and improving access to them where possible, provides a valuable educational resource for people in the District.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A large number of sites in West Oxfordshire are protected for their biodiversity value and are widespread throughout the District ensuring that large areas of land are protected by this policy. By restricting development in these locations, development is directed towards and concentrated in more sustainable locations, restricting the extent to which development can be dispersed throughout the wider landscape.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of local biodiversity and the improvement of biodiversity networks will have significant positive impacts on local air quality. Woodlands and urban trees in particular have positive impacts on improving local air quality. The preparation of Habitats Regulations Assessments in relation to SACs will ensure that new development does not have an unacceptable impact.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Biodiversity makes an important contribution to both climate change mitigation and adaptation in the District. Healthy and well connected habitats remove carbon from the atmosphere reducing one of the key causes of climate change while the protection of green spaces maintain the ability of the land to respond to increased flood risk by maintaining green field absorption rates.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The protection of water resources is promoted through this policy, particularly in relation to SACs where deterioration in water quality would have an effect on the integrity of the habitat. HRAs would be expected where development proposals are likely to have a significant adverse impact on any European protected site. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity will deliver improvements to water quality through healthy aquatic ecosystems.

The protection of biodiversity has positive implications for reducing flood risk by maintaining greenfield absorption rates and interception of increased rainfall by vegetation. The protection of floodplains and river corridors as important biodiversity corridors reduces the risk of flooding.

Policy CP18 delivers significant positive outcomes against this sustainability objective, ensuring that all development proposals protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity assets of the District.

Biodiversity and landscape character are intrinsically linked. The protection and restoration of habitats in the District will have positive implications for the protection and enhancement of landscape character through increased planting and the restriction of development in environmentally sensitive areas.

The protection and enhancement of biodiversity will provide benefits for the local economy, particularly in terms of providing job opportunities in tourism and the visitor economy.

Biodiversity in the District is an important element in supporting the tourist economy as the natural sites of West Oxfordshire are a key feature that attract visitors to the District.

**Summary of Significant Effects**
The protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the District is key to addressing a wide range of sustainability objectives for West Oxfordshire, particularly in relation to supporting the health and well being of communities and in delivering significant environmental improvements to the District in terms of landscape character, climate change mitigation and local air quality.

**Business as Usual**
The approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement in the district has proven successful with a combination of Local Plan policies and a target area approach contributing to the good quality and condition of protected sites in the district. Many of the sites within West Oxfordshire benefit from national and international protected status and this protection would continue in the absence of Policy CP18. These sites may remain isolated however and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement as a result of new development may not be realised without a cohesive policy to guide biodiversity enhancements where appropriate.

**Mitigation**
No additional mitigation measures are necessary.
## Policy Number CP19: Public Realm and Green Infrastructure

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>An improved green infrastructure network will deliver significant benefits to the health and well being of communities through enhanced opportunities for recreation and improved environmental quality of the District. The creation of green corridors linking biodiversity sites and extending into settlements will improve accessibility to the countryside and support healthy and active lifestyles.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of the District’s green infrastructure network will have a positive impact on the creation of thriving and inclusive communities in West Oxfordshire. The accessibility of good quality green space is an important factor in encouraging communities to lead healthy and active lifestyles. The protection of existing green infrastructure resources and the creation of new multifunctional green spaces will encourage communities to engage in leisure and recreational activities and linking these green spaces throughout the urban and rural environment will improve the character of places and contribute to the vitality of town and village centres.</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Quality footpath and cycleway provision is a key component of a comprehensive green infrastructure network. Protection and enhancement of green infrastructure in the District will ensure that better links are provided between residential areas and green spaces, employment opportunities and community services and facilities, improving accessibility by walking and cycling.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The protection of green spaces for their recreational and biodiversity value will limit opportunities for greenfield development, particularly within the built up area of settlements. The policy also seeks to safeguard existing recreational buildings unless surplus to requirements or alternative provision is made elsewhere.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A strong green infrastructure network will lead to the greening of urban environments through the protection of existing and delivery of new multifunctional green spaces and the delivery of additional enhancements such as street trees. Improved green infrastructure networks will help encourage people to travel by sustainable means. Increased levels of vegetation within urban environments will have positive implications for air quality and reductions in pollution through better absorption of carbon emissions.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An improved green infrastructure network will help to address the causes and impacts of climate change. Networks of footpaths and cycle ways will provide better opportunities to walk and cycle for communities, reducing the need to travel by car and thereby reducing carbon emissions from transport. Urban greening, particularly increased tree planting will mitigate against the impacts of climate change through urban cooling and improved interception of rainfall. The protection of green spaces will also mitigate against increased flood risk through the availability of permeable surfaces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>River corridors are an important element of the green infrastructure network, particularly as they link sites of biodiversity value and provide opportunities for the migration of species. The protection and enhancement of the green infrastructure network in the District will extend to river corridors and their floodplains to ensure that their biodiversity and recreation qualities are preserved. The protection of green spaces will also have positive implications for the protection of agricultural land.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The protection of green spaces through an enhanced green infrastructure network will reduce the risk from all sources of flooding, maintaining permeable surfaces to absorb rainfall and floodwater and increasing rainwater interception through increased tree planting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The creation of a green infrastructure network will have significant positive impacts on the protection and enhancement of local biodiversity. Individual sites will be protected, maintaining species and habitats in specific locations. An enhanced green infrastructure network with improved linkages between these sites will enable species to thrive and migrate in response to climate change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>A strong green infrastructure network will also have positive implications for the preservation and enhancement of landscape character and the historic environment in the District. Importantly it will help to promote access to the countryside thereby positively supporting this SA objective. The protection of green spaces, particularly in urban areas will make a valuable contribution to the setting of conservation areas and historic buildings. In rural areas, features within the green infrastructure network such as rivers, trees and hedgerows also form important elements of the landscape character. Conservation and enhancement of these features may contribute to the strength of the landscape structure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Maintaining and enhancing the character of the District will ensure that West Oxfordshire remains an attractive place to live and work. The high quality landscape and townscape are important factors in attracting investment into the area, supporting the provision of local job opportunities. Attracting people to live in the District ensures the provision of a good quality workforce to support the local economy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The high quality environment of West Oxfordshire is a key asset in attracting new business to the District and the protection and enhancement of the green infrastructure network will ensure that this high quality environment is maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Significant Effects
A comprehensive green infrastructure network will deliver multiple social, environmental and economic benefits for the district. The policy therefore scores well against a large number of the SA objectives.

Business as Usual
West Oxfordshire benefits from a reasonable green infrastructure network with a range of accessible and multifunctional green spaces distributed throughout the district, many of them linked by green corridors such as public rights of way and river channels although access to natural greenspace is relatively limited compared to national standards. The absence of an effective policy relating to green infrastructure will limit opportunities to secure enhancements to the network through new development, leaving some habitats disjointed and potentially resulting in the loss of valuable open space such as recreation land.

Mitigation
No additional mitigation measures necessary.
**Policy Number CP20: Decentralised and Renewable or Low Carbon Energy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to secure at least 10% of their energy from decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy sources. This will apply to a large number of properties in the District due to the concentration of much of the District’s housing growth on strategic development sites.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Improved environmental quality through reduced carbon emissions will have a positive impact on the health of local communities.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Policy CP20 supports the creation of small scale community led, decentralised energy projects. Such projects may enhance community integration and cohesion with opportunities for job creation and income generation.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>There may be educational opportunities associated with larger scale renewable energy proposals such as visitor centres which explain the various processes and potential benefits involved.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>The policy seeks to ensure that larger developments generate at least 10% of their energy from decentralised and renewable low carbon sources thereby encouraging the efficient use of land and helping to mitigate potential impact on climate change.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>The development of biomass energy generators in the district will help to reduce the proportion of waste being directed to landfill. Other proposals for more sustainable forms of waste management including energy from waste will be considered in appropriate locations and having regard to other relevant policies as well as the County Council’s minerals and waste core strategy.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>The implementation of renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy projects in the District will have positive implications for air quality, both locally and beyond the District boundaries, by reducing burning of fossil fuels to provide energy for the District’s needs.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>Increasing the proportion of energy generated from low carbon and renewable energy sources in the District will make a valuable contribution to addressing the causes of climate change, by reducing the level of carbon emissions into the atmosphere. Strong positive impact on this objective.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>The impact of renewable energy on the District’s biodiversity will be a key consideration in the implementation of this policy, to ensure that any negative impacts are avoided or mitigated.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>There are potential negative impacts that may arise from the implementation and development of low carbon energy resources on landscape and heritage in the area. The quality of the landscape and historic character of the District are major constraints to the implementation of certain technologies, particularly large scale wind turbines and will be key considerations in determining whether proposals for such development are acceptable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The development of new renewable and low carbon energy developments has the potential to create additional job opportunities within the ‘green energy’ sector which is currently rapidly growing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>This policy supports the creation of community led initiatives for generating decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy, providing opportunities for communities to generate an income from energy. There may also be opportunities for diversification into such proposals in appropriate locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Significant Effects**

The delivery of renewable and low carbon energy technologies in the district will have significant positive outcomes in relation to objectives for the improvement of air quality and addressing the causes of climate change. There will also be positive effects on the health and well being of communities through improved environmental quality. There are conflicts that may arise from the development of renewable energy sources however, particularly in terms of the impact on the natural and historic landscape and the policy is worded so as to minimise potential harm.

**Business as Usual**

Applications for renewable energy schemes will continue to come forward and will be determined in line with the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, in the absence of specific local guidance. This may lead to a detrimental impact on local landscape and historic character. Policy CP20 states a requirement for larger developments to secure a proportion of their energy from decentralised sources. Without a specific requirement such as this, the prospect of such provision being made is much reduced.

**Mitigation**

In order to avoid negative impacts on landscape and historic character, the location of renewable energy sources should be guided to the least sensitive areas and be designed to assimilate into the landscape effectively. The effective implementation of policies for the protection and enhancement of environmental and heritage assets along with the application of local design guidance will mitigate these negative impacts and ensure that new development is located suitably. The policy seeks to take advantage of opportunities for environmental enhancement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ensuring that communities are not at risk of flooding is important in ensuring their health and well being and the policy therefore scores well against this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The policy will help to ensure that development proposals are steered towards locations that are not at risk of flooding. This will ensure that areas of land currently functioning as floodplain are able to continue to do so and that the demand for development is met in more appropriate locations.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Increased flood risk is one of the key likely impacts of climate change and mitigating its impacts are important in ensuring that development is resilient to climate change. The sequential test will ensure that development is located outside areas of flood risk and the incorporation of SUDs into development proposals will ensure that increased flood risk as a result of new development (through increased surface run off) is mitigated.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The use of SUDs will reduce the risk of pollution in water courses by controlling surface water run off from new development. Controlling development in proximity to water courses will contribute to the protection and enhancement of aquatic ecosystems in the District and improve the quality of fresh water in lakes and river channels</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The application of the sequential test will ensure that development is steered away from flood risk areas. The incorporation of SUDs into development design and layout will ensure that the impacts of increased run off from development are mitigated. Land required for flood management will be safeguarded.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Reducing flood risk by restricting development in floodplains will ensure that the biodiversity value of river corridors is conserved. The use of SUDs in new development will improve the biodiversity value of newly developed areas and contribute to the network of habitats as part of the green infrastructure network</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The protection of land for flood management and safeguarding of open spaces from development will preserve sites that contribute to the quality of the landscape character of the District. The implementation of SUDs and planting of extra vegetation to reduce flood risk may add features of landscape value enhance the character of an area.

### Summary of Significant Effects

Mitigation of flood risk is an important factor to be taken into account in determining the sustainability of all developments in the District. A significant threat of flood risk exists due to the proximity of water courses to existing development in the district. The application of the Sequential and Exceptions tests in determining the suitability of new development will ensure that it is steered to the areas of least risk, delivering positive sustainability scores for the health and well being of communities and sustainably constructed housing as well as mitigating the potential impacts of climate change. Significant benefits also relate to the protection and enhancement of the environment, by protecting areas of landscape and biodiversity value and through the implementation of SUDs and increased vegetation.

### Business as Usual

There is a strong risk of inappropriate development occurring in flood risk areas without an effective policy to guide it. The default position is the NPPF which includes some general requirements, but given the significance of this issue for West Oxfordshire it is considered essential to have a local policy in place.

### Mitigation

The introduction of flood mitigation measures into previously developed areas will better enable the redevelopment of such sites for a range of uses in line with the sequential and exceptions tests.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The protection of the environment and improved environmental quality is important in sustaining the health and well being of communities. Development proposals that are likely to cause pollution or result in exposure to increased levels of pollution or health risk will only be permitted if the health risk or amenity impact can be sufficiently mitigated. This policy will therefore help to protect human health and well being.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ensuring that new development protects and enhances environmental quality is important in the creation of thriving and inclusive communities. A high quality environment will encourage communities to engage in leisure and recreational activity and improve the vitality of town and village centres by ensuring that they remain attractive places to live and visit.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This policy enables the re-use of contaminated land where remediation measures can be properly implemented into the development proposal, thereby promoting more efficient use of previously developed land.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The policy seeks to allow for waste management facilities to come forward in appropriate locations thereby helping to facilitate the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste in accordance with this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of local air quality is a key strand of this policy focussing on the management and improvement of air quality in line with National Air Quality Standards and the Air Quality Area Action Plans for Witney and Chipping Norton. Proposals that are likely to cause air pollution will only be permitted if measures can be taken to minimise the risk and the impact on the environment.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Policy CP22 will deliver significant benefits for addressing the causes of climate change, particularly in relation to improving air quality and reducing green house gas emissions. Proposals that are likely to result in a degradation of air quality and increased air pollution will only be permitted where sufficient measures are put in place to mitigate the impact and improve air quality.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The protection of water and soil resources is a key component of this policy. Proposals for development will only be acceptable where there is no adverse impact on water bodies and groundwater resources in terms of quality, quantity and important ecological features they support. Policy CP22 also supports the re development of contaminated land where remedial measures can be identified and successfully implemented.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals that are likely to result in exposure to risk of safety will only be permitted if measures can be implemented to mitigate the risk, providing a high standard of safety for protection of environmental quality and amenity. This will include measures to reduce flood risk.</td>
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</table>

| Biodiversity will be conserved and enhanced through this policy, particularly through the protection of water resources and air quality. Proposals will only be acceptable where there is no adverse impact on water resources and the ecological features they support. Air quality is important in relation to the conservation of habitats, particularly Special Areas of Conservation. The management of air quality in the District will ensure that the quality of these sensitive environments is supported. |

| Landscape character and historic environment will be protected and enhanced through Policy CP22, particularly in relation to reducing the potential impacts of artificial light and noise. The tranquillity of the area is an important element of landscape character and reducing the impact of noise in areas where it would cause unacceptable nuisance will be positive preserving this feature of the landscape. The installation of external lighting and proposals for remote rural buildings will only be permitted where it would not have a detrimental impact on the character of a settlement or the wider countryside. |

| The quality of the natural environment is a key driver in supporting the local economy and maintaining the vitality of the District. Protection of the local environment will ensure that people are attracted to the district, providing local labour and supporting local businesses. There may also be some additional job opportunities associated with new waste management facilities. |

| Proposals for business development in the District must demonstrate that environmental impact is minimised. This does not preclude economic development from taking place but it will restrict the location of development in the District if it is likely to cause environmental harm. Protection of the natural environment is important in sustaining the tourism sector in West Oxfordshire. |

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The natural environment is a key asset in West Oxfordshire, making the District an attractive place to live, work and visit. The protection and enhancement of the environment is an important factor in delivering significant benefits to biodiversity, landscape and quality of life. This policy ensures that the degradation of key elements within the natural environment including air and water quality is prevented and improved where possible through the implementation of management plans.

Business as Usual Scenario
The NPPF provides a range of policy guidance to ensure that the environmental impacts of development are managed effectively and that existing environmental conditions do not impact negatively in new development. However, it is considered that these issues are of significant local importance and therefore warrant policy consideration through the Local Plan.

Mitigation:
Ensure that all development incorporates the use of sustainable design and construction methods and that opportunities for the use of sustainable transport are promoted, to ensure that objectives for environmental protection are realised.
## Policy Number CP23: Historic Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The protection of the high quality environment in West Oxfordshire will have benefits for the health and well being of communities by ensuring that the settlements and countryside of the district remain attractive places to live, contributing to the overall quality of life in local communities.</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The historic character of the district is an important factor in promoting thriving and inclusive communities by maintaining the vitality of towns and villages. The character and distinctiveness West Oxfordshire attract people to live and work in the district and the retention of historic features will ensure that the towns, villages and countryside of the area continue to attract people. The policy will also help to ensure continued and improved access to cultural facilities in the form of various heritage assets, in accordance with this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The efficiency of land use where development is permitted, will be guided by the historic and landscape character of the area, potentially resulting in lower density development than would otherwise be desirable, in order to protect the historic character of an area.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The protection of the historic environment could prevent the development of low carbon energy sources as their implementation could detract for the historic qualities of the landscape and townscape. Historic buildings in the district are unlikely to have been constructed to the highest standards of sustainable design and construction and are therefore likely to be less energy efficient than modern dwellings.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<td>9</td>
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West Oxfordshire District Council
| 13 | Biodiversity and geodiversity in the district make an important contribution to the historic character of West Oxfordshire, particularly the presence of protected habitats such as ancient woodlands and water courses within or in close proximity to settlements. The quality of the natural environment is of significant importance in defining the overall historic character of the area and as such, habitats that contribute to the character and setting of historic areas will be protected through this and other relevant policies. | + |
| 14 | Policy CP23 delivers significant positive impacts against all elements of this sustainability objective by ensuring that all development proposals secure the preservation, conservation and enhancement of the special character and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire’s historic environment. | ++ |
| 15 | The historic character of the district is an important factor in supporting vibrant market towns and a sustainable rural economy, particularly in terms of attracting visitors to the district and making West Oxfordshire an attractive place to live. This has positive implications for local employment as rural tourism is a significant source of employment in the district. | + |
| 16 | The protection of historic assets in the district does not preclude economic development from taking place although the need for development and the protection of the historic assets must be sufficiently balanced. The historic character contributes greatly to the high quality of the environment which may attract new businesses and investment into the area. | + |

**Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects**

The conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is a key factor in meeting sustainability objectives for the health and well being of communities and supporting the local economy, particularly in relation to the local tourist industry. Policies to protect the character of historic areas may be restrictive in terms of enabling the development of renewable energy generators in the district.

**Business as Usual Scenario**

The protection and enhancement of the historic environment is currently guided by the built environment policies in the Local Plan 2011 which have proven effective in protecting the historic character and distinctiveness of the District. In the absence of CP23, historic assets in the District will be at risk of harm either as a direct result of development or as a result of development affecting the setting of a historic asset.

**Mitigation:**

The effective application of design policies and the use of design guidance such as the landscape character assessments will ensure that low carbon energy sources are located suitably and that where they are considered appropriate, they are assimilated effectively into the historic environment.
## Policy Number CP24: Transport and Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
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<th>SA Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The health and well being of communities will be improved by giving priority to development in areas with convenient access to a reasonable range of services and facilities including healthcare. Healthy and active lifestyles will be encouraged by improving cycling and walking infrastructure.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The vitality of town centres is promoted through the ongoing provision of sufficient car parking, to attract people into local service centres from the rural areas of the District. Much of the social exclusion that exists in the district relates to access to services and facilities and improved public transport accessibility will ensure that people, particularly in rural areas are able to access the more comprehensive provision in Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. Additional cycling and walking infrastructure will provide new opportunities for leisure and recreation in accordance with this objective.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improvements to the transport and movement network will ensure that people in all parts of the District have safe and convenient access to education and training opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Policy CP24 will deliver significant positive outcomes for all elements of this sustainability objective by reducing the need to travel, improving accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, reducing congestion and improving accessibility by car throughout the district.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Priority will be given to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a reasonable range of services and facilities. This would normally be in close proximity to the main service centres of the District, thus reducing the extent to which development is dispersed throughout the wider countryside.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A key aim of this policy is to reduce pollution and improve air quality by reducing the need to travel, improving the flow of traffic movements and improving accessibility by sustainable modes of transport. If successfully implemented, this policy will deliver significant positive outcomes against this sustainability objective.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This policy will help to reduce the volume of greenhouse gas emissions arising from road transport by reducing the need to travel and by promoting the use of sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.</td>
<td>++</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Environmental improvements such as better air quality will have positive implications for the quality and health of biodiversity and natural habitats in the district, particularly those areas that are sensitive to changes in air quality.

Improvements to transport and movement within the District will generally have positive implications for the landscape and historic character of the district by improving the overall environmental quality of the area and reducing congestion in historic settlements. There is a significant amount of pressure on historic river crossings in the District. Transport improvements would include the provision of new river crossings, helping to alleviate the pressure on these crossings and reduce congestion in town centres.

Improving the movement of transport between West Oxfordshire and major conurbations in close proximity to the district such as Swindon and Oxford may encourage residents to continue commuting to job opportunities outside of the area. Conversely, reductions in traffic congestion within the district may attract new employers into the district, providing a range of employment opportunities appropriate to the skills of the community. Either way, the high and stable employment rates currently experienced in the district will be maintained.

The limited capacity on the local road network and significant levels of congestion in parts of the district are major constraining factors in attracting new, competitive business sectors to the District. Improvements to transport and movement within the district and beyond to locations such as Swindon and Oxford will help promote economic growth and competitiveness within West Oxfordshire.

Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The capacity of the local road network is one of the main constraints to growth in West Oxfordshire and as a result, improving the local transport network scores positively against the majority of sustainability objectives delivering significant positive outcomes for the local economy, air quality and improving the health and well being of local communities.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without the implementation of transport and infrastructure improvements, existing problems of traffic congestion and poor air quality may worsen. Although WODC has limited responsibility for transport infrastructure, Policy CP24 will ensure that development in the District makes a contribution to the delivery of transport infrastructure improvements in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Mitigation:
Travel plans must be submitted where development would have a significant transport impact individually and cumulatively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The strategy for the Witney sub-area aims to deliver at least 1,900 dwellings through the duration of the Local Plan comprising a mixture of affordable and market housing and accommodation to meet specific local needs such as extra care housing. A significant proportion of this will be delivered through a strategic development area of approximately 1,000 dwellings to the West of Witney and a strategic development of 300 dwellings at East Witney. Significant increases in housing supply will help to address housing need in the District and facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This policy ensures that new development makes a contribution to the provision of necessary supporting infrastructure including education, health and green infrastructure. As Witney is the main service centre in West Oxfordshire, it has the greatest level of provision to support the health and well being of local communities. It is also the most accessible location for a large proportion of the District’s population. The enhancement of public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes will reduce the reliance on private transport for shorter journeys and promote healthier and active lifestyles. Active lifestyles will be further supported through partnership working in the Lower Windrush Valley Area to deliver long term recreational and leisure benefits for the community, and improved access to the countryside.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social exclusion will be addressed to a degree with the provision of affordable housing in the sub-area, meeting the housing needs of local people. Much of the social exclusion in the district relates to access to services and facilities and improved access to Witney will enable people from surrounding villages to access the good quality provision in the town centre. The vitality of town and village centres in the sub area will be supported by the delivery of necessary supporting infrastructure through new development. Witney is a primary leisure, recreation and cultural centre in the District and beyond and the policy aims to protect and enhance the special qualities that make the Witney sub-area an attractive destination for cultural, leisure and recreation activity.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The policy ensures that new development in the sub-area makes a contribution to the appropriate and timely provision of necessary supporting infrastructure including new education, health, green infrastructure and other community facilities. The development of large scale strategic development areas in particular will make a valuable contribution to such community infrastructure. Expansion and modernisation of employment opportunities in the district will help to develop and retain skills in the District and attract further inward investment in key sectors.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The key aim of this policy is to deliver a significant level of housing growth in the District which will lead to the creation of new communities and expansion of existing residential areas in the sub-area. No reference is made to designing out crime in the development of new residential areas although this is likely to be covered through specific design policies for the District. Investment in the public realm should ensure that these areas remain safe and welcoming. Further expansion of development in the sub-area is likely to lead to the creation of more diverse communities and measures should be taken to ensure that they remain safe and supportive. The provision of appropriate community facilities to support new development will go some way to addressing this issue.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 6 | The Witney sub-area is currently one of the most accessible parts of the District with Witney town centre in particular being the focus of much of the district’s public transport. Accessibility will be improved through transport infrastructure improvements such as road and junction improvements. The protection and enhancement of existing services and facilities and the provision of new community infrastructure to support new development will ensure that essential services are accessible by a large proportion of the District’s population. Enhanced walking, cycling and public transport provision will ensure that services are accessible by sustainable means. |

| 7 | Focussing a large proportion of the District’s housing growth in the Witney sub-area will reduce the extent to which housing growth is distributed throughout the District, although the scale of housing growth proposed for the sub-area will require a significant area of greenfield land to accommodate it. The use of appropriate densities of development will help to ensure that where Greenfield land is needed, development makes the most efficient use of the land having regard to the character of the area. The retention and modernisation of existing employment sites will reduce the need for further employment provision and will maximise the use of previously developed land. |

| 8 | Significant expansion in housing and employment development and increased population size in the District have the potential to create more waste, both through construction and development as well as by products of daily life. New development will be sustainably designed and constructed in conformity with CP4, although a positive score against this sustainability objective is dependent on the effective application of these policies. |

| 9 | Traffic congestion and road capacity are constraints to growth in the sub area and further residential and employment development within the sub-area will increase the number of vehicle movements. Witney town centre will remain the primary focus for most of the District’s service provision and increased demand for these services could have negative implications for the Air Quality Management Area unless appropriate mitigation is put into place. Provisions are made through this policy to improve sustainable access and land is protected to facilitate strategic road infrastructure improvements which recent modelling suggests will help to reduce the impact of new development at Witney and encourage fewer vehicles to travel through the more congested central area of the town. The availability of funding is vital to ensuring that transport infrastructure improvements are implemented and provision will be sought through new development as appropriate. |
| 10  | Focussing development in and around Witney will reduce the need to travel long distances for local residents to access services and facilities, as Witney is the primary focus for much of this provision. The significant increase in local housing development has the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions unless sustainable design and construction techniques are used in the development and the location of new development is such that the need to travel is reduced or alternatives to the car are provided. Requirements for sustainable design and construction are included in CP4 but positive outcomes against this sustainability objective are very much dependent on the effective implementation of these policies. | +/- |
| 11  | The greatest impact arising from this policy will be on the countryside at the edge of Witney where much of the strategic housing development will be taking place. There are no significant issues relating to soil or water quality in these areas that would be affected by the introduction of new development. The proposed strategic allocations at East and West Witney do not affect land of particularly high agricultural quality. | +/- |
| 12  | Specific reference is made in this policy to the avoidance of development which will be at risk or increase the risk of flooding. The importance of partnership working is highlighted to deliver flood mitigation measures. Such measures are highly important in the Witney sub-area as it is of significant risk of flooding, as demonstrated by the 2007 flood events. | + |
| 13  | Biodiversity protection and enhancements will be delivered through ongoing partnership work in relation to the Lower Windrush Valley Project and the Windrush in Witney project. The maintenance and enhancement of these managed areas will have positive nature conservation impacts. | + |
| 14  | The protection of the market town character and setting of Witney, neighbouring villages and the Windrush valley are important requirements of this policy to protect and enhance the intrinsic landscape quality, historic character and cultural value of the area. Specific reference is made to the protection and enhancement of Church Green which is of particular importance. These safeguards are important if large scale development is going to assimilate into the sub-area effectively. | + |
| 15  | The policy seeks to deliver the expansion of employment opportunities in the town through the retention and modernisation of existing sites, development of remaining employment land and further provision of employment land to enable business expansion, relocation and inward investment. This will make a vital contribution to the provision of employment opportunities within the District, potentially reducing the level of out commuting to neighbouring conurbations. The continued focus of retail and services within the main town of Witney will support the role of the town within the wider rural economy and support its ongoing vitality. | ++ |
| 16  | Witney is the main economic centre in the District providing a wide range of employment opportunities in manufacturing, engineering, technology and tourism. The provision of high quality employment sites in the sub area has attracted significant inward investment with some growth experienced in the health care sector. The modernisation of growth of these sites will attract new and related businesses to locate in the District. The availability of a highly skilled local workforce will support local enterprise and innovation and attract competitive business sectors. Enhanced employment opportunities at the local level will reduce the level of out-commuting to neighbouring conurbations. | ++ |
### Summary of Significant Effects

The Witney sub-area strategy is a key element of the overall strategy for the District as it guides the development of a significant proportion of the overall future growth for West Oxfordshire. As a result, the policy scores well against objectives for the promotion of thriving and inclusive communities, improving health and well being and addressing housing needs. The policy also scores well against objectives for economic growth and competitiveness, by protecting existing employment sites and supporting the development of new sites, to meet the needs of new and existing businesses in the District. One of the major constraints to growth in the Witney sub-area is the capacity of the road network to accommodate more growth. Significant improvements must be delivered to strategic transport infrastructure to ensure that increased development in and around the main town does not further exacerbate problems of road traffic congestion and air quality and degrade the quality of life for existing communities.

### Business as Usual

Witney will remain the main focus for growth due to the significant level of housing demand in the sub area. Without the allocation of the two strategic housing sites, development is likely to come forward in a more dispersed manner on less suitable, sustainable sites and may not deliver the required supporting infrastructure. Continued growth in the town without the necessary supporting infrastructure, particularly road improvements is likely to exacerbate existing problems of congestion and poor air quality. Without the expansion of employment sites in the sub area, residential development will not be balanced with the provision of employment opportunities and this could lead to an increase in the number of people commuting out of the district to work.

### Mitigation

Ensure that any new development within the Witney sub area is accompanied by sufficient supporting infrastructure, particularly road transport improvements, to mitigate the impacts on road traffic congestion and associated problems with air quality. Ensure that new development particularly of a strategic scale has regard to the protection and enhancement of the market town character.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Policy Number CP26: Witney Town Centre Strategy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</strong></th>
<th><strong>SA Score</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SA Objective</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Although the role of the town centre is predominantly the provision of retail and community services and facilities, there is also some residential provision. This policy focuses primarily on the commercial and community facilities and makes no provision for the protection and delivery of town centre residential development. The policy could be amended to include reference to the provision of mixed-use development (including residential) in appropriate locations.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The focus of community facilities within Witney town centre will ensure that they remain accessible to a large proportion of the Districts population via sustainable means. The creation of an attractive environment for people to walk and cycle will encourage people to access town centre services without relying on private transport and supporting healthy and active lifestyles.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The primary aim of this policy is to protect and enhance the vitality of Witney Town Centre. The area has responded well to the recession with low shop vacancy rates and continues to be the main focus for retail, cultural and leisure activities within the District. Policy CP26 ensures that the individual elements that have contributed to the success of the town centre are capitalised on, with the designation of the primary shopping frontage intended to retain retail uses in the central shopping core, a more flexible mix of uses in the secondary frontages, measures to protect the historic market town character and the effective management of parking so that the centre remains accessible and attractive.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Enhancing the public realm and making the town centre an attractive place for pedestrians and cyclists will include elements of street lighting and furniture which will contribute to perceptions of public safety within the town. Increasing opportunities for mixed-use development to provide activity throughout the day and night would have a further positive impact.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Town centre accessibility will be maintained by the effective management of parking which has been key in the ongoing success of the town through challenging economic times. Town centre provision of community facilities and retail ensures that it remains accessible by a range of sustainable means and by the largest proportion of local residents.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>In guiding new retail development towards the town centre as a priority, the policy will help to ensure the re-use of previously developed and limit urban sprawl in response to commercial development needs.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Appropriate servicing and waste collection arrangements will be made to maintain a high quality environment within the town centre.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<td>Page</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The most significant constraint to ongoing development within Witney town centre and attracting greater numbers of people into the area is the capacity of the road network and the quality of the town centre air quality, particularly towards Bridge Street. Without the provision of appropriate strategic transport infrastructure to address the level of traffic accessing the town centre, problems of congestion and air quality will be exacerbated. It is anticipated that the impact of new development both within and on the fringe of the town will be mitigated through the provision of various highway improvements as well as increasing opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The centralised provision of retail and community facilities within the town centre makes them accessible by sustainable means and reduces the need to travel long distances for a large number of people, particularly those living in Witney. Much of the development within the town centre is historic in nature and is unlikely to be built to the highest standards of sustainable construction although there may be opportunities to retrofit sustainable energy and water efficiency measures. Parts of the town centre are at risk of flooding due to the close proximity of the River Windrush and this risk may increase in the future in response to climate change. These issues may be addressed by greater reference to them in the policy with requirements to energy efficiency and climate change mitigation measures although these issues are already covered to a large extent by other policies.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Focussing development within the town centre will reduce the pressure on the surrounding countryside to accommodate development, thereby protecting soil and water resources.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Parts of the town centre are within an area of flood risk due to the proximity of the River Windrush. There is no reference to the need for flood risk mitigation measures in this policy although retail uses are likely to be more acceptable in this location in accordance with the sequential test applied to flood risk. Reference is made to flood risk mitigation in the overall policy for the Witney sub-area.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Focussing development within the town centre will reduce the pressure on environmentally sensitive areas.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Witney town centre retains much of its historic character as a commercial and community centre. This policy aims to maintain and enhance those elements of the historic core that make Witney such an attractive location for leisure, retail and cultural activities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Maintaining Witney town centre as the primary focus for commercial and community activity in West Oxfordshire will support the vitality of the market town and continue to support a range of employment opportunities in the town, particularly in the retail and tourism sectors. The policy allows for the creation of new job opportunities associated with new town centre development such as retail and leisure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The centralised provision of services and facilities in Witney give the town a key role in supporting sustainable tourism in the District as an accessible location, supporting the needs of surrounding rural settlements. The ready availability of key services and facilities also makes Witney an attractive location for business development and continues to play a key role in attracting investment to the area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Significant Effects
Policy CP26 will continue to enhance the role of Witney town centre as the primary service centre for the District, delivering significant positive sustainability impacts for a range of objectives, including the promotion of sustainable economic growth and competitiveness, improved access to all services and facilities and promoting thriving and inclusive communities. There is potential however, for further development within the town centre to exacerbate existing problems of traffic congestion and associated air quality, unless mitigated through necessary improvements to transport infrastructure.

Business as Usual
Without a clear town centre strategy in place there may be pressure for town centre uses to come forward on less sustainable sites outside of the town centre thereby potentially undermining its vitality and viability. Although some safeguards are provided by the NPPF, it is considered important to set out a clear local strategy for how Witney Town Centre will be taken forward.

Mitigation
Further town centre development must be accompanied by sufficient supporting infrastructure, to mitigate the potential negative impacts on town centre traffic congestion and air quality.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Witney Strategic Development Area will deliver approximately 1000 new dwellings including affordable housing and homes to meet a specific local need such as extra care housing. The policy stipulates that the developer should demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction methods thereby scoring positively against this objective.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The town centre is relatively distant thereby potentially increasing reliance on private transport, however the site is close to a good network of footpaths and cycleways and the permeability of the area through to key services and facilities is excellent. This will encourage people to walk and cycle to access key local services. Improvements to local green infrastructure including enhanced footpaths and cycleways will also serve to benefit the health and well being of local residents.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The proposed development is predominantly residential but will also include a local centre and primary school with potential for a secondary school if needed to support future growth. The location of the site means that it would support existing employment areas to the north of the site. The scale of the development presents the opportunity to create a new sustainable mixed and inclusive community well integrated with the existing built area of the town.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The delivery of a new primary school and potential secondary school in the area will make a valuable contribution to educational infrastructure in the town.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This is a detailed development design and site layout issue although the mixed-use nature of the proposal presents a good opportunity to provide natural surveillance throughout all hours.</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The site is relatively distant from the town centre, indoor recreation facilities and secondary education although there are a range of services and facilities at Edington Square that are within walking and cycling distance of the site.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The site is located in close proximity to the 233 bus route linking the area with the town centre and diversion of the premium S1 bus service will provide very good public transport access to Carterton, Oxford and Witney town centre. The provision of a new local centre will help to provide for the needs of new residents and those in close proximity to the site.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Although the site is Greenfield in nature, the majority of development in this area will be built at a density of 35-45 dwellings per hectare which is considered to represent an efficient use of the site. Further expansion is limited by surrounding development and the A40. Downs Road also forms a natural limit to the site with higher, more exposed land to the west forming an important landscape and visual buffer to Minster Lovell.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Proposals in this area will be required to demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction methods which will include measures to promote and facilitate the recycling of waste.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Development of the scale proposed will clearly have an impact in terms of the number of car movements being made in and around Witney. However, a pre-requisite of the development is to deliver the A40/Down’s Road junction which in combination with other proposed transport improvements will help to mitigate the impact and reduce traffic congestion in the central parts of the town by encouraging traffic to use the A40 as an alternative option. Importantly, travel by sustainable modes will be encouraged through the development of a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes and diversion of a premium bus service into the site.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Clearly development of the scale proposed will have an impact in terms of emissions and potential climate change. However, the energy and water efficiency of development will be promoted through the use of sustainable design and construction methods and the use of SUDs will help to mitigate the impacts of climate change including increased surface run off caused by the development. Locating new development close to existing employment opportunities and the provision of local community and retail facilities will reduce the need to travel.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The site is predominantly comprised of Grade 3 agricultural land with some woodland although this will not present a constraint to development in the area. There are no known issues of water quality in the area and the Environment Agency has not raised any objections to the development of the land. An oil spill and filled quarry have potential for contamination but these are over small areas and any contamimation could be remediated to make the site suitable for residential use.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is therefore sequentially preferable to other options in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Surface water from the proposed development will be directed to sustainable drainage systems and a flood alleviation pond has been proposed upstream of the Main Road culvert to alleviate flood risk issues in Curbridge.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No part of the site is subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designation and the only protected species records relate to badgers in 1999 and 2005. Neither Natural England nor the Environment Agency have objected to development of the site although clearer information on the potential impact on Port Meadow SAC has been requested. This is applicable to all strategic development and is unlikely to constrain development in this location. A separate HRA report has been made available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>There are no known heritage assets that would be directly affected by development in this location and a programme of archaeological investigation has not revealed the presence of any important features. The majority of the site is of moderate to low landscape sensitivity. Along the Curbridge Road the sensitivity of the area has already been compromised by the presence of the A40 and other development but provides a landscape buffer between Witney and Curbridge. Development will be acceptable in landscape and visual terms, subject to a number of landscape design objectives.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The development will include the provision of significant new employment opportunities to maximise job creation including a minimum of 10 hectares of land primarily for business and general industrial use. This will have a significant positive impact on local employment and the local economy by balancing residential development with job opportunities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the residential aspect of the development, 10ha of land has been proposed for employment purposes, thereby generating significant potential for inward investment and job creation. The location of the site and the delivery of the A40 junction will also strongly support the existing employment areas to the north of the site.

**Summary of Significant Effects**
The strategic development site to the West of Witney will deliver a range of positive sustainability outcomes, primarily as a result of the on site delivery of much of the supporting infrastructure required, including educational provision and green infrastructure. Less positive sustainability impacts relate to potential environmental impacts however these are not considered to be significant constraints to development and would apply to any large scale Greenfield development. The development also presents the opportunity for a number of major positive improvements including the provision of new green infrastructure as an integral part of the development.

**Business as Usual**
Improvements to the Downs Road / A40 junction are largely dependant on the development of this site so it is uncertain how these could come forward without developer contributions from this strategic development area. Without this strategic allocation, it will be necessary to identify sufficient land elsewhere in the town to accommodate 1000 houses which could prove difficult to deliver given the environmental constraints that apply to the other main option for large scale growth to the north.

**Mitigation**
The potential environmental impacts that have been identified in the appraisal will be mitigated by the effective implementation of this policy and the more general environment and heritage assets policies elsewhere in the Local Plan. It is not possible to mitigate against the loss of greenfield land due to the shortage of appropriate brownfield sites that are available for development, although it is possible to ensure that the new development integrates effectively with the existing settlement and makes the most efficient use of the land that is being used for development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>The policy will enable the delivery of around 300 new homes which will include a proportion of affordable housing, the current target for Witney set out in the draft Local Plan being 40%. The policy stipulates that any development will need to demonstrate sustainable design and construction methods. The policy also stipulates that a mix of housing should be provided to meet the current and future needs of the community.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>The location of the site provides the opportunity to integrate with existing communities at Cogges. The site is relatively limited in size although there is the potential to provide some additional community facilities. Good connections to existing pedestrian and cycle routes mean that the sites benefit from sustainable access to a wide range of services and facilities including GP surgery, leisure facilities and the town centre. Potential provision of improved pedestrian links has the potential to further improve access to local facilities. There is likely to be some amenity impact arising from noise generated by traffic on the A40 which will require mitigation through appropriate design and layout.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>The development of this site will provide a range of beneficial assets to the local community to address social exclusion and increase the vitality of town and village centres and communities. The delivery of the SGSR will draw some traffic away from the most sensitive parts of the local road network which will have beneficial impacts and improved sustainable access to the town centre via pedestrian and cycle links over the River Windrush will encourage people to access employment and a range of services and facilities by means other than the private car thus, supporting more healthy and active lifestyles. The proximity of the site to Witney Town Centre will lend positive support to maintaining its vitality and viability.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Nearby schools are at capacity so development in this location would be required to contribute towards increasing capacity in the local area. Although the developer has indicated that land would be set aside for a primary school, development of the scale proposed would not warrant on-site provision. Good accessibility to existing secondary schools although a contribution to secondary school provision would be sought from development in this location.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>This is a detailed site layout and development design consideration.</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Rating</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The site has good access by all modes of transport to GP surgeries and excellent access by walking and cycling to the town centre, supermarkets and educational facilities. There are opportunities associated with the site to deliver additional access across the River Windrush to the Station Lane area of town. The site may be served by an extended local bus service and is in close proximity to the S1 and S2 premium bus routes linking Witney with Carterton and Oxford.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The development will involve the use of greenfield land although building will be confined to land below the 95m contour thus limiting the extent of built development across the whole of the site in order to minimise the landscape impact. The proposed number of dwellings would represent an efficient use of the site.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Proposals in this area will demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction methods which will include measures to promote and facilitate the recycling of waste.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strategic scale development in this location would create some additional pressure on the local road network. The policy therefore requires that any new development would need to be complimented by sufficient improvements to transport infrastructure to mitigate the potential impact of development and improve road traffic conditions in the local area. The development will for example be required to deliver the SGSR which recent transport modelling suggests will, in combination with the proposed Down’s Road junction, help to draw traffic away from the Town Centre and the Air Quality Management Area as people choose to use the A40 for cross town and long-distance trips instead of travelling through the town centre unnecessarily. Further improvements to junctions throughout the town will be required to improve the flow of traffic in all areas.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Development in this location will incorporate high standards of sustainable building design and construction and will promote energy and resource efficiency with buildings sited and orientated to maximise solar gain. A commitment to providing 10% of on-site energy use from renewable sources has been suggested with the prospect of a community heating scheme. The proximity of the site to the Town Centre will help to reduce the need to travel including by car. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk from fluvial flooding associated with climate change.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Environment Agency maps indicate the presence of secondary aquifers in the area. The presence of such aquifers does not preclude development from taking place although special care needs to be taken in selecting appropriate SUDs techniques. There are no records of land contamination or ground stability issues in this area.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and therefore performs well in terms of the sequential test to selecting development sites. The slope of the land however and the potential for increased hard surfacing may result in increased flood risk to existing development without the incorporation of appropriate SUDs measures.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No part of the site is subject to any formal protected biodiversity status although there are records of badgers on site. The site is comprised of semi-improved grassland and arable land with intact, species rich hedgerows present in the area. The site is located in close proximity to the Lower Windrush Valley project area and may therefore deliver biodiversity enhancements by strengthening the green infrastructure network through the creation of the community woodland as part of the development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The site has been assessed as being an area of landscape importance and sensitivity. There is high landscape intervisibility to the countryside to the south west, west and north with visual connections with the historic cores of Witney and Cogges. Limiting development so that it occupies land only below the 95m contour line as stipulated by the policy, will limit any harmful effect on the landscape and historic character of the area. There is evidence of some historic activity on the site which would need to be considered further. Key views would also need to be retained and this could be included as a requirement of the policy to strengthen it further. +/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The scale of development proposed limits the potential to provide new business land and the site promoter is suggesting residential development only. The sites do however enjoy good access to local employment opportunities in the town centre which could be further enhanced through improved pedestrian linkages. Access to other employment opportunities in the town will also be enhanced through the introduction of highways improvements such as the SGSR. +/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The proposed scale of development means that it will be a residential led scheme without any further provision of employment land, however the development of new housing and delivery of affordable houses will improve the local labour supply, by ensuring that the local working age population has access to decent accommodation, thereby helping to retain working age people in the district. A strong local labour force is a key determinant in attracting competitive business sectors to locate in West Oxfordshire. +/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Significant Effects**

The development of the East Witney SDA is likely to deliver generally positive outcomes, particularly in relation to the creation of thriving, mixed communities, due to its location and proximity to a wide range of existing services and facilities. Potential negative outcomes relate to the impact on the historic and natural environment in terms of landscape and biodiversity and it will be important that such issues are addressed through any development of the site. The development will increase traffic however in delivering the Shores Green improvements, there should be an overall positive impact as traffic is drawn away from the town centre. The scale of the site means new business land does not form part of the proposals however the location of the site ensures it will support existing employment areas nearby.

**Business as Usual**

Without development in this location, the necessary improvements to Shore’s Green are unlikely to be delivered and problems of traffic congestion in Witney are likely to persist. The site would also fail to make a contribution to the delivery of new housing to meet local needs including affordable housing.

**Mitigation**

In order to mitigate the impact of development the extent of the developable area should be restricted to below the 95m contour line. In order to mitigate the impact of extra traffic generated by new development in this area, new highways improvements will need to be provided including the Shores Green Slip Roads scheme.
### Policy Number CP29: Carterton Sub-Area Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Carterton sub-area will accommodate a large proportion of the District’s total housing target with approximately 1,850 dwellings, comprising a mixture of affordable and market housing and provision to meet specific local needs including extra care housing. Areas of sub-standard MOD housing will be replaced by high quality residential development making a positive contribution to the town. Around 700 new homes including affordable housing will be delivered on land to the east of the town.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conditions throughout the town will continue to be improved for walking and cycling, to encourage people to engage in healthy and active lifestyles. New and improved community facilities will be delivered through new development, to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the health and well being of communities. The provision of improved green infrastructure will facilitate access to the countryside.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Policy CP29 seeks to ensure that new development satisfactorily accommodates the needs of the local military community alongside the civilian community. This is important in sustaining an inclusive community in the Carterton sub-area. Carterton has a relatively small town centre for its size, primarily serving a convenience and service role. This policy aims to strengthen the role of Carterton town centre with new and refurbished retail opportunities. All new development should make a contribution to the necessary social infrastructure and local leisure provision, further supporting thriving and inclusive communities.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New development in the sub-area will contribute to the provision of social infrastructure to support the local community, including the delivery of any educational improvements required.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No direct impact although the promotion of a stronger town centre could increase activity throughout the day thereby having a positive impact. Uncertain at this stage however.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The focus for the majority of growth and additional service provision in the sub-area will be Carterton as this remains the most accessible location for the majority of the population via sustainable modes of transport. Any new service provision outside of the main town will be steered towards the rural service centres and larger villages where it will meet local community and business needs. New development will support the provision of necessary community infrastructure. Traffic congestion in the area will be addressed by working in partnership with the highway authority and Town Council to improve connections between Carterton and the primary road network.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The regeneration and replacement of old MOD housing stock will make a valuable contribution to meeting the local housing target using previously developed land. The release of greenfield land will still be required to accommodate the required level of housing growth. It will be important that the density of development makes the most efficient use of Greenfield land that is used.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Significant expansion in housing and employment development and increased population size in the District have the potential to create more waste, both through construction and development as well as by products of daily life. New development will be sustainably designed and constructed in line with other Local Plan policies although a positive score against this sustainability objective is dependent on the effective application of these policies.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Traffic congestion and air quality are not issues of major concern in this location. However, improving the network of local footpaths and cycle links will encourage people to travel by sustainable means thereby having a positive impact. The level of growth proposed for the area could counterbalance these improvements however, and it will be essential to deliver the necessary transport improvements in the local area as stipulated by the policy.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Focussing development in and around Carterton will reduce the need to travel long distances for local residents to access services and facilities, as Carterton is the primary focus for much of this provision. The significant increase in local housing development has the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions unless sustainable design and construction techniques are used in the development. Requirements for sustainable design and construction are included in the overall strategy, but positive outcomes against this sustainability objective are dependent on the effective implementation of these policies. The policy stipulates that due regard must be had to issues of biodiversity and flood risk both key elements of climate change.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Partnership working is supported through this policy, particularly with the River Thames Alliance to protect and enhance the ecological, landscape and heritage value of the River Thames. There are unlikely to be any significant harm to soil or water resources in the area although the presence of aquifers in the Carterton area suggest that significant care should be taken in the use of SUDs.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Specific reference is made through this policy to the avoidance of development that will increase flood risk and the need to work with partners such as the Environment Agency to deliver flood mitigation measures. Much of the area in and around Carterton was affected by the flood events of 2007 so flooding is a particular issue that needs close regard in considering new development.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The protection and enhancement of the biodiversity and recreation value of the Shill Brook is a key element of this policy as is partnership working with the River Thames Alliance to protect the ecological and heritage value of the River Thames. The biodiversity and geodiversity of the land surrounding Carterton has been a key consideration in determining appropriate locations for strategic scale housing growth in the sub area. New development outside of the main town should also have regard to the biodiversity value of sites although this policy does not reiterate this. Significant positive outcomes in relation to this sustainability objective will be dependent on the application of other relevant policies contained within the Local Plan.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The expansion of Carterton carries some risk in relation to the impact on the historic character of settlements surrounding the town, including Brize Norton and Shilton. Any potential harm will be mitigated by the establishment of landscape buffer zones, which will prevent the growth of the main town from encroaching on neighbouring settlements. The historic character of the smaller settlements in the sub area will be protected by only permitting small scale development appropriate to the needs of the community. The design of new development is guided by relevant policies throughout the Local Plan, although the policy could be strengthened by including specific reference to the need to take account of landscape character.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15 The MOD is a major employer in the sub area and this policy seeks to ensure that the ongoing needs of RAF Brize Norton are met to enable effective operations in the area. Supporting the RAF in the area is important as many other businesses within the town depend on business relationships with the base and the military personnel. This policy also seeks to deliver expansion of employment opportunities to meet business needs.

16 The policy seeks to promote a more vibrant town centre which will help to attract investment and also seeks to ensure that sufficient provision is made for business land to meet identified needs. The level of provision will be kept under review. Providing A-road access between Carterton and the A40 is likely to have a significant benefit to the local economy and inward investment in this area.

**Summary of Significant Effects**

This policy makes a significant contribution to the vitality of the Carterton sub-area particularly in relation to promoting thriving and inclusive communities and the delivery of new housing including affordable housing and strengthening Carterton Town Centre. The policy contains sufficient safeguards to ensure that any environmental impact of development is taken into account, although as with any significant housing growth, there is potential for increased traffic generation, which will require appropriate mitigation.

**Business as Usual**

The Carterton Sub-area is planned to accommodate significant housing growth through the period of the Local Plan as one of the most sustainable locations in the District. Without the delivery of sufficient housing in this area, there is potential that the housing targets for the district will not be met and any development that does take place will be dispersed more widely in less sustainable locations. Consolidating the role of Carterton Town centre is largely dependant on a sufficient increase in the size of the population to support improvements to local services and facilities. The planned expansion of Carterton through appropriate core policies will ensure that any potentially negative impacts are managed effectively.

**Mitigation**

Any significant housing growth within the sub area should be accompanied by appropriate transport infrastructure improvements, to ensure that the impact of such development on the local road network is mitigated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Although the town centre is not the primary location for residential development, the policy does make provisions for the delivery of ancillary residential development which will help to contribute towards meeting local needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Carterton town centre will become the local centre of choice for people living and working in the town and surrounding villages. Community services and facilities will be permitted within the town centre where they will be accessible by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The key aim of this policy is to improve the vitality and viability of Carterton town centre through the provision of better retail, leisure and community facilities. The development of a more attractive and distinctive town centre with high quality streetscape is aimed at attracting a greater number of people to use the centre rather than travelling to other nearby centres such as Witney. Supporting the vitality of the town centre in such a way will provide an enhanced range of services in an accessible location for communities in the Carterton sub-area without the need to travel long distances.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No reference is made to the need to ensure town centre safety or the need to address crime or the fear of crime. The integration of residential development into the town however through mixed-use development in appropriate locations will ensure that the centre is occupied all of the time increasing natural surveillance and potentially reducing incidences of crime.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Currently there is a tendency for residents of Carterton to travel elsewhere including Witney to do their main shopping. The provision of improved retail and other associated facilities will help to ensure that a greater proportion of available expenditure is spent in Carterton and that the need to travel to other locations is reduced. The policy also seeks to make improvements for pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with this objective.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The efficient use of land is ensured by targeting development within a defined area within the centre of Carterton. The comprehensive development and re-development within the south west quadrant of the town centre will make effective use of previously developed land in the town for the benefit of the community. Mixed-use development as promoted by the policy including ancillary residential development represents a particularly efficient use of land.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Carterton town centre is not affected by the same traffic congestion and air quality issues as other major centres in the District. Encouraging access via public transport and other sustainable means will continue to ensure that local air quality is maintained and improved although the creation of a more attractive centre is likely to attract more local people into the town and as stipulated by the policy it will be important to provide for alternative modes of transport including walking and cycling.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The provision of a greater range and better quality of town centre services and facilities will reduce the need for local residents to travel outside of the town centre to other local service centres reducing greenhouse gas emissions arising from private transport.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Focussing development within the town centre will reduce the pressure on the surrounding countryside to accommodate development, thereby protecting soil and water resources.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The Carterton town centre strategy aims to create distinctive and attractive shopping frontages incorporating traditional and contemporary design with the use of high quality materials. The quality of the public realm will also be enhanced through landscaping and the retention and planting of trees within the centre.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Enhanced retail and community facilities within Carterton town centre will make an important contribution to the vibrancy of the town and the strength of the local economy. Increased development within the town centre will provide more employment opportunities, particularly in retail services.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>New development in the town centre will provide a wider range of well integrated shops, leisure opportunities public spaces and ancillary town centre facilities. A well designed town centre with a wide range of uses may be a key factor in attracting new businesses to the town, potentially driving enterprise and innovation.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Significant Effects**

The primary purpose of Policy CP30 is to improve the vitality and viability of Carterton town centre through improvements to retail and service provision, as well as enhancements to the public realm and character of the centre. The policy scores generally well against all sustainability objectives, particularly in relation to providing a range of employment opportunities and promoting thriving and inclusive communities. As with other town centres in the District, enhancing the role and improving accessibility to Carterton town centre is likely to encourage more people to access it with potential negative impacts for traffic congestion and air quality which must be mitigated through appropriate improvements for walking, cycling and public transport.

**Business as Usual**

Carterton is not currently fulfilling its potential as a retail and leisure destination and as such, expenditure is leaking to other places including Witney. Without a clear town centre strategy in place this situation is likely to continue. There may also be pressure for new development in inappropriate locations.

**Mitigation**

The transport impact on the town centre needs to be fully taken into account in considering proposals for town centre development, to ensure that the potential impacts of increased traffic are mitigated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The East Carterton development site will provide approximately 700 new dwellings, comprising a mixture of market and affordable housing and accommodation to meet specific local needs including extra care housing. The policy stipulates that any development will need to demonstrate use of sustainable design and construction.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The development will incorporate a range of green spaces to support healthy and active lifestyles in the community including the provision of allotments and public playing fields and an extension of the Kilkenny Lane Country Park. A comprehensive network of footpaths, cycle links and public transport will encourage people to access services and facilities in and around the town via sustainable means. The creation of a local centre within the development will ensure that community facilities are located within direct proximity of new residential development although the town centre and other local facilities are located within convenient walking distance of the site. A potential issue surrounds the level of noise generated by RAF Brize Norton although noise impact assessments indicate that suitable mitigation is able to be provided. The policy stipulates that noise should be addressed through any development in this location.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The site is well related to the existing built up area of Carterton and would provide safe and convenient access to existing services and facilities within the town. Additional services and facilities delivered as a result of development on this site would provide benefits for the immediate and wider community. These will include a mixed use local centre, primary school, sports pitches, allotments and open space. The vitality of Carterton town centre will be supported through the development of a new community that is well integrated with the town. A network of sustainable linkages will be provided to ensure that residents are able to access existing facilities and employment opportunities within the town safely and conveniently. Enhancements to the local green infrastructure network such as the extension to Kilkenny Lane Country Park will provide a range of opportunities for leisure and recreational activity and the developer has also suggested that contributions could be made to improving Carterton leisure centre.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The development will provide a new primary school designed to allow for future potential expansion. The site is also close to other existing facilities including Carterton Community College and would help to support these through the generation of additional pupil numbers.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This is a detailed site layout and development design consideration</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although predominantly residential, the development would also include a mixed use local centre, primary school, sports pitches, allotments and open space for the benefit of the immediate and wider community. The provision of local shopping, community and leisure facilities on site through the creation of a local centre will ensure that the local community has safe and convenient access to a range of services without the need to travel long distances. Access to these facilities will be further enhanced through the development of a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes which will also extend beyond the development area and towards Carterton Town Centre. Minor improvements to the local road network will be required to mitigate the impact of traffic arising from the development.

The site is greenfield however the development of 700 dwellings of this site would represent an efficient use of the land at approximately 34 dwellings per hectare, whilst retaining a degree of separation between the development and Brize Norton village.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction methods which will include measures to promote and facilitate the recycling of waste.

There is capacity on the local road network to accommodate new development in this location although further minor improvements to the local highways network may be required to mitigate the impact of new development. An increase in the overall level of development is likely to bring an increase in the total number of car journeys however the opportunities for sustainable travel presented by the location of the site mean that any impact on local air quality is unlikely to be significant.

Proposals within the area will demonstrate the use of renewable energy and sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings. Such requirements will address the causes of climate change, reducing the levels of greenhouse gas emissions from residential development. The development will also provide appropriate flood risk mitigation measures such as SUDs, taking account of the likely impacts of climate change. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore well placed to withstand potential increases in flood risk associated with climate change. The location of the site is also such that the need to travel will be reduced with good access to the Town Centre by foot and bicycle.

The site is not located within the minerals consultation zone and minerals in this location are uneconomic to extract due to their depth. There is a minor aquifer underlyng the site and it lies within a high groundwater vulnerability zone so careful consideration needs to be given to the use of SUDs in the area. The site is classed as grade 3 (moderate/good) in the agricultural land use classification. The Environment Agency has identified an area of potentially contaminated land in the south east of the site although this is not considered to be a significant issue.

The site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is therefore preferable to sites located in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The eastern boundary of the site is covered by surface water flood risk. Brize Norton village experienced flooding in 2007 and the developer proposes to include ‘flood compensation areas’ to the south west and north west of the development area, to mitigate the effect of increased run-off arising from development.
|   |   | An ecological assessment completed for the site concluded that the site has low biodiversity value apart from the hedgerows on site which should be retained. The site has potential to deliver biodiversity improvements through the extension of the country park and enhancement of the Shill Brook Valley as a contribution to the South Cotswolds Valleys Conservation Target Area. There are no protected species or habitats on site so development will not have a significant impact on biodiversity and geodiversity in the area. | + |
|   |   | The impact of development on the historic and landscape character of the area will be mitigated through landscaping around the edge of the development and the extension of the Kilkenny Lane Country Park. The retention of this landscape buffer will prevent the coalescence of the development with the neighbouring Brize Norton village. The eastern side of the town is comprised of a mixture of modern development at Shilton Park and MOD development at RAF Brize Norton so there is potential to enhance the character of this part of town with well designed development and landscaping. Although the site is visually exposed, it is already subject to a range of urban influences such as the airbase which is in relatively close proximity. | +/- |
|   |   | The location of the site ensures that it would support the nearby employment areas as well as the town centre. In terms of job creation, the development would result in some additional opportunities associated with the proposed local centre. The number of jobs would however depend on the mix and nature of uses. | + |
|   |   | The development of new affordable housing in Carterton will attract young families to live and stay in Carterton supporting the growth of employment and business within the town. | + |
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The East Carterton Strategic Development Area scores generally well against the sustainability objectives for the District, particularly as much of the supporting infrastructure needed will be provided on site as part any development proposal. Policy CP31 will deliver significant positive sustainability outcomes, particularly in relation to meeting housing needs, creating thriving and inclusive communities and supporting the health and well being of residents.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without a clear policy framework in place there is a risk that development in this location is not supported by the appropriate investment in infrastructure and measures to mitigate the impact of development including the provision of a long-term buffer to Brize Norton Village. There may also be pressure for development elsewhere in less sustainable, suitable locations.

Mitigation:
The development should meet high standards of design and layout in order to mitigate the impact on the landscape and the historic character of nearby Brize Norton village. The implementation of the landscape buffer will be critical to minimising potential landscape impact and impact on the setting of Brize Norton village.
**Policy Number CP32: REEMA North and Central Strategic Development Area (SDA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The development of the REEMA sites has potential to increase the housing stock within Carterton by around 400 dwellings (net) and will result in the redevelopment of sub-standard housing in the town. This will result in greater opportunities to live in decent, affordable housing for local communities while improving the quality and mix of housing stock in the town. A range of new dwelling types will be provided.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The REEMA sites are located in close proximity to Carterton Town Centre where a range of community services and facilities will be accessible by sustainable means for local communities including healthcare and other services. Improvements to the existing sub-standard housing stock will have a positive impact on the health and well being of residents in the area and will reduce inequalities in terms of access to decent affordable housing.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The redevelopment of these sites will have a positive impact on the town, revitalising an area of poor quality housing stock and also helping to support the Town Centre. The development of new housing and the refurbishment of existing poor quality units will improve the character of the area and will improve the quality of life and conditions for local residents.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New development within this area will be required to make financial contributions to educational facilities within the town. Although there is some capacity within existing educational establishments within the town, flexibility is needed to cater for service personnel.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This is a detailed design and site layout consideration.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The redevelopment of the REEMA sites will result in residential development in an extremely accessible location within the built up area of Carterton, ensuring that communities benefit from sustainable access to town centre services and facilities. Carterton is also well served by premium bus services linking the town with Oxford and Witney, and providing sustainable access for local residents to higher order goods and services.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The proposed development involves the re-use of previously developed land. The density of new development is likely to be of a higher density than the existing MOD housing on site therefore making more efficient use of the land available.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Proposals will be required to demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction methods which will include measures to promote and facilitate the recycling of waste.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The sustainable, central location of the site will encourage non-car modes of transport thereby helping to reduce congestion arising from car use (although this is not a significant issue in Carterton).</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development in this area will enable local residents to access essential services and facilities by sustainable means, thus reducing the need for private transport. Development will be required to meet at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4, which will ensure that houses are built with higher levels of energy and resource efficiency built in. The use of sustainable drainage systems in the new development is guided by policies elsewhere in the plan. The site is not affected by flooding and is therefore well-placed to withstand the future impacts of climate change. +</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The redevelopment of this site will be on previously developed land, thereby reducing the need for the release of greenfield land on the edge of the settlement to accommodate the necessary housing growth in the town. As an existing area of housing the necessary water and sewerage infrastructure is already in place. Any necessary improvements would need to be provided through the proposed development. ++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The site was affected as a result of ditch flooding following the 2007 flood event. However, measures have been undertaken to ensure that such problems do not re-occur. Importantly, the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is therefore not likely to be affected by fluvial flooding. Any increase in hard surfacing will result in increased run off and sustainable drainage will be needed to mitigate this. The policy stipulates that any development should demonstrate the use of sustainable design and construction. +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The sites are not subject to any formal biodiversity protection designations and as the proposals will make use of previously developed land, it is unlikely that any negative impacts will arise from development in relation to biodiversity or geodiversity ++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Redevelopment of these sites will provide significant enhancements to the quality and character of Carterton as sub standard MOD housing is cleared and replaced with modern residential development. The sites are not covered by any conservation area designations and redevelopment will not adversely affect the setting of any local listed buildings. The sites are within the built up area of Carteron and will therefore have no negative impacts on the landscape setting of the town. ++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The provision of new housing within Carterton will provide greater choice and opportunity for people to live in well constructed and affordable homes in the town. This will ensure that working age people are able to access housing and are more likely to want to remain in the town if the local environment improves. The sites are located in close proximity to local employment opportunities provided at both business parks as well as within the town centre. RAF Brize Norton remains a significant employer within the town. +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Retaining a workforce in the town is key to attracting competitive business sectors to the town. The redevelopment of the REEMA sites will deliver significant improvements to the quality and character of the town attracting younger people to stay in the area. Many specialist manufacturing and engineering companies continue to operate in the area due to the presence of the airbase and associated aviation operations and will continue to do so where there is a ready supply of skilled labour. +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The redevelopment of the REEMA sites has the ability to deliver significant positive impacts across all sustainability objectives, largely due to the central location of the sites and the fact that it is previously developed land. The current condition of the site detracts from the overall quality and character of Carterton and as a result, new high quality buildings will make a positive contribution to the local environment as well as the overall health and well being of local residents. Redevelopment of sites within the town will reduce the need for development on the edge of the settlement, protecting the high quality landscape surrounding the town and the historic character of neighbouring settlements. No negative impacts have been identified through the SA.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without the redevelopment of these sites, further land will need to be identified for housing, which is likely to be located in the countryside at the edge of the settlement, thereby resulting in potentially negative landscape impacts.

Mitigation:
No mitigation necessary other than the requirements of development already stipulated in the policy.
### Policy Number CP33: Chipping Norton Sub-Area Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect / Justification of Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The policy makes provision for around 600 dwellings in the sub area including affordable housing and homes for older people and newly forming households. New housing in the remainder of the sub-area will be permitted to meet local needs and will be steered towards the larger villages.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Protection of the Cotswolds AONB will ensure that there is high quality and accessible countryside in close proximity to residential areas. Chipping Norton town centre will continue to be the main focus for community services and facilities in the sub area providing good access for people within the town and surrounding villages. Some of the larger villages in the sub area also have good provision of community infrastructure but the loss of these facilities is not explicitly resisted through the sub area policy. Provision of good quality services and facilities and accessibility to them by sustainable means is important in supporting the health and well being of local communities.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chipping Norton Town Centre will remain the main focal point the provision of retail and community facilities. The policy for the sub-area seeks to deliver a stronger town centre with new opportunities for retail and community facilities. This will improve the vitality and viability of the town centre and as it is the main focal point for local public transport, will remain accessible for communities elsewhere in the sub-area. Other settlements within the sub-area provide a range of services including schools, post offices and general stores but the policy makes no reference to the protection of these community assets. This is however covered by other general policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The policy seeks to ensure that new development makes appropriate and timely provision for supporting infrastructure such as education. Advice received from Oxfordshire County Council suggests that the proposed level of housing (600) does not warrant the provision of a new school however local primary capacity is tight and housing provision in excess of this is likely to lead to a need for new school provision. This will be a matter for the Neighbourhood Plan to address.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No reference is made to the creation of safe and supportive communities or the need to design out crime through this policy although this issue is covered through the general design policy which will apply to all development in the district.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chipping Norton town centre will continue to be the main focal point for the provision of services and facilities in the sub area where they are easily accessible by most people using sustainable means. Conditions throughout the town will be improved for pedestrians and cyclists to make sustainable transport more attractive. The provision of new services and facilities is supported but no reference is made to the protection of existing community facilities which is a particularly important issue in the rural settlements elsewhere in the sub area. The policy seeks to reduce the impact of through traffic.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Impact</td>
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<td>-----</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Priority is given in this policy to the re-use / re-development of the former health and older people’s accommodation in the town thereby supporting the use of previously developed land. Dispersal of large scale development throughout the rest of the sub-area including the Cotswolds AONB is reduced by focussing of the majority of new residential development within Chipping Norton where there are potential opportunities for development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Partnership working is encouraged through the policy to reduce the impact of through traffic on town centre air quality. The town centre is already the subject of an air quality management plan and further development in the area has the potential to exacerbate existing problems without action being taken. Improved cycle and pedestrian access will have a positive impact by reducing reliability on the car. The policy also seeks to deliver a reduction in the impact of through traffic especially lorries which are known to cause problems at present.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The policy aims to steer the majority of new development to Chipping Norton itself which has the best opportunities available for the use of public transport, walking and cycling. This should help to reduce the need to travel. Improving the offer of the town centre will mean residents are less likely to travel to other places such as Banbury for their shopping and leisure needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Development proposals must ensure that they make appropriate and timely provision for necessary supporting infrastructure and this includes the provision of water transmission and waste water treatment in the sub area. Steering development into Chipping Norton will help to reduce potential impact on agricultural land within the sub-area.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>No reference is made directly in the policy to the need to include flood risk mitigation measures in new development proposals. There is less flood risk in the northern part of the District compared with other sub-areas but the impacts of new development on flood risk, particularly increased surface run off should be taken into account when preparing development proposals in the area.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>No mention is made in the policy itself to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity resources in the sub area, although the supporting text makes reference to conservation target areas and the Wychwood Forest area. These areas of biodiversity value are likely to be protected by relevant policies elsewhere in the Local Plan, although the need to take account of protected habitats and species should be reiterated through this policy, in order to steer development effectively in the sub area.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Policy CP33 requires that development proposals in the sub-area conserve and enhance the town’s landscape setting and heritage assets, recognising the value of these resources. There is no reference made to the use of landscape character assessments for the area although further guidance is provided in the Environmental and Heritage Assets section of the Local Plan.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The policy seeks to expand the provision of local employment opportunities to meet local needs. The Chipping Norton sub area has a relatively well self contained economy with a large proportion of local residents working within the local area. The expansion of local employment opportunities will ensure that the local workforce is retained, reducing the level of out commuting to other areas. The policy aims to strengthen the town centre which will also have a positive economic impact.</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The majority of additional employment land provision will be focussed at Chipping Norton although proposals of an appropriate scale or type will be supported elsewhere subject to compliance with other policies. This could be to the benefit of local specialist firms as it will enable them to adapt and expand their premises. It will also enable rural diversification.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
 Commentary / Summary of Significant Effects
The Chipping Norton sub-area strategy scores positively against the majority of sustainability objectives, particularly those for the provision of suitable housing to meet the needs of the community and for promoting sustainable economic growth and competitiveness.

Business as Usual Scenario
Without the sub-area strategy, the level of housing growth in the area including affordable housing may not be sufficient to meet local needs and to support the level of community infrastructure required in the area. Employment opportunities in the area may be further reduced if employment land is lost to other uses and problems of poor air quality in the town centre will remain without the delivery of highways improvements. Much of the future development of Chipping Norton will be guided through the Neighbourhood Plan which is currently being prepared.

Mitigation:
Any potential negative impacts on biodiversity, landscape character and flood risk will be mitigated by the effective application of policies relating to the environmental and heritage assets of the District. The policy could be amended to include specific reference to these issues.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The policy aims to deliver around 450 new homes including affordable housing and homes for older people and newly forming households. The majority of these will be provided at the main rural service centres but development will be permitted elsewhere to ensure local housing needs are met.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New development will be required to make appropriate and timely provision for necessary supporting infrastructure including community facilities such as healthcare. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes linking residential areas with these facilities will encourage healthy and active lifestyles by not being overly dependent on private transport. Protection of the Cotswolds AONB and Oxford Green Belt will ensure that good quality countryside remains accessible to communities in the area. Enhanced leisure and recreation provision will also be delivered through partnership working in the Windrush Valley and around the River Thames.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The aim of the sub area strategy is to deliver development that will reinforce the roles of the existing service centres while enabling development in other larger villages to meet local community and business needs. The policy seeks to ensure that Woodstock Town Centre remains vibrant.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Schools within the sub area are operating in line with the County Council’s target level of spare places for rural areas but are generally nearing capacity with particular pressure on schools at Bladon and Combe. New development within the sub area will be required to make a contribution to necessary supporting infrastructure, including potential improvements to educational provision although there are no specific proposals identified.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>By continuing to focus the majority of community infrastructure within the main service centres, services and facilities will remain accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Meeting local needs within communities will reduce the need to travel long distances to access basic provision. Congestion on the primary road network is a major issue within the sub area so protecting the roles of the local service centres is important in ensuring that residents don’t have to travel further afield.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>In steering development towards the rural service centres and larger villages, the policy will help to encourage the re-use of previously developed land although in reality the nature of the sub-area is likely to mean that such opportunities are relatively limited although there are some potential sites in Chipping Norton identified in the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) available separately.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Road congestion in the sub-area, particularly on the A40 and A44 is a significant issue in this part of the District as a result of the large numbers of people commuting to work in Oxford and the surrounding employment areas. Partnership working with the highway authority will help to bring improvements to mitigate these problems but without enhanced local job opportunities, people will continue to look elsewhere for work. Improved public transport infrastructure including railway improvements may further alleviate issues on the road transport network.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The need to travel may be reduced through the improved provision of local community services and facilities as well as local job opportunities, potentially addressing the causes of climate change by reducing local transport emissions. The rural nature of this part of the District however means that local people are likely to be dependent on private transport to access higher order goods and services and employment opportunities. The policy makes specific reference to partnership working to deliver flood mitigation measures which will help to combat the impact of climate change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The area contains two significant water resources, the River Thames and its tributaries and the Lower Windrush Valley. The ecological conservation and enhancement of these valuable resources will be managed through partnership working encouraged by this policy. The policy requires new development to make appropriate provision for supporting infrastructure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The policy clearly states the need to avoid development that increases the risk of flooding and refers to the delivery of flood mitigation measures through partnership working.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>There are key areas of biodiversity value within the sub area that are currently managed to protect and enhance the biodiversity resource including the Windrush Valley and River Thames and this ongoing management is supported through this policy. New development will be required to deliver comprehensive long term nature conservation benefits where possible. The policy requires development to respect the ecological value of the River Thames.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The landscape character and heritage of the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area are highly important feature of this part of the District having a major effect on the health and well being of communities and driving the local tourist economy. Specific regard is given to the protection of the World Heritage Site and its setting and the Cotswolds AONB. All development in the sub area should have key regard to the landscape and heritage of the sub area and should be designed and located accordingly.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The policy supports the provision of additional employment opportunities including sustainable tourism and rural diversification lending particular support to the rural economy.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The ability to diversify rural businesses will be important in ensuring that they can adapt and survive, particularly in this challenging economic climate. Sustainable tourism is a key driver of the local economy in this part of the District with the unique heritage and high quality landscape drawing in large numbers of visitors and supporting local businesses. The protection and enhancement of these key assets is promoted through the policy to promote sustainable economic growth in the area.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Summary of Significant Effects**

The Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area strategy scores positively against objectives for the delivery of housing, improving the health and well being of communities and promoting thriving and inclusive communities due to the provision of new housing to meet local needs along with improved accessibility to services and facilities. Objectives for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape character also score well due to ongoing partnership working focussed on the biodiversity assets of the Windrush Valley and River Thames and the additional protection afforded to the area by the Cotswolds AONB and the Blenheim World Heritage Site. The policy scores less well against objectives for air quality and road congestion however, as the rural nature of the District means that notwithstanding the proposed focus on the rural service centres, communities are likely to remain dependant on private transport to access higher order goods and services. Increased development may exacerbate existing problems on the A40 and A44, particularly if new and existing residents in the sub area continue to commute to work outside of the District via private transport and mitigation will need to be sought as appropriate.

**Business as Usual**

There is currently no distinct policy guidance in the local plan to guide development in the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area. In the absence of an overarching policy for the sub-area, development will be guided by more general policies which enable development to meet local needs. The benefit of setting a housing target for the area ensures that there is sufficient dispersal of residential development throughout the district and that the smaller settlements make a contribution to meeting local housing needs. Without the policy in place there is a danger of development pressure in less sustainable locations that do not enjoy the same level of services as those found in the rural service centres and larger villages.

**Mitigation**

Improved public transport in the sub-area, particularly rail provision as well as improved provision for walking and cycling will encourage local residents to utilise public transport and other non-car modes of transport to access jobs and services, mitigating the impact of increased development on the local road network.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Summary of Significant Effects / Justification for Assessment</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The policy aims to deliver around 350 new homes including affordable housing and homes for older people and newly forming households. The majority of these will be provided at the main rural service centres but development will be permitted elsewhere to ensure local housing needs are met.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New development will be required to make appropriate and timely provision for necessary supporting infrastructure including community facilities. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes linking residential areas with these facilities will encourage healthy and active lifestyles by not being overly dependent on private transport. Protection of the Cotswolds AONB will ensure that good quality countryside remains accessible to communities in the area. Leisure and recreation provision will also be delivered through the protection and enhancement of the Wychwood Project Area and Windrush Valley.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The aim of the sub-area strategy is to deliver development that will reinforce the roles of the existing service centres while enabling development in other larger villages to meet local community and business needs. The policy seeks to ensure that Burford Town Centre remains vibrant.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Additional primary school provision may be required as pressure for school places continues to grow in the sub area. New development within the sub area will make a contribution to necessary supporting infrastructure including educational provision, although no specific proposals are identified.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>By continuing to focus the majority of community infrastructure within the main service centres, services and facilities will remain accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Meeting local needs within communities will reduce the need to travel long distances to access basic provision. The area could benefit from better bus service provision and the policy seeks to deliver enhanced public transport accordingly as well as improvements to rail provision.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In steering development towards the rural service centres and larger villages, the policy will help to encourage the re-use of previously developed land although in reality the nature of the sub-area is likely to mean that such opportunities are relatively limited.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This sub-area benefits from better rail provision than other areas of West Oxfordshire. Enhancements on the Cotswolds line will make rail commuting a more attractive prospect for those residents working outside the District, reducing the impact on the local road network and improving local air quality.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The need to travel may be reduced by through the improved provision of local community services and facilities as well as local job opportunities, potentially addressing climate change by reducing local transport emissions. The rural nature of this part of the District means that local people are likely to be dependent on private transport to access higher order goods and services and employment opportunities however the policy seeks to deliver improvements to public transport, walking and cycling opportunities.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>This sub area has some significant soil and water resources that are rich in biodiversity value including the Upper Windrush Valley. This policy ensures that new development proposals support the protection and enhancement of these important resources. Limited availability of previously developed land however may result in the need for agricultural land to be used for development.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Much of the area is at risk of flooding due to the presence of major river channels and their tributaries. The policy clearly states the need to avoid development that will increase the risk of flooding and the need to deliver flood mitigation measures as part of new development proposals.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Burford – Charlbury sub area has the highest concentration of biodiversity resource in the District. Particular reference is made through the policy to the protection and enhancement of the Upper Windrush Valley and the Wychwood Project Area which cover many of the local biodiversity resources including National Nature Reserves and SSSIs. Development within sites designated for their biodiversity value is also strictly controlled by other Local Plan policies relating to Environmental and Heritage Assets.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The majority of this sub area falls within the Cotswolds AONB and therefore benefits from enhanced landscape protection through the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan. Reference is made in the supporting text to the quality of the landscape character, particularly in the Upper Windrush Valley Landscape character area and importance of local building design in defining the character of particular areas. The policy seeks to ensure that new development proposals protect the Cotswolds AONB and protect and enhance the Upper Windrush Valley and Wychwood Project Area. The policy could be further strengthened by making reference to landscape character assessments to ensure that the individual elements that define the landscape character are taken into account when preparing development proposals.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The policy ensures that new development proposals support additional employment opportunities including sustainable tourism and rural diversification. This is particularly important in this part of the district as the rural nature of the area makes employment opportunities more limited. There are a number of relatively isolated employment sites in the sub-area and their ability to diversify operations will enable them to adapt to changing economic circumstances and market conditions. Tourism is important to the local economy and is driven by the quality of the landscape and heritage assets. Support for tourism based proposals will ensure that employment levels in this sector are maintained.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The ability to diversify rural businesses will be important in ensuring that they can adapt and survive, particularly in the current challenging economic climate. Sustainable tourism is a key driver of the local economy in this part of the District with the unique heritage and high quality landscape drawing in large numbers of visitors and supporting local businesses. The protection and enhancement of these key assets is promoted through the policy to promote sustainable economic growth in the area.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Significant Effects
Policy CP35 scores positively against objectives for the provision of housing to meet local needs, improving the health and well being and promoting thriving and inclusive communities, primarily due to the provision of new housing and the promotion of improved accessibility to services and facilities by sustainable means. Although the policy promotes the use of sustainable transport, the rural nature of the sub area means that in reality residents are still likely to be largely dependent on private transport to access higher order goods and services. Emphasis is placed on biodiversity protection and enhancement due to the concentration of biodiversity assets in this part of the district resulting in significant positive impacts in relation to sustainability objective 7.

Business as Usual
There is currently no specific policy guidance in the local plan to guide development in the Burford - Charlbury sub-area. In the absence of an overarching policy for the sub-area, development will be guided by more general policies. The benefit of setting a housing target for the area ensures that there is sufficient dispersal of residential development throughout the district and that the smaller settlements make a contribution to meeting local housing needs. Without the policy in place there is a danger of development pressure in less sustainable locations that do not enjoy the same level of services as those found in the rural service centres and larger villages.

Mitigation
The effective application of landscape and heritage polices and improvements to the green infrastructure network will help to mitigate the impact of development on the character of the area and ensure that access to the countryside is maintained.
APPENDIX 3  Full Appraisal of Housing Growth Options

LOW GROWTH (4,000)

The 'natural change' scenario considers the amount of planned housing to 2016 and then calculates how many additional homes would be needed to accommodate 'natural growth' in the period to 2029. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 4,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home</td>
<td>The low growth scenario would deliver sufficient housing to meet the needs of the local population, taking account of natural change in the District. Sufficient housing will be delivered to meet the needs of a growing population as a result of births and deaths without significant in migration to West Oxfordshire. The level of growth would however be less than the other options and the opportunity to increase the supply of affordable homes would therefore be more limited.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>The low growth scenario would require less greenfield land on the edge of settlements and in the countryside to accommodate the required level of housing development. Sufficient community infrastructure including health care will be delivered alongside residential development, although the level of provision will be determined through consultation with relevant bodies in accordance with local needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Much of the social exclusion that exists in the district is related access to affordable housing and access to services and facilities. The delivery of new housing to meet locally identified needs will go some way to tackling housing deprivation in West Oxfordshire. New housing, particularly in rural areas will help to support the viability of local businesses and services to ensure that they remain accessible for rural communities.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improve education and training</td>
<td>The construction of new residential development in West Oxfordshire will support the delivery of necessary social infrastructure to meet locally identified needs including necessary education and training provision.</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime</td>
<td>This is a detailed development design consideration</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>New housing development will be delivered throughout the District in accordance with the locational strategy, thereby ensuring that new development is located close to existing services and facilities and in accessible locations. New residential development will contribute towards the funding of new transport and other infrastructure to alleviate existing congestion problems and to mitigate the impact of new development on local infrastructure. This low growth option may limit the potential to deliver new infrastructure compared with the higher growth options.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improve the efficiency of land use</td>
<td>This is a detailed design consideration and will be determined at the master planning stage, particularly in relation to strategic development sites. A limited supply of previously developed land in the district however is likely to result in a large degree of development on greenfield land and it will be important to ensure that such proposals make the most efficient use of the land through appropriate density of development.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reduce waste generation and disposal</td>
<td>This is a detailed construction and site design issue.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>One of the main constraints to growth in West Oxfordshire is congestion on the local road network and the resultant air pollution from traffic emissions. Any large scale development is likely to result in increased local traffic and congestion unless appropriate mitigation measures are put into place. Whilst it could be argued that a lower level of growth will reduce the consequent increase in traffic and help congestion, it also limits the opportunity to provide new transport infrastructure to help tackle the problem.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</td>
<td>An increase in built development may have a range of negative outcomes in relation to the causes and effects of climate change without the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures. Increasing residential development in particular is likely to result in increased run off from hard surfaces and increased carbon emissions as a result of domestic and transport emissions. Positive sustainability outcomes in relation to the level of housing growth are dependant on the effective implementation of other local plan policies on design, flood risk, location of development and green infrastructure provision. Although it could be argued that a lower level of housing growth will lead to fewer carbon emissions and less impact on climate change, in reality the difference between the three scenarios is likely to be negligible. Larger scale development could also be argued to offer greater potential to deliver renewable and low carbon energy solutions.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>All development in the district will seek to meet this objective, although a shortage of previously developed land, capable of accommodating strategic development in the district, will result in the take up of greenfield sites for new residential development. Whilst it could be argued that a lower level of growth would mean less Greenfield land being released, at the same time it would limit the potential to deliver necessary improvements e.g. to water infrastructure.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>The location of development will be guided to a large extent by local flood risk, with residential development guided to those areas at least risk from flooding. An increase in physical development and hard surfacing may increase surface run-off rates, although incorporating necessary infrastructure such as SUDs into new development may reduce run-off. The requirements for delivering such infrastructure are set out elsewhere in the Draft Local Plan. There is likely to be relatively little difference between the three growth options in relation to this objective.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>A lower overall housing target will place less pressure on local biodiversity and geodiversity in West Oxfordshire, as less greenfield land will be required outside of the main settlements to accommodate new development. The shortage of appropriate brownfield sites in the district however, will still place pressure on the natural environment to accommodate new houses. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant residential development is likely to have some impact on biodiversity assets, particularly if they have no formal protected status.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>A lower overall housing target will place less pressure on the local landscape and natural environment to accommodate significant housing development, although the shortage of appropriate brownfield sites in the district still result in greenfield development. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant residential development is likely to have some impact on the character of the countryside or location in which it is built.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>The provision of sufficient housing to meet local needs is a key factor in supporting vibrant market towns and a sustainable rural economy. A lower housing target will help to meet the housing needs of the population under a natural change scenario, but the key to supporting local businesses will be the retention of a strong working age population. Evidence suggests that under the natural change scenario, the working age population will decline over the duration of the Local Plan.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>Projections suggest that the setting of a lower housing target for the district could result in a reduced workforce in the future, as the population ages and young people decide to move out of the district. Without a sufficient workforce, businesses in West Oxfordshire will be in competition with neighbouring districts to attract employees, and as the current trend is for a proportion of residents to work in surrounding conurbations such as Oxford, there is a strong likelihood that this pattern will continue with local economic growth and competitiveness suffering as a consequence.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MEDIUM GROWTH (5,500)**

The ‘south east plan’ based scenario considers planned growth to 2016 and then rolls forward the residual south east plan requirement on a pro-rata basis to 2029. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 5,500.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
<th>Nature of Effect</th>
<th>SA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home</td>
<td>The medium growth scenario is in line with the housing growth target set out in the South East Plan. This will increase the supply of new homes over and above the natural change scenario, thereby helping to boost housing supply, promote economic growth and increase the availability of affordable housing.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>The medium growth scenario would place greater pressure on greenfield sites to accommodate new development although accessibility to the countryside will still be protected as the locational policy would direct growth primarily to the main settlements. Sufficient community infrastructure including health care will be delivered alongside residential development, although the level of provision will be determined through consultation with relevant bodies in accordance with local needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Much of the social exclusion that exists in the district is related access to affordable housing and access to services and facilities. The delivery of an increased supply of new housing to meet locally identified needs will go some way to tackling housing deprivation in West Oxfordshire. New housing, particularly in rural areas will help to support the viability of local businesses and services to ensure that they remain accessible for rural communities. Higher levels of housing growth also have increased potential to support and improve local infrastructure and services.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improve education and training</td>
<td>The construction of new residential development in West Oxfordshire will support the delivery of necessary social infrastructure to meet locally identified needs including necessary education and training provision.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime</td>
<td>This is a detailed development design consideration</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</strong></td>
<td>New housing development will be delivered throughout the District in accordance with the locational strategy, thereby ensuring that new development is located close to existing services and facilities and in accessible locations. New residential development will contribute towards the funding of new transport and other infrastructure to alleviate existing congestion problems and to mitigate the impact of new development on local infrastructure.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Improve the efficiency of land use</strong></td>
<td>This is a detailed design consideration and will be determined at the master planning stage, particularly in relation to strategic development sites. A limited supply of previously developed land in the district however is likely to result in a large degree of development on greenfield land.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8. Reduce waste generation and disposal</strong></td>
<td>This is a detailed construction and site design issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</strong></td>
<td>One of the main constraints to growth in West Oxfordshire is congestion on the local road network and the resultant air pollution from traffic emissions. Any large scale development is likely to result in increased local traffic and congestion unless appropriate mitigation measures are put into place. The delivery of a higher rate of housing growth is more likely to facilitate the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure improvements to help ease congestion and improve air quality.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</strong></td>
<td>An increase in built development may have a range of negative outcomes in relation to the causes and effects of climate change without the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures. Increasing residential development in particular is likely to result in increased run off from hard surfaces and increased carbon emissions as a result of domestic and transport emissions. Positive sustainability outcomes in relation to the level of housing growth are dependant on the effective implementation of other local plan polices on design, flood risk, location of development and green infrastructure provision. The delivery of a higher rate of housing growth may assist with the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy solutions where these are associated with development proposals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources</strong></td>
<td>All development in the district will seek to meet this objective, although a shortage of suitable brownfield sites, capable of accommodating strategic development in the district, will likely result in the take up of greenfield sites for new residential development. Whilst it could be argued that a higher level of growth is likely to have a greater impact on soil and water resources it would also provide more potential to deliver infrastructure improvements including water supply and sewerage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</strong></td>
<td>The location of development will be guided to a large extent by local flood risk, with residential development guided to those areas at least risk from flooding. An increase in physical development and hard surfacing may increase surface run-off rates without incorporating necessary infrastructure such as SUDs into new development. The requirements for delivering such infrastructure are set out elsewhere in the Draft Local Plan. There is likely to be relatively little difference between the three growth options in relation to this objective.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</strong></td>
<td>The medium growth scenario potentially places more pressure on local biodiversity and geodiversity in West Oxfordshire, as more greenfield land will be required outside of the main settlements to accommodate new development than under the low-growth scenario. The shortage of brownfield sites in the district will place pressure on the natural environment to accommodate new houses. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant levels of residential development are likely to have some impact on biodiversity assets, particularly if they have no formal protected status. New development does however provide the potential for better management of habitats which may lead to increases in their biodiversity value including enhancements to Conservation Target Areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</strong></td>
<td>Any significant housing growth in West Oxfordshire will put pressure on the local landscape and natural environment to accommodate such development. The shortage of appropriate brownfield sites in the district will result in greenfield development and the locational policy of guiding development towards the main settlements may have an impact on the historic character of some areas. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant residential development is likely to have some impact on the character of the countryside or location in which it is built. There may however be a positive impact on the landscape character of the area depending on the design quality of the development. There may also be improved opportunities to access and enjoy the countryside through improvements to the District’s network of Green Infrastructure.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment</strong></td>
<td>The success of local businesses will largely depend on having access to a pool of skilled labour and the ability of businesses to compete with those in neighbouring districts and conurbations to retain skilled employees. The delivery of sufficient levels of housing to meet the needs of an expanding population, taking account of natural change and in migration will be key to retaining a strong working age population in West Oxfordshire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>The medium level of housing growth will ensure that there is flexibility within the district to respond to growth in the local economy. The ability of West Oxfordshire to retain a sufficient working age population will be strengthened by providing more housing to meet the needs of an expanding population and will help to support business growth and competitiveness in the District.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HIGH GROWTH (6,700)

The ‘employment based’ scenario considers planned growth to 2016 and then calculates how many homes would be needed up to 2029 in order to sustain the peak in the District’s workforce predicted to occur at 2016. Under this scenario, the total number of new homes in the period 2011 – 2029 is 6,700.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Objective</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed affordable home</td>
<td>This scenario will increase the supply of new homes over and above the natural change and south east plan scenarios, thereby helping to boost housing supply, promote economic growth and increase the availability of affordable housing.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities</td>
<td>The higher growth scenario would place greater pressure on greenfield sites on the edge of settlements, potentially eroding access to the countryside for edge of settlement locations, although the wider countryside will still be protected through locational policies in the Local Plan. Sufficient community infrastructure including health care will be delivered alongside residential development, although the level of provision will be determined through consultation with relevant bodies in accordance with local needs.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote thriving and inclusive communities</td>
<td>Much of the social exclusion that exists in the district is related access to affordable housing and access to services and facilities. The delivery of new housing to meet locally identified needs will go some way to tackling housing deprivation in West Oxfordshire. New housing, particularly in rural areas will help to support the viability of local businesses and services to ensure that they remain accessible for rural communities. Higher levels of housing growth also have increased potential to support and improve local infrastructure and services.</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improve education and training</td>
<td>The construction of new residential development in West Oxfordshire will support the delivery of necessary social infrastructure to meet locally identified needs including necessary education and training provision.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maintain a low level of crime and fear of crime</td>
<td>This is a detailed development design consideration</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improve accessibility to all services and facilities</td>
<td>New housing development will be delivered throughout the District in accordance with the locational strategy, thereby ensuring that new development is located close to existing services and facilities and in accessible locations. New residential development will contribute towards the funding of new transport infrastructure to alleviate existing congestion problems and to mitigate the impact of new development on local infrastructure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Improve the efficiency of land use</td>
<td>This is a detailed design consideration and will be determined at the master planning stage, particularly in relation to strategic development sites. A limited supply of previously developed land in the district however is likely to result in a large degree of development on greenfield land which will be further increased under this high growth scenario.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reduce waste generation and disposal</td>
<td>This is a detailed construction and site design issue.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reduce air pollution and improve air quality</td>
<td>One of the main constraints to growth in West Oxfordshire is congestion on the local road network and the resultant air pollution from traffic emissions. Any large scale development is likely to result in increased local traffic and congestion unless appropriate mitigation measures are put into place. The delivery of a higher rate of housing growth is more likely to facilitate the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure improvements to help ease congestion and improve air quality however this must be balanced with the increase in traffic movements associated with the proposed level of growth.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Address the causes of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for its impacts</td>
<td>An increase in built development may have a range of negative outcomes in relation to the causes and effects of climate change without the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures. Increasing residential development in particular is likely to result in increased run off from hard surfaces and increased carbon emissions as a result of domestic and transport emissions. Positive sustainability outcomes in relation to the level of housing growth are dependant on the effective implementation of other local plan polices on design, flood risk, location of development and green infrastructure provision. The delivery of a higher rate of housing growth may assist with the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy solutions where these are associated with development proposals.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Protect and improve soil and water resources</td>
<td>All development in the district will seek to meet this objective, although a shortage suitable brownfield sites, capable of accommodating strategic development in the district, will likely result in the take up of greenfield sites for new residential development. Whilst it could be argued that a higher level of growth is likely to have a greater impact on soil and water resources it would also provide more potential to deliver infrastructure improvements including water supply and sewerage.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding</td>
<td>The location of development will be guided to a large extent by local flood risk, with residential development guided to those areas at least risk from flooding. An increase in physical development and hard surfacing may increase surface run-off rates without incorporating necessary infrastructure such as SUDs into new development. The requirements for delivering such infrastructure are set out elsewhere in the Draft Local Plan. There is likely to be relatively little difference between the three growth options in relation to this objective.</td>
<td>+/−</td>
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<td>13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity</td>
<td>The higher growth scenario places more pressure on local biodiversity and geodiversity in West Oxfordshire, as more greenfield land will be required outside of the main settlements to accommodate new development. The shortage of appropriate brownfield sites in the district will place pressure on the natural environment to accommodate new houses. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant levels of residential development are likely to have some impact on biodiversity assets, particularly if they have no formal protected status. New development does however provide the potential for better management of habitats which may lead to increases in their biodiversity value including enhancements to Conservation Target Areas.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
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<td>14. Conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment</td>
<td>Any significant housing growth in West Oxfordshire will put pressure on the local landscape and natural environment to accommodate such development. A shortage of appropriate brownfield sites in the district will result in greenfield development and the locational policy of guiding development towards the main settlements may have an impact on the historic character of some areas. Development will be guided away from the most sensitive areas of the district by other relevant Local Plan policies, although significant residential development is likely to have some impact on the character of the countryside or location in which it is built. The higher growth strategy is likely to result in significant change to the character of the main settlements as they expand more extensively into the surrounding countryside and there is also likely to be some impact on the setting of other surrounding, smaller settlements as the larger towns potentially encroach upon them.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Maintain high and stable levels of employment</td>
<td>The success of local businesses will largely depend on having access to a pool of skilled labour and the ability of businesses to compete with those in neighbouring districts and conurbations to retain skilled employees. The delivery of sufficient levels of housing to meet the needs of an expanding population, taking account of natural change and in migration will be key to retaining a strong working age population in West Oxfordshire.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Promote sustainable economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td>The higher growth scenario will ensure that there is sufficient housing to sustain the labour force at it’s highest point in 2016. This will be important to ensure that the district is able to continue attracting competitive business sectors and to ensure continued economic growth in the district.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>