



Working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire

Sustainability Appraisal/
Strategic Environmental
Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Wiltshire Core Strategy
Prepared for Council June 2012

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- B Sustainability Appraisal Framework
- C Significant effects assessment criteria
- D Wiltshire's key sustainability issues
- E Appraisal of Core Strategy spatial vision and strategic objectives
- F Proposed SA/SEA monitoring indicators
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Appendix H (separate document)

- H Core Strategy policy options – appraisal of likely significant effects

Appendix I (separate document)

- I Core Strategy strategic housing sites - appraisal of likely significant effects

Appendix J (separate document)

- J Core Strategy strategic employment sites - appraisal of likely significant effects

List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
AA	Appropriate Assessment
AAP	Area Action Plan
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CROW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act
CSH	Code for Sustainable Homes
CWS	County Wildlife Site
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
EEC	European Economic Community
EIP	Examination in Public
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GI	Green Infrastructure
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
OMS	Offshore Marine Sites
PAS	Planning Advisory Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PDL	Previously Developed Land
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SANGS	Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SLA	Special Landscape Area
SPA	Special Protection Area

SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSCT	Strategically Significant Cities or Towns
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
STW	Sewage Treatment Works
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
SWMP	Site Waste Management Plan
WHS	World Heritage Site

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background

1.1.1 Wiltshire Council is in the process of preparing a Core Strategy document which, when adopted, will be the key document within the council's Local Development Framework (LDF) for Wiltshire. The Core Strategy addresses the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change, setting the framework for future development across Wiltshire, and will replace the current Local Plans of the former Wiltshire district councils. The Core Strategy will guide development and be the main consideration in decision making.

1.1.2 This Sustainability Appraisal Report has been published to accompany the Submission Core Strategy document. Sustainability appraisal is a process that is carried out as an integral part of developing the Core Strategy, with the aim of promoting sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations. It is a requirement of national and European legislation and is subject to the same level of public consultation and scrutiny as the Core Strategy.

1.1.3 Sustainability appraisal is an ongoing and iterative process, influencing the Core Strategy as it develops. This report follows on from a first draft of the Sustainability Appraisal Report, published in October 2009, which accompanied the document 'Wiltshire 2026'¹, and an Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanied the second iteration of the Core Strategy², published in June 2011.

1.2 Sustainability appraisal – purpose and requirements

1.2.1 The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to promote the objectives of sustainable development within planning policy. This is done by appraising the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan from the outset and in doing so, helping to ensure that sustainable development is treated in an integrated way in the preparation of development plans (further information on this is given in Section 2).

1.2.2 Planning authorities should ensure that sustainable development is treated in an integrated way in their development plans. In particular, they should carefully consider the inter-relationship between:

- social inclusion
- protecting and enhancing the environment
- the prudent use of natural resources
- economic development.

¹ 'Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire's Future' (Wiltshire Council, October 2009).

² 'Working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (Wiltshire Council, June 2011)

- 1.2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that ‘a sustainability appraisal which meets the requirements of the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors’. The NPPF explains that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and states that ‘*sustainable* means ensuring that better lives for ourselves don’t mean worse lives for future generations. *Development* means growth’.
- 1.2.4 Sustainability appraisals also help to deliver the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. The 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy defines the goal of sustainable development as “to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations”.
- 1.2.5 The sustainability appraisal process is governed by European and national legislation, supported by government policy, which includes:
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and NPPF, which requires consideration of sustainability appraisal for all emerging Development Plan Documents.
 - The requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (often known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive) which requires the preparation of an environmental report that considers the significant environmental effects of a plan or programme. This Directive is transposed into UK law by *The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004: Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633* (SEA Regulations).

1.3 Compliance with the SEA Directive and Regulations

- 1.3.1 This Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive and Regulations, by combining the more environmentally-focused considerations of SEA with wider social and economic effects. The SEA Regulations set out certain requirements for reporting the SEA process, and specify that if an integrated appraisal is undertaken i.e. SEA is subsumed within the sustainability appraisal process then the sections of the Sustainability Appraisal Report that meet the requirements set out for reporting the SEA process must be clearly signposted. The requirements for reporting the SEA process, and how these have been achieved, are set out in Appendix A.

1.4 The Wiltshire Core Strategy

The SEA Directive requires that the environmental report must include...
“... an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan...and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”

- 1.4.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy will form the principal Development Plan Document (DPD) within Wiltshire’s Local Development Framework (LDF) and will be a key

consideration in the determination of planning applications. The LDF is the collection of *local development documents* produced by the local planning authority which collectively delivers the spatial planning strategy for the area.

1.4.2 The Submission Core Strategy document that this sustainability appraisal accompanies builds on previous consultation exercises as follows:

- Those undertaken by the former district councils of Kennet, North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire between 2007-2009, prior to the formation of the unitary authority
- *Wiltshire 2026 – planning for Wiltshire’s future* (October, 2009)
- *Wiltshire Core Strategy – working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire* (June, 2011)

1.4.3 A brief summary of the findings of the sustainability appraisal work relating to those documents, including options appraisal, is presented in Section 4 of this report.

1.4.4 The Core Strategy document includes:

- an overall vision which sets out how Wiltshire and the places within it will develop
- strategic objectives for the area focussing on key issues
- a delivery strategy for achieving these objectives, setting out how much development is intended to happen, where, when, and by what means it will be delivered
- locations for strategic development
- evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed
- arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy.

Core Strategy strategic objectives

1.4.5 A series of strategic objectives have been developed to deliver the vision for Wiltshire, and provide more specific direction to the spatial strategy and policies in the Core Strategy. The strategic objectives can be summarised as follows:

1. Delivering a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities and enhances the vitality and viability of town centres.
2. Addressing climate change.
3. Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home.
4. Helping to build resilient communities.
5. Protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment.
6. Ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support our communities.

1.4.6 These objectives are discussed in more detail in Section 5.2 of this report.

Relationship of the Core Strategy with other relevant plans and programmes

- 1.4.7 The Core Strategy provides a spatial expression of the Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026³ and will be focussed on delivering the three overarching priorities of the Community Plan. The overarching priorities are to help build and protect resilient communities through:
- creating an economy that is fit for the future
 - reducing disadvantage and inequalities
 - tackling the causes and effects of climate change.
- 1.4.8 The Core Strategy has been developed using other policies and strategies relating to the area and adds a local spatial dimension to those. The relationship between the Core Strategy and other documents is made explicit at relevant points throughout the document but they include:
- National planning policy, including the draft NPPF
 - The Wiltshire Community Plan
 - Wiltshire's Joint Strategic Assessment
 - Plans of neighbouring authorities
 - Strategies prepared by local communities such as community area plans and parish plans
 - The Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham Visions
 - Heritage strategies such as Conservation Area Appraisals and the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plans
 - Strategies relating to specific geographic areas such as management plans for the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - Forward work programmes of essential infrastructure providers
 - The South Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- 1.4.9 The SEA Directive requires the relationship between the Core Strategy and other plans/programmes to be taken into account, as well as the way environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in plan preparation. Further details regarding this are presented in Section 3 of this report.
- ## 1.5 South Wilts Core Strategy
- 1.5.1 The South Wilts Core Strategy, covering the former Salisbury district area, has been produced as a separate document, with its own associated Sustainability Appraisal Report. The reason for this is because work on the former Salisbury District Core Strategy was sufficiently well advanced prior to local government reorganisation in April 2009.
- 1.5.2 **The South Wilts Core Strategy was formally adopted on 7th February 2012.** After adoption, it will in effect be a transitional document, eventually to be incorporated into the Wiltshire wide Core Strategy.

³ People, places and promises - The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026 Consultation Draft (Wiltshire Assembly, 2010)

1.5.3 Where appropriate, this Sustainability Appraisal Report takes account of the findings of the South Wilts Core Strategy sustainability appraisal, but will not attempt to carry out any new appraisal work of policies relating to that area of Wiltshire, unless any significant changes are made to those policies. Where South Wilts Core Strategy policies have been included in the Wiltshire Core Strategy, a summary of the South Wilts Core Strategy sustainability appraisal findings is included in this report.

1.6 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1.6.1 European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive) requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken on the Core Strategy. In the UK, the Habitats Directive is implemented through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the “Habitats Regulations”).

1.6.2 The HRA assesses any impacts of the Core Strategy against the conservation objectives of sites of European importance for nature conservation, within and outside Wiltshire, to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of any sites concerned. These sites, often just referred to as European sites, consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Site (OMS). Sites designated under the Ramsar Convention (known as Ramsar sites) also receive the same degree of protection under Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) (ODPM, 2005) as a matter of planning policy.

1.6.3 Wiltshire Council appointed WSP Environmental Consultants to undertake the HRA requirements for the Wiltshire Core Strategy. It is important that the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal take account of the HRA findings in order that consideration can be given to mitigating any significant effects. The HRA process is an iterative one and has been reviewed and amended as the Core Strategy has developed.

1.6.4 A separate HRA Report has been produced for the South Wilts Core Strategy and this can be viewed at:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/corestrategysustainabilityappraisal.htm>

HRA screening

1.6.5 A key concept within HRA guidance is that of screening ie identifying those elements of the plan where it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that no significant impact on a European site will occur. An HRA screening exercise, or Screening Report, was published alongside the ‘Wiltshire 2026’ document in October 2009. This can be viewed at: **<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm>**

1.6.6 This report was carried out in discussion with a Steering Group comprising of representatives from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council, and involved the following tasks:

- Identifying European sites within Wiltshire, and up to 15km from the boundary of Wiltshire Council local authority area (and therefore within the potential influence of the Core Strategy), and the characteristics of those sites.
- Detailed consideration of selected spatial options to highlight potential effects and any opportunities for avoidance measures to be incorporated in policies within the Core Strategy, lower level plans and projects.
- Identification of spatial options and European sites that can be screened out from any further assessment.

1.6.7 In total, the screening report identified 26 separate European sites, of which 11 were entirely or partly in Wiltshire. Effects on these sites were then considered in relation to the following issues that could potentially result from additional housing, employment and supporting infrastructure that is proposed in the Core Strategy:

- Potential for increased recreational pressure
- Hydrogeology/hydrology, including:
 - potential changes to the hydrological regime of catchment areas
 - potential for pollution of surface or ground water
 - potential for nutrient enrichment of aquatic systems
 - issues around increased water abstraction
- Potential for effects on European sites associated with air pollution.
- Potential physical damage due to housing provision/transport infrastructure development
- Potential for in-combination effects associated with developments and potential mineral extraction.

1.6.8 The report concluded that there is uncertainty as to whether or not the Core Strategy will have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, and that further HRA assessment will be necessary considering the Habitats Regulations requirement to follow a precautionary approach.

Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA Report – June 2011

1.6.9 An HRA Report was published alongside the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011. The key findings and recommendations of that HRA were taken into account in the sustainability appraisal and in Core Strategy policy. The conclusions of that HRA Report were as follows:

1.6.10 The thematic policies go some way to ensuring that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of European sites. The review of the policies against the criteria developed by Natural England has helped highlight areas that need strengthening and potential policy gaps, key points are:

- Policy relating to the provision of SANGS needs to be sharpened – Policy 33 needs to make it clear that there is potential for effects on other European sites, not just Salisbury Plain and the New Forest SPA.
- The **quantum** and **location** of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) that needs to be provided **should be identified somewhere**. The Green Infrastructure Strategy has a key role but the Core Strategy will have more weight. The **characteristics** of sites that qualify as SANG should also be set out (see box on SANGS above).
- The provision of SANG is necessary to be able to demonstrate that the Core Strategy will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites and should therefore be identified as **critical infrastructure**.
- In relation to potential impacts on the River Avon SAC it can be **concluded** that, provided development can be accommodated within the existing headroom of the Sewage Treatment Works and the Nutrient Management Plan is implemented, there should be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Avon SAC arising from the Core Strategy.
- It is recommended that the **traffic modelling**, undertaken as part of the Core Strategy process to inform infrastructure requirements, should also model emissions to air. This will help provide an evidence base for the HRA and Core Strategy.
- It is recommended that the Core Strategy includes a specific policy requiring major developments to specifically consider the potential for effects on European sites associated with **transport related emissions to air and point source pollution** from relevant processes.
- The HRA process is predicated on the basis that the Core Strategy should not make an existing situation worse. As things stand it is considered premature to screen out air quality as an issue. It would also be premature to identify specific settlements as being problematic because in the context of European sites it is the road corridors that are potentially problematic. More detailed modelling work is needed to help determine whether or not development associated with a particular settlement will exacerbate the existing situation.
- Policy 31 sets out the need for additional Gypsy and Travellers sites and locational criteria. It is **recommended** that an additional criterion is added relating to the avoidance of locations that might impact on European sites.

1.6.11 In terms of the Community Areas the key points were:

- Issues relating to potential effects on water quality associated with development in the Warminster Community Area have been addressed by Policies 50 and 51. It can therefore be **concluded** that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on the River Avon SAC.
- Issues relating to potential impacts associated with disturbance and other effects on Salisbury Plain and other European sites would be addressed by Policies 33, 35 and 36 relating to Green Infrastructure but these need to be strengthened as suggested in this report. It would therefore be **premature to**

conclude at this stage that there are no significant adverse effects on Salisbury Plain and other European sites associated with recreational pressure. The Draft Core Strategy is moving in the right direction but needs to go further by identifying the quantum of SANGS that is required and its broad location. This could be covered in the thematic policies, rather than Community Areas, recognising that some SANGS could serve more than one area.

- Issues relating to air quality cannot be assigned to specific Community Areas at this time; more information is needed so it would be **premature to conclude** that there are no significant adverse effects on European sites.
- The potential for physical damage to sites and supporting habitats caused by the Draft Core Strategy is an issue where bats are the qualifying feature and while it is not addressed in the thematic policies it is considered in relevant Community Areas. It is also understood that additional guidance will be provided by the Council in a Supplementary Planning Document on this issue. It can therefore be **concluded** that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on European sites.

1.6.12 The key issues from these conclusions that needed to be resolved through Core Strategy policy relate to the following:

- Policy relating to the provision of SANGS needs to be sharpened.
- Further consideration of issues concerning disturbance on all European sites not just Salisbury Plain and New Forest.
- Transport related emissions to air and point source pollution need further consideration in policy.
- Additional criterion is needed to Gypsy and Traveller policy relating to the avoidance of locations that might impact on European sites.
- Guidance to be published by the Council regarding impacts of development on bats.

Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA Report – February 2012

1.6.13 An HRA Report has been published alongside the Wiltshire Core Strategy Submission document in February 2012. The conclusions and recommendations of the HRA have been taken into account in the sustainability appraisal and in Core Strategy policy. The conclusions of the HRA Report are as follows:

- Potential effects associated with increased recreational pressure are acknowledged in Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'. The preferred approach is to manage the potential for increased recreational pressure through management measures, with Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space only to be provided in exceptional circumstances. A Green Infrastructure Strategy is also under development and the combination of these measures will provide sufficient mitigation to ensure that adverse impacts on European sites are avoided.

- Policies intended to address potential impacts on European sites in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy have been fully integrated into the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- Core Policy 69 'Protection of the River Avon SAC' sets out the issues and measures to protect the SAC. It can be concluded that, provided development can be accommodated within the existing headroom of the Sewage Treatment Works, or other measures are put in place, Construction Management Plans are prepared and implemented and the Nutrient Management Plan referenced in the supporting text is implemented, there should be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Avon SAC arising from the Core Strategy.
- Potential impacts associated with air quality are an issue at the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC site which falls under the management plan for the Cotswolds AONB. Core Policy 55 'Air Quality' sets out measures that may be required to contribute to the air quality strategy for Wiltshire. It is recommended that Policy 55 identifies the role of Low Emission Strategies (Defra, 2010) as a way of tackling transport related emissions and the need to consider the potential for air quality impacts on European sites, this would be consistent with Core Policy 25 in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- Core Policy 55 should be amended to state that assessment will be required for new industrial processes located within 10km of a European site.
- Text in the Draft Core Strategy relating to the Corsham and Bradford – on – Avon Community Areas states that all development will be planned and delivered in accordance with Wiltshire Council guidance to maintain the integrity of the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Draft Core Strategy could go further by committing the Council to developing a process for ensuring that developments within 4km of the SAC will not have a significant adverse effect on it. Such a statement could be included in Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity.' Such a statement would enable the HRA to conclude that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on the SAC.

1.6.14 It was recommended that the Core Strategy include the following in Core Policy 50 or in the supporting text:

“Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy” - this would help demonstrate that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on European sites and be consistent with the approach taken in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy which contains a similar statement at Objective 5’.

How has policy been amended to reflect the HRA conclusions/ recommendations?

1.6.15 In order to reflect these recommendations in the Core Strategy, amendments have been made to core policies 50 (Biodiversity and geodiversity) and 55 (Air quality):

- Core policy 50 – the following statement has been added to the supporting text for this policy:

‘Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy’.

- Core policy 55 - the following statement has been added to the supporting text for this policy:

‘Development which could potentially impact upon Natura 2000 sites through contributions to aerial deposition e.g. industrial process within 10km of a SAC, will require an assessment of the likely impacts in accordance with published guidance. Where mitigation is required this may be delivered through a Local Emissions Strategy’.

1.7 Structure of this report

1.7.1 This Sustainability Appraisal Report has been designed to be as succinct as possible to improve accessibility of information and to allow key findings to be presented more concisely. Detailed appraisal work for Core Strategy policies and strategic sites are presented in separate appendices.

1.7.2 This first section has provided an introduction to sustainability appraisal, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The rest of the report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – the methodology of how this appraisal was carried out, any limitations/uncertainties and consultation requirements.
- **Section 3** – an overview of the scoping stage and the sustainability appraisal framework.
- **Section 4** – a summary of the main findings of the sustainability appraisal work undertaken for previous Core Strategy stages between 2007-2011.
- **Section 5** – a summary of the main findings of the sustainability appraisal of the Wiltshire Core Strategy core policies, including options assessed, strategic sites, significant effects, mitigation measures and favoured options.
- **Section 6** – an overview of significant effects, cumulative effects, potential mitigation measures and the overall sustainability of the Core Strategy.

- **Section 7** – the Sustainability Appraisal Report must include proposals for future monitoring of predicted significant effects once the Core Strategy is implemented – this section briefly describes those proposals.
- **Section 8** – Next steps in the Core Strategy and sustainability appraisal process.

2 Methodology

2.1 Approach adopted in carrying out the sustainability appraisal

2.1.1 The methodology for this appraisal was developed in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents* (ODPM, 2005)
- *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive* (ODPM, 2005)
- Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Sustainability Appraisal guidance online at: <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageId=152450>

2.1.2 The guidance issued by PAS is the latest official guidance for sustainability appraisal and replaces the section relating to Development Plan Documents in the 2005 ODPM guidance. The latest guidance on SEA remains that issued by ODPM in 2005.

2.1.3 The sustainability appraisal is undertaken by a dedicated Sustainability Appraisal/SEA officer at Wiltshire Council which enables the sustainability appraisal to be undertaken as an integral and iterative part of plan development.

2.2 Sustainability appraisal stages

2.2.1 The sustainability appraisal is carried out in a series of stages, which includes setting the context and objectives for the sustainability appraisal, developing and assessing the effects of policy options and carrying out consultation on a Sustainability Appraisal Report. The stages of preparation are shown below in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 - Stages of sustainability appraisal preparation

Preparation stage	Description
A – Setting the context and objectives for the sustainability appraisal	This stage sets the scope for the ongoing appraisal by establishing an evidence base. A separate ‘Scoping Report’ and ‘Scoping Report Addendum’ have been completed and published for consultation.
B – Developing options and assessing effects	The sustainability appraisal is involved in developing policy options from the outset. Development and appraisal of options is an iterative process, with effects being predicted and evaluated for their significance, and options amended. Potential mitigation measures for any predicted significant effects are considered at this stage.
C – Preparing a	This report is a key output of the appraisal process, presenting

Sustainability Appraisal Report	information on the effects of the plan in a format suitable for public consultation. It is published with the Core Strategy.
D – Consulting on the plan and Sustainability Appraisal Report	The Sustainability Appraisal Report is published for consultation alongside the plan concerned. Consultation must include the statutory environmental consultation bodies and the public.
E – Monitoring significant effects	The predicted significant effects are monitored after implementation of the plan to identify any unforeseen effects and undertake appropriate remedial action.

2.2.2 A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, meeting the requirements of Stage A, was published in April 2010. This culminated in the production of a sustainability appraisal framework or set of sustainability objectives. This framework provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared, and forms the basis of the appraisal of Core Strategy effects. More detail is provided on this scoping stage in Section 3 of this report and the framework of sustainability objectives is presented in Appendix B.

2.3 Developing and refining policies and ‘reasonable alternatives’

2.3.1 The SEA Directive requires an assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the Core Strategy, and “reasonable alternatives”. Developing options and alternatives is an important part of both the plan-making and sustainability appraisal process. For development plan documents such as the Core Strategy, the reasonable alternatives are the different options put forward during the preparation of the plan.

2.3.2 Given the duty on authorities preparing Core Strategies to contribute to sustainable development, and as part of the broader principle of frontloading, Wiltshire Council (and the former district councils before it) began developing options from the start of the Core Strategy preparation process. The sustainability appraisal has been involved from an early stage in this development of options to help ensure that any adverse effects of proposals were identified as early as possible. Working with the public and stakeholders, including local strategic partners and the SEA consultation bodies has a major role in identifying and refining options. It can also help to ensure that options that could be considered ‘reasonable alternatives’ are satisfactorily defined and covered in the sustainability appraisal.

2.3.3 The first iteration of the Core Strategy in October 2009, ‘Wiltshire 2026’ considered strategic housing site options for towns across Wiltshire. The sustainability appraisal assessed up to four different strategic options for each town, helping to inform the decision to take forward a ‘preferred option’ for each town. A summary of this options appraisal work from 2009 is presented in Section 4 of this report.

2.3.4 For subsequent stages of the Core Strategy, a number of topic groups were established to develop policies and policy options/alternatives. This work has been published alongside the Core Strategy in a series of topic papers. The sustainability appraisal officer was involved in these topic groups and advised on the relative sustainability of different options.

- 2.3.5 Additional strategic housing and employment options have also been considered for a number of towns in Wiltshire since 2009, and these have undergone additional assessment to supplement the work undertaken previously. Details of these additional options are presented in the community area sections of this report.
- 2.3.6 In this report, for each policy area being considered, it is clearly indicated which option or options are more favourable in sustainability terms, and recommendations are made as to which options should be taken forward. These recommendations have clear links to the appraisal work undertaken, and potential amendments to policy options are recommended, where appropriate.
- 2.3.7 It is important to note that sustainability appraisal helps to identify the most sustainable options to be taken forward but it does not decide which options are taken forward. The SEA Practical Guide⁴, paragraph 5.B.7 states “It is not the purpose of the SEA to decide the alternative to be chosen for the plan or programme. This is the role of the decision-makers who have to make choices on the plan or programme to be adopted. The SEA simply provides information on the relative environmental performance of alternatives, and can make the decision-making process more transparent”. Similar wording is given in the 2005 ODPM guidance on sustainability appraisal.
- 2.3.8 A summary of the main findings of the appraisal of options is presented in Section 5, with detailed matrices presented in Appendices H, I and J.

2.4 Assessing the significance of effects

- 2.4.1 The SEA Directive requires an assessment of “likely significant effects...taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme”. PAS guidance⁵ states ‘you are only required to assess the likely significant effects of the plan, not all possible effects’.
- 2.4.2 In this report, the social, environmental and economic effects of all Core Strategy policies have been predicted and evaluated for their significance. The sustainability appraisal framework, presented in Appendix B, forms the basis for the assessment throughout the report.
- 2.4.3 Prediction of effects involves identifying what changes might occur to the sustainability baseline over time – these changes are then evaluated for their likely significance, in terms of their probability, duration, frequency, geographical area and size of population likely to be affected. The value and vulnerability of certain areas and populations also affects the evaluation.

⁴ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005)

⁵ Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Sustainability Appraisal guidance online at:
<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=152450>.

2.4.4 Assessment matrices (contained in appendices) present the detailed findings. Each matrix provides a discussion of likely effects, their potential significance and possible mitigation measures. Within each matrix, there are columns entitled 'T', 'R', 'S' and 'L' which relate to the following:

T = Temporary Scale of effects (Short Term, ST (0-5 years); Medium Term, MT (5-10 years); Long Term, LT (10+ years))

R = Reversibility of effects (Reversible, R; Irreversible, I)

S = Spatial Scale of effects (Area Specific, A; County Specific, C; Cross Border, B)

L = Likelihood of effects (Likely, L; Unlikely, U)

2.4.5 A significance 'score', ranging from ++ (significant positive) to -- (significant negative) is given against each objective, based on the following criteria:

Table 2.2: Effects assessment - general criteria

Significance Assessment	Description
++	Option would have a significant positive effect in its current form as it would help resolve an existing issue or maximise opportunities, leading to significant benefits. SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE
+	Option would have a positive effect
?	Effect of option is uncertain
0	Option would have a neutral effect
-	Option would have a negative effect
--	The option would have a significant negative effect as it would substantially exacerbate existing problems with mitigation problematic. SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE
Note: assessment of some objectives for a given option may be considered to be positive or negative but with some uncertainties, in which case a symbol such as +/? or -/? may be used.	

2.4.6 Effects evaluation is then considered using more detailed criteria for each sustainability objective (see Appendix C). For example, the criteria used to assess policies against the sustainability objective relating to biodiversity are as follows:

Table 2.3: Effects assessment – detailed criteria by sustainability objective

Sustainability objective 1: protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses	
++ SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE EFFECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adverse effects on biodiversity or geological features • Policy/option will have significant positive effects on existing biodiversity or geological features • Protection of the natural environment is strongly promoted and the policy/option will offer significant opportunities for habitat restoration, enhancement or creation
+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adverse effects on biodiversity or geological features • Policy/option will have positive effects on existing biodiversity or geological features • There may be further opportunities to maximise beneficial effects through habitat restoration, enhancement or creation
?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects are uncertain and further information is required to establish potential effects
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy/option will have a neutral effect

-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited adverse effects on biodiversity or geological features • Limited mitigation proposed or there is potential for mitigation
-- SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE EFFECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy/option will have significant adverse effects on a designated site or sites • AND/OR will have significant adverse effects on protected or notable species • AND/OR will lead to the loss or significant damage to ancient woodland • No mitigation, or inadequate mitigation measures proposed OR mitigation considered problematic

2.4.7 It is important to note that whilst criteria such as this can help in forming a judgement, significance has to be determined individually in each case i.e. effects which are significant in one situation are not necessarily significant in another. Flexibility is important and the criteria are used as a guideline as to the significance of effects. PAS guidance⁶ states that ‘ultimately, the significance of an effect is a matter of judgment and should require no more than a clear and reasonable justification’.

2.4.8 Further discussion of policies in Section 5 of this report focuses on effects considered ‘significant’. Where uncertainties exist or where it is considered that insufficient information exists to enable an accurate assessment to be made this has been noted. Uncertainties are always likely to exist in a sustainability appraisal exercise because effects identified are likely future effects and often cannot be known with absolute certainty. Effects will often depend on the implementation of a policy or the precise nature and location of development at any one site.

Assessing cumulative effects

2.4.9 The assessment of effects of Core Strategy policies will include potential secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, as required by the SEA Directive. Many sustainability problems result from the accumulation of multiple, small and often indirect effects rather than a few large obvious ones, and consideration of such effects will be included in any further discussion of significant effects in this report.

2.4.10 An overview of the likely **key** cumulative effects of the Core Strategy is presented in Section 6.

2.5 Consideration of mitigation measures

2.5.1 The SEA Directive requires consideration of “measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”. These are referred to as mitigation measures, and can include recommendations for improving beneficial effects.

2.5.2 In the assessment matrices, potential mitigation measures are considered for likely adverse and positive effects. For any effects judged likely to be significant, these are discussed further in Section 5 and 6 of this report.

⁶ Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Sustainability Appraisal guidance online at: <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=152450>.

2.6 Assessment of significant changes to the Core Strategy

- 2.6.1 Following the consultation on the Wiltshire Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document (draft Core Strategy), a number of changes are made to the document. These changes are considered to be minor in nature and do not alter the overall substance of the Core Strategy. Changes are made in the interests of improving clarity and understanding of the document, and to update it to improve consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.6.2 These changes were determined not to be significant enough to warrant further detailed sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy or the proposed submission policies. However, amendments have been made to the Sustainability Appraisal Report to take account of the latest consultation representations and these are summarised in Appendix G.
- 2.6.3 If any significant changes are made to the Core Strategy as a result of the examination process that may lead to additional significant effects not already covered in the sustainability appraisal, the Sustainability Appraisal Report may need to be reviewed and updated, with changes documented.

2.7 Appraisal limitations, difficulties encountered and assumptions made

- 2.7.1 A key issue in undertaking the appraisal of the Core Strategy is the strategic nature of the document and the uncertainty surrounding precisely how its ambitions would be implemented on the ground and the degree to which they would be achieved in practice (particularly since many different partners are involved in its delivery). A key assumption was made that the policies in the Core Strategy would be fully implemented (i.e. they were taken at 'face value').
- 2.7.2 In terms of the prediction and evaluation of significant effects, the Core Strategy defines strategic areas for housing and employment development, and it is possible to predict effects that may be likely in those areas through, for example, examining proximity to sensitive environmental receptors and predicting future increases in traffic volumes. However, there is often a degree of uncertainty regarding these future effects; more detailed impact assessments will often be required and this has been stated in the sustainability appraisal where this is the case.
- 2.7.3 Actual effects will often depend on elements such as the type of development that takes place, its exact location in terms of sensitive environmental receptors, the sustainability of buildings i.e. materials used, energy and water efficiency etc., design quality and transport mitigation measures. The extent of any mitigation measures to prevent or reduce any effects or compensatory measures for loss will be very important and cannot always be fully assessed at this stage.
- 2.7.4 Every effort has been made to present an accurate baseline situation in the scoping report and a Scoping Report Addendum has been published to update the sustainability baseline and key issues. This addendum has reviewed the policies, plans and programmes, baseline information, key sustainability issues and

sustainability objectives in order to provide an updated evidence base for the ongoing sustainability appraisal. This was prepared taking into account the responses received from Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency who were consulted during this exercise. It is not intended to replace the Scoping Report and therefore a full consultation exercise was not undertaken.

2.7.5 Inevitably, a degree of judgement has been required (see para. 2.4.6) in undertaking the policy appraisals to determine the 'significance' of effects. Sustainability appraisal relies on expert judgement, which is guided by knowledge of the likely impacts of the plan, the baseline data available and responses and information provided by consultees and other stakeholders. The assessment has been carried out and reported using an expert, judgement-led qualitative assessment. A 'precautionary approach' has been taken, especially with qualitative judgements and any uncertainties are highlighted if there is any doubt as to the effect of the plan.

2.7.6 Assessing policies on a strategic scale with such wide-ranging implications has made it difficult to apply thresholds for when an effect of a policy is likely to be 'significant'. Nevertheless, the sustainability appraisal has proved to be a useful tool in raising awareness of potential effects to inform the content of the Core Strategy.

2.8 Consultation requirements for the sustainability appraisal

The SEA Directive requires that...

"authorities with relevant environmental responsibilities and the public...shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan...and accompanying environmental report..."

2.8.1 The SEA Directive creates the following requirements for consultation:

- Authorities which, because of their environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned by the effects of implementing the plan or programme, must be consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report. These authorities are designated in the SEA Regulations as the Consultation Bodies.
- The public and the Consultation Bodies must be consulted on the draft plan or programme and the Environmental Report, and must be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinions.

2.8.2 In England, the 'consultation bodies' are Natural England, English Heritage and Environment Agency, and they have been included in the consultation at every stage in the development of the Core Strategy. It is also recommended that public and stakeholder involvement on the sustainability appraisal is carried out at each stage in order to ensure that policies meet the objectives of sustainable development and this has taken place throughout.

- 2.8.3 Wiltshire Council has involved a wide range of stakeholders in its consultation, including neighbouring authorities, community groups and other key stakeholders. The consultation process has included public exhibitions held in each of Wiltshire's community areas where information on the sustainability appraisal, SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment has been available for the public to view and comment on.

Consultation on the scope and level of detail of the sustainability appraisal

- 2.8.4 Consultation has previously been undertaken on the scope and level of detail of the sustainability appraisal (the 'Scoping Report') from January to February 2009 and the results were taken into account in a revised version published in April 2010. This Scoping Report was produced to provide an evidence base for the sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy but also for other documents within the Local Development Framework.
- 2.8.5 A Scoping Report Addendum document has also been produced which provides an update to the information contained in the Scoping Report. The purpose of this addendum is to provide an updated evidence base for the sustainability appraisal process that is currently being undertaken on the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and potentially for the assessment of future local development documents within Wiltshire's Local Development Framework (LDF). The Addendum is not intended to replace the Scoping Report.
- 2.8.6 The three SEA environmental consultation bodies provided comments on the addendum, meeting the requirements of the SEA Directive, and these were taken into account in the final version.
- 2.8.7 The Scoping Report and Addendum paper, and details of all consultation comments received, can be viewed on the council's website at:
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/ldfsustainabilityappraisal.htm>

Wiltshire Core Strategy sustainability appraisal consultation

- 2.8.8 An initial Sustainability Appraisal Report was published alongside the 'Wiltshire 2026'⁷ document for consultation in October 2009 and an interim Sustainability Appraisal Report was published alongside the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document⁸ in June 2011.
- 2.8.9 The latest iteration of the Sustainability Appraisal Report accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy **Pre-Submission** document for a consultation period of 6 weeks from 20th February 2012 to 2nd April 2012. **The most recent consultation responses on the Core Strategy relevant to the sustainability appraisal, received from the statutory environmental consultation bodies and the public are presented in Appendix G. It is**

⁷ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire's Future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009).

⁸ Working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire – Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (Wiltshire Council, June 2011).

shown how these comments have been taken into account in the sustainability appraisal and in the Core Strategy, where applicable.

3 Sustainability appraisal context and objectives (scoping)

3.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires an environmental report to include...

“An outline of the plan’s relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”

“The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”

“The environmental characteristics of those areas likely to be significantly affected”

“Any existing 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 Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and Habitats Directive”.

“The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State 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”

3.1.1 This stage of the sustainability appraisal (shown as stage A in Table 2.1) involves compiling background information needed before a sustainability appraisal can be undertaken; it is often referred to as ‘scoping’. It establishes an evidence base for ongoing appraisal work and culminates in a framework of sustainability objectives.

3.1.2 Key tasks in this evidence compilation include:

- identifying relevant policies, plans and programmes
- collecting baseline information
- identifying key sustainability issues in Wiltshire
- establishing sustainability objectives.

3.1.3 This evidence base work was published by Wiltshire Council in a Scoping Report in April 2010 after a comprehensive and wide ranging public consultation exercise. Further details of the consultation undertaken, including responses received and how these were taken into account in the scoping work and the report itself can be viewed or downloaded at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/ldfsustainabilityappraisal.

3.1.4 The scoping work is subject to review as evidence becomes outdated and new information is made available that can assist in the assessment of significant effects. An addendum to the Wiltshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has been produced to provide an updated evidence base for the sustainability appraisal

process that is being undertaken on the Wiltshire Core Strategy. It does not replace the Scoping Report and therefore has not undergone a full consultation exercise.

3.1.5 In Section 3.4 of this report, trend information reported in the Scoping Report has been used to identify the “future baseline” - the potential evolution of the baseline in the absence of the plan, as required by the SEA Directive. This prediction is based on current and past trends and would be subject to many external factors that the local authority cannot control, such as government policy and global issues such as climate change.

3.1.6 The key elements of the Scoping Report are described in the following sections.

3.2 Relationship with other plans and programmes

3.2.1 This report is required to highlight the environmental protection objectives which are relevant to the Core Strategy and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation. In order to establish a clear scope for the sustainability appraisal it is necessary (and a requirement of SEA) to review and develop an understanding of the wider range of “policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives” that are relevant to the LDF. This includes International, European, National, Regional and local level policies, plans and strategies.

3.2.2 A thorough and wide-ranging review has been undertaken of relevant plans, policies and programmes that include international conventions and EU policies through to Core Strategies and other local level plans and programmes. The Core Strategy is influenced in various ways by other plans or programmes, or by external environmental protection objectives such as those laid down in policies or legislation, and this review has enabled potential synergies to be identified as well as any potential any inconsistencies and constraints.

3.2.3 This review is presented in the Scoping Report and subsequent Scoping Report Addendum which are separate documents but form part of this Sustainability Appraisal Report. The key requirements that the Core Strategy takes account of in the ‘Core policies’ outlined in Section 5 of this report are as follows:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Core Strategy will need to be in conformity with the NPPF which makes clear that achieving sustainable development is still the purpose of the planning system; this includes planning for the social, environmental and economic needs of a community.

3.2.5 The NPPF includes a set of 12 core land-use planning principles which the Core Strategy must conform with. These are that planning should:

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should be kept up-to-date, and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should

provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;

- not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;
- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);
- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;
- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and
- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

People, Places and Promises: Wiltshire Community Plan 2011 - 2026

- 3.2.6 People, places and promises is the proposed new Wiltshire Community Plan to take the place of the existing sustainable community strategy. The Core Strategy provides the spatial expression of this plan and must take account of its objectives.

Wiltshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1

- 3.2.7 The Core Strategy must take these findings into account when deciding on strategic locations for development. This summarises information on the application of the Sequential Test, a broad scale assessment of flood risk for potential strategic developments, flood risk management measures for consideration for new developments and makes recommendations for flood risk policy and site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) guidance.

European Landscape Convention

- 3.2.8 This convention seeks to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of England's landscapes. Article 5(d) specifically requires landscape to be integrated into planning policy, and the Government has recognised the need to make the statutory framework fully effective when reviewing policy.

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

- 3.2.9 The LTP steers the implementation of national transport policies at the local level. It sets out a long-term transport strategy for Wiltshire, a shorter-term implementation plan and a number of supporting strategies.

European Directive 2001/42/EC (2001)

- 3.2.10 This requires Member States to carry out an environmental assessment to determine whether plans/programmes are likely to have significant environmental effects; SEA is a mandatory requirement for land use plans.

Habitats Directive (92/43/EC)

- 3.2.11 The Habitats Directive aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species. These measures include designation and strict protection of the best resources of these habitats and species as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), part of a coherent European network known as Natura 2000. Development plans and projects likely to affect a Natura 2000 site must undergo a strict 'appropriate assessment' process before they can be adopted or permitted.

Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)

- 3.2.12 The EU meets its obligations for bird species under the Bern Convention and Bonn Convention through the Birds Directive including a mandatory requirement for the identification and classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Development plans and projects likely to affect a Natura 2000 site must undergo a strict 'appropriate assessment' process before they can be adopted or permitted.

Water Framework Directive

- 3.2.13 Currently a range of inconsistent European legislation covers different aspects of water management. The Directive aims to introduce a simpler approach which will result in greater protection for a vital part of the environment. Successful implementation of the WFD will help to protect all elements of the water cycle and enhance the quality of groundwaters, rivers, lakes, estuaries and seas.

Government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system

- 3.2.14 This circular sets out the procedures to be followed by planning authorities in order to discharge statutory responsibilities. This includes procedures for carrying out appropriate assessment for Natura 2000 sites, authorising operations likely to damage SSSIs, protection of Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats, and protected species.

Planning strategically across local boundaries

- 3.2.15 Public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries and the Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities. Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans.
- 3.2.16 It is therefore important for the local authority to be aware of the relevant strategic objectives and/or any specific requirements in the Core Strategies of its neighbouring authorities that would have particular cross-boundary effects, and it is a requirement of the SEA Directive. A review of the key objectives/issues in these Core Strategies that are considered particularly relevant to Wiltshire has been undertaken as an update to the information contained within the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. This review has not highlighted any additional issues that the Core Strategy needs to take account of but it is important to recognise that many of these Core Strategies are now at a more advanced stage and therefore the review is necessary. The summary of objectives is presented below:

Bath & North East Somerset Core Strategy (December 2010)

Relevant key strategic issues: climate change, growth, the economy
Strategic objective 3: Economic development, diversification and prosperity
Strategic objective 5: Meeting housing needs
Strategic objective 7: Delivering well connected places accessible by sustainable means of transport

Cotswold District Council Second Issues and Options Paper (December 2010)

Strategic objective H3: Allocate housing development to meet local needs in the absence of Regional Housing Targets
Strategic objective EC2: Consider Cotswold Water Park and Kemble Airfield as positively guided special policy areas with potential for new economic development
Strategic objectives CWP1-CWP5 concerning Cotswold Water Park

Christchurch and East Dorset joint Core Strategy pre-submission (April 2012)

Relevant key strategic issues:

- Almost limitless housing demand, given the popularity of the area to live in.
- The need to adapt to the challenges of climate change, particularly the increased risk of flooding, as well as measures to reduce the impact of new development on climate change.

Strategic objective 3: To adapt to the challenges of climate change.

Strategic objective 5: To deliver a suitable, affordable and sustainable range of housing to provide for local needs.

Strategic objective 6: To reduce the need for our communities to travel, and to do so more easily by a range of travel choices.

Mendip District Council Core Strategy Preferred Option (February 2011)

Relevant key strategic issues:

- Chronic undersupply of housing in major centres surround the district
- Commuting patterns: Providing appropriate jobs at Frome to recapture a workforce travelling outside Mendip for employment

Strategic objective 1: Deliver suitable employment land and premises...with additional provision in Frome to promote a better balance of jobs and economically active people.

Strategic objective 14: Deliver new housing within our towns at levels that maintain or, as in the case of Frome, improve the balance of jobs and economically active people and rural housing that is clearly related to identified local needs.

New Forest District Council Core Strategy (October 2009)

Key issue 1 – Housing needs

Key issue 2 - Local economy

Key issue 3 – Climate change

Key issue 8 – Impacts on the National Park

Key issue 10 – Transport

Key issue 14 – Tourism and visitors

Strategic objectives:

2. Climate change and environmental sustainability
3. Housing
4. Economy
5. Travel
9. Leisure and recreation

New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (December 2010)

Key challenges:

Climate change

Economic growth in the Park and in the surrounding areas

Strategic objectives:

- Plan for the likely impacts of climate change
- Support development which encourages sustainable tourism and recreation
- Reduce the impacts of traffic

North Dorset District Council Draft Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (March 2010)

Key issues and challenges:

- Addressing the causes and effects of climate change
- Delivering more sustainable forms of development
- Delivering more sustainable patterns of development
- Protecting internationally important wildlife sites

Strategic objectives:

4: Meeting the district's housing needs

South Gloucestershire Core Strategy Proposed Changes Version (December 2010)

Key issues:

- Reducing and adapting to climate change
- Managing future development
- Maintaining economic prosperity
- Providing housing for all

Strategic objectives:

- Responding to climate change and high quality design
- Managing future development
- Managing economic prosperity
- Providing housing and community infrastructure

South Somerset District Council Draft Core Strategy inc Preferred Options (October 2010)

Strategic objectives :

5. A comprehensive, high performing economy
6. A balanced housing market
7. An Eco Town for Yeovil to deliver on the balanced housing market objective
8. Movement toward a Carbon Neutral economy by 2030 (for new and existing buildings).

Swindon Borough Council Core Strategy Revised Proposed Submission (March 2011)

Strategic objectives:

- SO2: Infrastructure requirements
- SO3: Economy
- SO4: Housing
- SO7: Transport
- SO10: Green Infrastructure

Test Valley Borough Council Core Strategy (January 2012)

Key issues in the Borough:

- Providing for the future housing needs, types and tenures within the Borough
- Providing a range of job opportunities
- Ensure development addresses sustainability issues such as combating climate change, implementing water and energy efficiency measures and reusing resources
- Protect high standards of water and air quality

- Encourage use of public transport, cycling and walking networks to help reduce reliance on cars and provide choice

Vale of White Horse Core Strategy Preferred Options (January 2009)

Strategic objectives:

- The development proposed for the area in the South East Plan has been provided
- The local economy is successful. There are diverse, secure, well-paid and rewarding jobs.
- The water supply to the residents of the Vale and surrounding areas is secure, reliable and safe.

West Berkshire Council Submission Core Strategy inc main modifications (March 2012)

Cross boundary issues identified relating to Wiltshire:

- Rural issues do create synergies and a range of cross border activity does exist between West Berkshire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Hampshire often associated with the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- The concentration of towns surrounding West Berkshire with strong economic growth agendas has the ability to attract business investment and labour away from the District

Strategic objectives:

- Tackling climate change
- Housing growth
- Housing needs
- Economy

3.3 Baseline evidence

3.3.1 The review of plans, policies and programmes was followed by a thorough review of the sustainability 'baseline' in Wiltshire. Baseline identifies what is currently happening in Wiltshire and the likely future state of the area if current trends were to continue. It provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them.

3.3.2 The baseline review consists of both qualitative and quantitative information, including an analysis of indicators which show trends on whether the situation is getting better or worse. This information is presented within the Scoping Report and subsequent Scoping Report addendum, as described previously.

3.4 Likely evolution of the area without implementation of the Core Strategy

3.4.1 The SEA Directive requires that the environmental report includes a discussion of "the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment **and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme**". Much of the baseline information collected during the scoping stage records the state of the situation in Wiltshire at a point or points in time. However, the topic papers also include analysis of trends over several years, and this enables us to think about how Wiltshire might evolve if no Core Strategy was implemented.

3.4.2 This section will give a brief outline of the potential evolution of the area without implementation of the Core Strategy, based on evidence gathered in the Scoping Report and set out in order of the 13 scoping topic paper themes. It is important to note that this is a theoretical exercise, but is based on known trends and sustainability issues already occurring. The actual future situation will also depend on many external factors that are outside the control of the local authority, such as government policy, plans of neighbouring authorities, climatic factors etc.

Biodiversity

3.4.3 Biodiversity in Wiltshire continues to be threatened by many activities, including habitat loss and fragmentation, agriculture, housing development, road building, water pollution, air pollution and climate change. The Core Strategy is likely to have some adverse effects on existing biodiversity assets through the level of growth proposed, especially through development of greenfield land. However, it also contains strong policies concerned with protecting and enhancing the natural environment, including policies to protect and enhance biodiversity and promoting Green Infrastructure (GI) are one example of this.

3.4.4 Without implementation of the Core Strategy, we will be relying on existing saved policies that are possibly weaker and less coordinated and do not give such a strong steer towards protection and enhancement of the natural environment. There is no current saved policy on GI which will provide a strategically planned network of multi-functional green spaces across Wiltshire, giving wider opportunities to promote biodiversity enhancement while also increasing people's enjoyment of nature.

3.4.5 Development proposals will still come forward if there was no Core Strategy, but possibly in less sustainable locations that may directly lead to increased loss of biodiversity or may not provide the mitigation and enhancement measures that would be needed.

3.4.6 In terms of potential effects of climate change on biodiversity, whether we have a Core Strategy or not is unlikely to be significant as climate change is a global issue. Our effects on the climate are most likely to arise from human activity, especially energy use and transport resulting from existing and future population. Any future changes in the climate are likely to have both positive and negative effects on biodiversity, with some species and habitats benefitting and others being adversely affected.

Land and soil resources

3.4.7 In Wiltshire, there is a limited amount of brownfield land to develop and in the future, an increasing amount of greenfield land is likely to be needed for housing and employment growth. The Core Strategy promotes development of Wiltshire's remaining brownfield sites, particularly in town centres and through the Trowbridge and Chippenham Vision statements. These sites, which will often require significant remediation, may not be developed as quickly, or at all, without the pro-active

approach of the Core Strategy. There is also likely to be less emphasis on high density development in sustainable locations, such as town centres, that can benefit from good public transport links and proximity to local services and facilities.

- 3.4.8 Policies regarding waste are contained within other DPDs and recycling rates continue to increase, however the amount of waste also increases with an increasing population. The need for waste related infrastructure has been assessed through the Core Strategy and proposed Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), particularly to meet the demands of new housing, and without Core Strategy implementation the necessary waste infrastructure may not be in place to deal with future population growth.

Water resources and flood risk

- 3.4.9 Water demand is increasing with a larger population, and climate change may further increase this demand. The Core Strategy considers provision of necessary water infrastructure to cope with anticipated population growth and contains policies to protect water resources and ensure water efficiency measures are incorporated in new development. Without the Core Strategy, this infrastructure may not be adequate to cope with future water scarcity issues or adequate measures in place to reduce water use and protect water resources from pollution. However, with the expected improvements to Building Regulations in future years, the water efficiency of new dwellings is likely to improve.
- 3.4.10 Risk of flooding is likely to be greater if development takes place in unsuitable locations where the risk of flooding is higher; this is more likely where strategic sites are not allocated through a Core Strategy. The Core Strategy promotes strategic sites for development which have been subject to sustainability appraisal, where flood risk has been assessed and which are capable of accommodating development in Flood Zone 1.

Air quality and environmental pollution

- 3.4.11 In Wiltshire, issues regarding declining air quality are often linked with traffic volumes and congestion, particularly in town centres, with a number of designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Air quality is likely to continue to decline in some areas without policies that promote development of sustainable transport links and without policies that promote housing development in sustainable locations that reduce the need to travel. The Core Strategy promotes development of strategic sites that are capable of incorporating sustainable transport links and contains policies that promote sustainable forms of transport. Without the Core Strategy air quality is likely to decline in other areas that are not currently designated as AQMAs.
- 3.4.12 Issues such as noise and light pollution (including tranquillity concerns) and other forms of pollution are largely caused by urban development and subsequent increases in traffic. The amount of development may not necessarily be any greater without Core Strategy implementation, but development pressure is more likely in less sustainable locations, leading to increases in environmental pollution.

Climatic factors

- 3.4.13 Wiltshire's contribution towards greenhouse gas emissions is most likely to come from energy use in the home and transport. The Core Strategy promotes levels of energy efficiency in line with national policy, provision of sustainable transport modes, residential and employment development in locations that reduce the need to travel and promotes renewable energy and other forms of low/zero carbon energy generation. Our impacts on climate change and our ability to adapt to future effects are likely to be greater if there is reliance on current policies that are not based on up-to-date evidence and do not offer a coordinated approach.
- 3.4.14 Reliance on existing local plan policies is also likely to leave us more exposed to the effects of climate change, such as water shortages and flood risk. Core Strategy policies concerning infrastructure provision, promotion of sustainable drainage systems and GI will increase our ability to adapt to future, unpredictable climate effects.

Historic environment

- 3.4.15 In the absence of the Core Strategy, protection of the historic environment could be assumed to remain as it is now. Core Strategy policy possibly provides increased protection and enhancement of the historic environment and will replace a number of policies of the former district councils, giving greater clarification through one Wiltshire-wide policy.
- 3.4.16 We cannot be certain whether levels of development and growth would be higher or lower without Core Strategy implementation or where development would take place. Without an up-to-date plan in place, development is likely to come forward in less sustainable locations that could cause more harm to the historic environment, including designated and non-designated sites and their settings.

Landscapes

- 3.4.17 In the future, landscape character may be threatened by lack of appropriate management, inappropriate development in unsustainable locations and climate change if strong policies are not adopted through a Core Strategy. Without the Core Strategy, areas deemed to be of poor townscape character may not be pro-actively improved, leading to degradation in townscape quality.
- 3.4.18 Wiltshire has a relatively high percentage of land covered by national and local landscape designations that currently receive a high degree of protection. It is unclear whether Core Strategy policies will strengthen this already high level of protection. The main threat to Wiltshire's landscapes is arguably from urban development; the Core Strategy ensures that strategic housing and employment sites have been identified in sustainable locations which have had their landscape impacts assessed and where relevant mitigation and enhancement measures have been considered.

Population and housing

- 3.4.19 A review has been undertaken of Wiltshire's housing requirements to 2026 – this has looked at past trends and includes the needs of existing residents, potential future levels of in-migration and the needs of the local economy.
- 3.4.20 Without the pro-active planning represented by Core Strategy policy, it may be difficult to meet future housing need and affordable housing need in particular. Affordability is a particular problem in Wiltshire as it is an attractive area to live in with a high quality environment. Delivery of adequate levels of affordable housing is not likely to result through existing local plan policies.
- 3.4.21 There are no current policies which adequately deal with another key Wiltshire issue – a significantly ageing population. This is an issue across the country but a specific one in Wiltshire. The Core Strategy contains policy to address this issue, to include provision of suitable accommodation and infrastructure. The future accommodation needs of older and vulnerable people are unlikely to be addressed without Core Strategy implementation.

Healthy communities

- 3.4.22 Development of the Core Strategy has included research into future infrastructure requirements to meet the needs of housing and employment growth and a growing population. This includes provision of health and social care provision, green infrastructure, recreational, sports and leisure facilities and the need for open space provision. Water, waste, transport and energy infrastructure are also key requirements. These are all key components of healthy communities and the Core Strategy has brought this research forward into policy, providing an overarching policy for decision-makers, developers and infrastructure providers. This is likely to provide greater certainty and achieve higher levels of infrastructure provision than existing saved policies that do not offer a coordinated approach.
- 3.4.23 Wiltshire, as many other parts of the country, faces a number of pressures in the future, including an ageing population, increasing levels of obesity and rising energy prices that will increase levels of fuel poverty. The Core Strategy helps to address all of these issues through consideration of appropriate infrastructure that can improve health and wellbeing, allowing more people to lead healthy lifestyles.

Inclusive communities

- 3.4.24 A reliance on existing saved policies is unlikely to achieve greater benefits for social inclusion and reducing poverty and deprivation. The Core Strategy has an important role in reducing social exclusion through providing for housing and employment needs, locating developments in areas that have good access to a range of services and facilities, ensuring that there are good sustainable transport links, especially to/from town centres, and through ensuring that development contributes in terms of providing the range of services and facilities that people need.

- 3.4.25 The Core Strategy will indirectly influence household income, employment levels and social inclusion through allocating land for housing and employment uses and being proactive in helping local businesses to expand and other businesses to locate in Wiltshire. This is the main way the Core Strategy can influence levels of poverty and deprivation.

Education and skills

- 3.4.26 Without revised policy through the Core Strategy and associated research into employment land demand, future need for employment land is unlikely to be met for local businesses and those businesses wanting to move to the area. This will have a detrimental impact on employment and subsequent skills levels and training/apprenticeship opportunities.
- 3.4.27 Future housing growth in Wiltshire may not provide appropriate developer contributions towards educational provision if relying on current policies that are inconsistent, and in some cases non-existent, across the former district council areas. A number of areas are currently at capacity in terms of primary and secondary provision and the Core Strategy is the most likely mechanism with which to ensure development contributes to future provision.

Transport

- 3.4.28 It is likely that current trends of increasing car use, particularly to and from work, and levels of out-commuting will continue without implementation of the Core Strategy. This may reduce the availability and viability of public transport services throughout Wiltshire, therefore helping to increase traffic on the highway network, resulting in pressure to build new roads. This will have a disproportionate effect on rural residents who may find rural public transport services continuing to decline, increasing social exclusion in terms of access to services and facilities.
- 3.4.29 Promotion of sustainable transport – including walking, cycling and public transport – which the Core Strategy does alongside the Local Transport Plan, will help reduce the pressures on Wiltshire’s roads and may bring forward alternative and more attractive schemes that will allow people a real choice of transport modes. Allocation of strategic sites that are in more sustainable locations, including mixed-use, can reduce the need to travel and allow greater viability for existing bus services.
- 3.4.30 The need to travel is influenced strongly by the location of housing and jobs and proximity of local services and facilities. Regeneration of town centres and building at higher densities in sustainable locations can all help the viability of public transport and allow investment in walking and cycling routes.

Economy and enterprise

- 3.4.31 Maintaining a buoyant local economy will rely on providing an adequate amount of additional employment land to meet future need and protecting and enhancing existing employment areas. Existing saved policies are variable and inconsistent

across the former district council areas and relying on these is unlikely to provide for future demand from current businesses and will not attract inward investment that is needed to provide new jobs and reduce out-commuting.

- 3.4.32 The Core Strategy promotes regeneration in a number of town centres which will improve the employment offer in these areas and help increase footfall thereby increasing the viability of town centre businesses.

3.5 Key sustainability issues in Wiltshire

- 3.5.1 The review of plans, policies and programmes, and research of the baseline situation in Wiltshire has enabled the identification of key sustainability issues in Wiltshire (including environmental problems as required by the SEA Directive). Sustainability issues can be any problems or uncertainties which need to be understood and addressed before the Core Strategy can be confidently considered sustainable.

- 3.5.2 Identifying sustainability issues is important when reaching an informed view on the sustainability of the Core Strategy. Key issues for Wiltshire have also been identified through awareness of existing problems and concerns in the area, and through consultation with stakeholders.

- 3.5.3 The key sustainability issues in Wiltshire are presented in Appendix D. On the basis of the issues identified, sustainability appraisal objectives have been defined which are used to test how likely the proposals in the Core Strategy and alternative options are to lead to sustainable outcomes. These are discussed in Section 3.6.

3.6 The sustainability appraisal framework

- 3.6.1 The Sustainability Appraisal Framework consists of sustainability objectives which provide a way in which the effects of the Core Strategy can be described, analysed and compared. These objectives were developed as a result of the review of other plans and programmes and baseline, consultation responses and from the identified sustainability issues, in particular.

- 3.6.2 Sustainability appraisal objectives are **different** in concept and purpose from the objectives of the Core Strategy, though there is a degree of overlap. They are not necessarily intended to be achievable, but are more aspirational in nature, and address the full cross-section of sustainability issues, including social, economic and environmental factors laid down by law or policy.

- 3.6.3 The objectives are listed in the following table and these form the basis of the appraisal. The full framework is presented in Appendix B, which includes more detailed 'decision aiding criteria'; the 'decision aiding criteria' help to ensure that all the key issues are included in the framework and considered.

Table 3.1 - Sustainability themes and sustainability objectives

Sustainability theme	Sustainability appraisal objective
Biodiversity	1. Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses
Land and Soil Resources	2. Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings
	3. Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste
Water Resources and Flood Risk	4. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner
	5. Protect people and property from the risk of flooding
Air Quality and Environmental Pollution	6. Improve air quality throughout Wiltshire and minimise all sources of environmental pollution
Climatic Factors	7. Minimise our impacts on climate change and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects
Historic environment	8. Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment
Landscapes	9. Conserve and enhance the character and quality of Wiltshire's rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place
Population and housing	10. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures
Healthy communities	11. Provide a safe and healthy environment in which to live
Inclusive Communities	12. Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive and self-contained communities
	13. Improve equality of access to, and engagement in local, high-quality community services and facilities
Education and skills	14. Raise educational attainment levels across the authority and provide opportunities for people to improve their workplace skills
Transport	15. Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices
Economy and enterprise	16. Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth
	17. Ensure adequate provision of high-quality employment land and diverse employment opportunities to meet the needs of local businesses and a changing workforce

4 Summary of previous sustainability appraisal work relating to the Core Strategy

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Submission Core Strategy builds on work carried out in previous stages of the emerging Core Strategy; each stage was subject to sustainability appraisal. These stages were:

- Preliminary Core Strategy work carried out by the former Wiltshire district authorities (2007-2008)
- *Wiltshire 2026 – planning for Wiltshire’s future* (October 2009)
- *Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document* (June 2011)

4.1.2 A brief summary of the key sustainability appraisal findings from each stage follows.

4.2 Former district authority Core Strategy work undertaken (2007/2008)

4.2.1 The former Wiltshire district councils, prior to the establishment of the unitary authority, carried out some preliminary Core Strategy work and published Issues and Options papers:

- Kennet District Council *Making Places for the Future* (May 2008)
- North Wiltshire District Council *Second Consultation on the Issues and Options* (May 2007)
- West Wiltshire District Council *Issues and Options Paper* (December 2007)

4.2.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy (former Salisbury District Council) has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and this is discussed in Section 1.5.

4.2.3 Further details of the sustainability appraisal work undertaken for the former districts can be found at: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/ldfsustainabilityappraisalldistricts.htm> and in the Core Strategy Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report of June 2011.

4.3 Wiltshire 2026 – planning for Wiltshire’s future (October 2009)

4.3.1 ‘*Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future*’ formed an important stage in the development of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. It brought together all the work carried out by the former district councils (except Salisbury District Council) and presented an overall vision and strategy for development in Wiltshire for the period to 2026.

4.3.2 *Wiltshire 2026*, consulted on between October-December 2009, invited comments on three areas; a vision and strategic objectives, strategic housing site allocations and a spatial strategy for Wiltshire. Strategic thematic policies were not included at that stage. A Sustainability Appraisal Report was published alongside *Wiltshire 2026*.

Strategic vision and objectives

- 4.3.3 The sustainability appraisal found that, overall, the Core Strategy vision and objectives scored well against the sustainability appraisal objectives and that they are reasonably well balanced between social, economic and environmental themes. The assessment found that most effects would be either minor or uncertain. Significant positive outcomes were reported for housing provision, economic growth and employment.
- 4.3.4 Amendments have been made to the vision and strategic objectives since *Wiltshire 2026* was published and the assessment has been reviewed. This is documented in section 5.2 of this report.

Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy

- 4.3.5 The sustainability appraisal of *Wiltshire 2026* reviewed the assessment of the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy. The Spatial Strategy background paper described both a settlement hierarchy and an overall distribution of housing across north, west and east Wiltshire; this was based on the Issues and Options work described in Section 4.2.
- 4.3.6 It was considered important to reassess the options of the former districts against Wiltshire Council's adopted sustainability objectives, as those options had been developed independently and assessed against very different sets of sustainability objectives within their respective sustainability appraisals.

Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy: Kennet District Council

- 4.3.7 A number of options for Kennet were assessed through the sustainability appraisal as follows:

Table 4.1 - Kennet options for spatial distribution of growth

Option	Option description - Kennet
1a	Devizes is the focus of development
1b	Devizes and Tidworth/ Ludgershall are the twin centres for growth
1c	Development directed to Devizes, Marlborough and Tidworth/ Ludgershall
2a	Small scale development to meet local needs directed to Pewsey
2b	Small scale development to meet local needs directed to Pewsey and Market Lavington
2c	Small scale development to meet local needs directed to Pewsey, Market Lavington and selected larger villages

- 4.3.8 For options 1a-1c, options 1b and 1c performed more favourably. It was considered that development should be directed towards all three settlements in accordance with Option 1c but that the scale of growth in Marlborough should be at a reduced rate in comparison to Devizes and Tidworth and Ludgershall due to environmental constraints. Option 1c was identified as the preferred option.
- 4.3.9 On balance, Option 2b was considered to be the most sustainable as growth is focused between two of the larger small settlements, thus focussing improvements to

community facilities and reducing travel. However, some small scale growth was also considered suitable for the other larger villages.

Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy: North Wiltshire District Council

- 4.3.10 Three options for the location of development, including the scale of development, were identified and assessed through the sustainability appraisal for North Wiltshire. These options encompassed the distribution of development across both the main towns and larger villages:

Table 4.2 – North Wiltshire options for spatial distribution of growth

Option	Option description – North Wilts
1	Tier 1 – Chippenham Tier 2 – Calne, Corsham, Malmesbury and Wotton Bassett Tier 3 – Ashton Keynes, Box, Bradenstoke, Christian Malford, Colerne, Cricklade, Curdwell, Derry Hill, Great Somerford, Hullavington, Kington St Michael, Luckington, Lyneham, Oaksey, Purton, Sherston, Sutton Benger and Yatton Keynell.
2	Tier 1 – Chippenham Tier 2 – Calne Tier 3 – Corsham, Malmesbury, Wotton Bassett, Ashton Keynes, Box, Bradenstoke, Christian Malford, Colerne, Cricklade, Curdwell, Derry Hill, Great Somerford, Hullavington, Kington St Michael, Luckington, Lyneham, Oaksey, Purton, Sherston, Sutton Benger and Yatton Keynell.
3	Tier 1 – Chippenham Tier 2 – Calne, Corsham, Malmesbury and Wotton Bassett Tier 3 – Ashton Keynes, Box, Colerne, Cricklade, Derry Hill, Hullavington, Lyneham, Purton and Sherston.

- 4.3.11 Option 3 performed much more positively overall as development is focused on a combination of a wider range of market towns and a narrower range of larger villages. This would maximise community value and minimise the scale of growth being directed towards locations with poorer accessibility. Option 3 was identified as the preferred option.

Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy: West Wiltshire District Council

- 4.3.12 A number of options for West Wilts were assessed through the sustainability appraisal; these considered the spatial distribution of growth between the main towns and villages and the location of large employment sites in Trowbridge, as follows:

Table 4.3 – West Wiltshire options for spatial distribution of growth

Option	Option description – West Wilts
1a	Development Policy A – Trowbridge Development Policy B – Bradford on Avon, Melksham, Warminster, Westbury Development Policy C – Atworth, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Bulkington, Codford, Corsley, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Horningsham, Keevil, Limpley Stoke, Longbridge Deverill, Monkton Farleigh, North Bradley, Semington, Southwick, Staverton, Steeple Ashton, Sutton Veny, Westwood, Wingfield and Winsley
1b	Development Policy A – Trowbridge Development Policy B – Melksham, Warminster, Westbury Development Policy C – Bradford on Avon, Atworth, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Codford, Corsley, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Horningsham, Monkton Farleigh, North Bradley, Southwick, Steeple Ashton, Westwood, Winsley.
1c	Development Policy A – Trowbridge Development Policy B – Melksham, Warminster

	Development Policy C – Bradford on Avon, Westbury, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Codford, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Southwick, Westwood, Winsley.
2a	Identify one or two large new strategic employment sites to accommodate all of the town’s future employment needs.
2b	Identify a number of smaller employment sites within new housing developments to accommodate some of the town’s needs, with the remainder being met through the redevelopment and expansion of existing employment sites within the town.
2c	Identify one or two strategic employment sites at Trowbridge but seek to meet the remaining need through other sites located within the town’s commute to work area – i.e. well located sites at nearby towns.

4.3.13 Option 1a was thought to represent the most sustainable approach overall when compared against 1b and 1c. This option narrows the range of smaller settlements to be the focus of growth and was considered the preferred option.

4.3.14 For options 2a-2c the assessment reported similar outcomes for each option but with Option 2c considered the most sustainable. This option is the only option which allows for a combination of large employment sites located in Trowbridge and other provision across a range of other market towns.

Housing and employment figures in Wiltshire 2026

4.3.15 The housing and employment figures quoted within the spatial strategy of *Wiltshire 2026* met the requirements for new homes and employment within the *South West Regional Spatial Strategy*. However, Wiltshire Council has now carried out a review of overall housing requirements within the authority area for the plan period 2006-2026, since the coalition government announced its intention to abolish regional strategies.

4.3.16 Wiltshire’s housing requirements are now identified within the context of the current ‘localism agenda’ and Wiltshire Council have reappraised housing need to identify locally derived requirements in accordance with this agenda. This review of housing requirements has undergone a separate sustainability appraisal and the findings are outlined in Section 5 of this report.

Wiltshire 2026 potential strategic housing allocations

4.3.17 *Wiltshire 2026* identified strategic site options for delivering new housing in 14 locations which were subject to sustainability appraisal. At that stage, potential strategic employment sites had not been subject to the same level of detailed assessment and were introduced later in the Core Strategy document in June 2011.

4.3.18 The following table shows the housing site options considered in each location and the favoured option from the sustainability appraisal:

Table 4.4 - Wiltshire 2026 (October 2009) preferred strategic housing allocations

Description of site options (favoured option(s) in sustainability terms in bold) See <i>Wiltshire 2026</i> Sustainability Appraisal Report section 6 for further details	Preferred option(s)
Chippenham	
<p>1. A mixed use urban extension to the north of Chippenham for up to 800 dwellings, combined with a mixed use urban extension to the east of the town for up to 2850 dwellings</p> <p>2. The eastern urban extension identified within Option 1, but with a higher number of dwellings, for up to 3650</p> <p>3. A southern urban extension site of up to 3650 dwellings</p> <p>4. A combination of the northern urban extension included within Option 1, with the southern urban extension included in Option 3, with a lower level of growth for up to 2850 dwellings</p>	Option 1
Trowbridge	
<p>1. A group of sites to the south east of Trowbridge, including land north and also south of Ashton Road</p> <p>2. A combination of Option 1 sites and a collection of sites to the south of Trowbridge, including Woodmarsh</p> <p>3. A combination of some of the sites to the east of Trowbridge included within Options 1 and 2 with a number of sites to the north of the town, including Marsh Farm Hilperton and land at Hilperton Gap</p> <p>4. A combination of the Option 1 sites with other sites located in Hilperton Gap</p>	Option 1
Bradford on Avon	
<p>1. Land at the golf course</p> <p>2. Moulton Estate (now named Kingston Farm)</p>	Option 2
Calne	
<p>1. Land at Quemerford, located to the south east of Calne</p> <p>2. Land west of Calne at Berhills Farm</p> <p>3. Land south of Calne at Marden Hill Farm and Silver Street</p> <p>4. Land north east of Calne</p>	Option 4
Corsham	
<p>1. A group of sites to the south east of Corsham, including land to the east of Leafield Trading Estate</p> <p>2. Sites to the south west of Corsham including the current MOD site at Rudloe Manor</p> <p>3. A group of sites to the west of the town, including land adjacent Box School and Hartham Quarry</p> <p>4. A combination of PDL sites included within Options 2 and 3 at Rudloe Manor and Hartham Quarry</p>	Part of Option 3
Devizes	
<p>1. A group of sites to the north west of Devizes, including land to the north east of Roundway Park</p> <p>2. A group of sites to the north east of Devizes, including the former Council Depot/ Bureau West</p> <p>3. A collection of sites to the west of Devizes, including land to the east of Windsor Drive</p> <p>4. A group of sites to the south of Devizes, including land to the south east of Devizes between Potterne Road and Andover Road</p>	Small components of Options 1, 2 and 4
Malmesbury	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sites to the west of Malmesbury, including land at Park Road 2. Sites to the east of the town, including land North West of Reeds Farm Estate 3. Sites to the south of Malmesbury, including Burton Hill House School 4. Sites to the south and south west of the town, including land at the rear of Bloomfield House 	Part of Option 2
Marlborough	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land west and east of Salisbury Road 2. Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane 	Option 1
Melksham	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three sites to the north east of Melksham including land rear of Woodrow 2. A number of sites to the east of Melksham, including land north and east of The Spa 3. Number of sites to the south east of Melksham, including land to the rear of Semington road 	Option 2
Tidworth and Ludgershall	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sites to the north of Ludgershall, including the former MSA depot 2. A collection of former MOD sites to the east of Ludgershall 3. Land at Empress Way 4. A further former MOD site to the south of Tidworth 	Small components of Options 1 and 2
Warminster	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land owned by the MOD to the west of Warminster 2. Land west of Bath road and south of Cold Harbour Lane 3. A series of sites to the south and west of Warminster, including Land to the Rear of Victoria Road and Land at Bugley Barton Farm 	Parts of Options 2 and 3
Westbury	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sites to the north east of the town, including land north of the Mead 2. Land at Matravers School and land at Redland Lane 	Option 2
Wootton Bassett	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sites slightly to the north of the centre of the town, including the Rugby Club at Stoneover Lane 2. Sites to the west of Wootton Bassett, including North West of Whitehill Lane Industrial Estate 3. Sites to the north of the town, including Marsh Farm 4. A site to the east of the town, Land North of Swindon Road 5. A collection of sites to the south of the town, including Lower Woodshaw Farm 	Option 5
West of Swindon	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land at Pry Farm, Ridgeway Farm and Moredon Bridge 2. Sites identified on the western edge of Swindon to keep development as close to the urban edge of Swindon as possible 3. Sites at Hook Street and also at either Washpool or Land at Ridgeway Farm and Moredon Bridge 	Option 1

- 4.3.19 Since the sustainability appraisal of potential strategic housing options was carried out in 2009, a review of all sites has taken place through a 'Strategic Sites Assessment', undertaken as part of the Core Strategy process, to assess whether sites are considered to be strategic and if they should be included in the Core Strategy.
- 4.3.20 Additional alternative strategic site options were identified in Bradford on Avon, Marlborough, Westbury and Warminster, and for Chippenham, a review of options for development in and around the town has been undertaken. Details of all new and revised strategic site options assessments are shown in the relevant community area sections in Section 5 of this report.

4.4 Core Strategy Consultation document (June 2011)

- 4.4.1 The Core Strategy consultation document published in June 2011 brought together strategic housing sites, strategic employment sites and thematic policies for the first time for consideration and comment by the wider community. It was informed by the findings of the sustainability appraisal and the way these findings were taken into account has been documented in the accompanying thematic topic papers.
- 4.4.2 All strategic sites, policies and reasonable alternatives to these were assessed against the sustainability objectives and a Sustainability Appraisal Report published and consulted upon in June 2011. This documented the options being considered, a comparison of assessment scores for each option, likely significant effects and mitigation measures and an opinion on the most favourable option.
- 4.4.3 A summary of the sustainability appraisal findings for each proposed policy and strategic site is presented in Section 5. Since June 2011 a number of new policies/options have been introduced and other policies amended to help resolve issues that have come to light as a result of consultation responses, the sustainability appraisal and the draft NPPF.
- 4.4.4 All new policies and options have been assessed and the findings documented in section 5. Where amendments have been made to policies/options that were considered likely to lead to additional significant effects this has been documented.

5 Assessment of Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policies

5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires an environmental report to include...

“the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives...”

“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties... encountered in compiling the required information”

“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”.

- 5.1.1 This section presents a summary of the sustainability appraisal of the core policies of the Core Strategy. Many of these policies were introduced in the June 2011 Core Strategy consultation document and were subject to sustainability appraisal at that time. In the Pre-Submission draft of the Core Strategy, a number of these policies have been deleted or amended and other policies introduced for the first time. These policy amendments are shown in Table 5.1 in this section.
- 5.1.2 Amendments have been made to the wording of some policies since June 2011 that have not significantly affected the findings of the sustainability appraisal. Where policy amendments have been made since June 2011 that are considered likely to lead to additional significant effects the sustainability appraisal has been reviewed and the findings documented.
- 5.1.3 A number of policies have been carried over from the South Wilts Core Strategy – these policies have already been subject to sustainability appraisal which has been scrutinised as part of an Examination in Public; where this is the case and the policy has not changed, a brief summary of the sustainability appraisal findings from the South Wilts Sustainability Appraisal Report⁹ is presented under the relevant policy heading in this section.
- 5.1.4 With reference to the requirements of the SEA Directive outlined above, policy options/alternatives must be appraised, where appropriate, and their likely significant effects “identified, described and evaluated”. This appraisal includes a description of the different options assessed (further details of these options, and how they were developed, are presented in the relevant ‘topic papers’ published alongside the Core Strategy), a discussion of potential significant effects and possible measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effect. A clear indication is given as to which option or options are more favourable in sustainability terms, with recommendations as to which options should be taken forward. These recommendations have clear links to the appraisal work undertaken.

⁹ South Wiltshire Core Strategy Proposed Submission Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report (Enfusion/Nicholas Pearson Associates, 2009)

- 5.1.5. This has been carried out as described in Section 2 (methodology) and following the guidance documents outlined in that section.
- 5.1.6 It is important to reiterate that sustainability appraisal helps to identify the most sustainable options overall by highlighting the likely significant effects. These are likely effects that are predicted to occur in the future; it is not possible to predict the exact nature of effects but they can be predicted and their significance assessed using latest information and evidence.
- 5.1.7 It is not the role of the sustainability appraisal to decide which options are to be taken forward in the Core Strategy. Para 5.B.7 of the Practical Guide to the SEA Directive (ODPM, 2005) states that “it is not the purpose of the SEA to decide the alternative to be chosen for the plan or programme. This is the role of the decision-makers who have to make choices on the plan or programme to be adopted. The SEA simply provides information on the relative environmental performance of alternatives, and can make the decision-making process more transparent”.
- 5.1.8 The following sections summarise the relative sustainability performance of policies and policy options.

DRAFT

Table 5.1 - Evolution of Core Strategy policies

Core Strategy draft policy (June 2011)	Comments	Submission Core Strategy policy (February 2012)
CP1 - The settlement strategy		CP1 Settlement Strategy
CP2 - Delivery strategy		CP2 Delivery Strategy
CP3 - Infrastructure requirements		CP3 Infrastructure requirements
CP4 - Chippenham Central Area of Opportunity	Policy number and name amended	CP9 - Chippenham Central Areas of Opportunity
CP5 - Chippenham Community Area	Policy number amended	CP10 - Spatial Strategy: Chippenham Community Area
CP6 - Trowbridge Vision Areas of Opportunity	Policy number amended	CP28 - Trowbridge Central Areas of Opportunity
CP7 - Trowbridge Community Area	Policy number amended	CP29: Spatial Strategy: Trowbridge Community Area
CP8 - Trowbridge Low-Carbon/ Renewable Energy Network	Policy number amended	CP30: Trowbridge Low-Carbon/ Renewable Energy Network
CP9 - Bradford on Avon Community Area	Policy number amended	CP7 – Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area
CP10 - Calne Community Area	Policy number amended	CP8 – Spatial Strategy: Calne Community Area
CP11 - Corsham Community Area		CP11 – Spatial Strategy: Corsham Community Area
CP12 - Devizes Community Area		CP12 – Spatial Strategy: Devizes Community Area
CP13 - Malmesbury Community Area		CP13 – Spatial Strategy: Malmesbury Community Area
CP14 - Marlborough Community Area		CP14 – Spatial Strategy: Marlborough Community Area
CP15 - Melksham Community Area	New policy added – Melksham link project	CP15– Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area CP16: Melksham link project
CP16 - Pewsey Community Area	Policy number amended	CP18 – Spatial Strategy: Pewsey Community Area
CP17 - Tidworth/ Ludgershall Community Area	Policy number amended	CP26 – Spatial Strategy: Tidworth Community Area
CP18 - Warminster Community Area	Policy number amended	CP31 – Spatial Strategy: Warminster Community Area
CP19 - Westbury Community Area	Policy number amended	CP32– Spatial Strategy: Westbury Community Area
CP20 - Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area	Policy number amended and name of community area changed	CP19 – Spatial Strategy: Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area
CP21 - Additional employment Land	Policy number amended	CP34 - Additional employment land
CP22 - Existing employment sites	Policy number amended	CP35- Existing employment sites
CP23 - Economic regeneration	Policy number amended	CP36 - Economic regeneration
CP24 - Re-use of military establishments	Policy number and name amended	CP37 - Military establishments
CP25 - Rural diversification and enterprise	Policy amended to 'Supporting rural life'.	CP48 - Supporting rural life
CP26 - Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy	Policy number amended	CP41 - Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy
CP27 - Standalone renewable energy installations	Policy number amended	CP42 - Standalone renewable energy installations

CP28 - Providing affordable homes	New policy added – ‘Rural exceptions sites’	CP43 - Providing affordable homes CP44 – Rural exceptions sites
CP29 - Meeting housing needs	New policy added – ‘Meeting the needs of Wiltshire’s vulnerable and older people’	CP45 – Meeting Wiltshire’s housing needs CP46 – Meeting the needs of Wiltshire’s vulnerable and older people
CP30 - Lifetime Homes standards	Policy deleted. Incorporated into CP46	
CP31 - Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers	Policy number amended	CP47 - Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers
CP32 - Protection of services and community facilities	Policy number amended	CP49 - Protection of services and community facilities
CP33 - Biodiversity and geodiversity	Policy number amended	CP50 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
CP34 - Landscape	Policy number amended	CP51 - Landscape
CP35 - Green infrastructure	Two GI policies combined into one.	CP52 - Green infrastructure
CP36 - Green Infrastructure development management policy	Two new policies added: ‘canals’ and ‘Cotswold Water Park’	CP53 – Wilts & Berks and Thames and Severn canals CP54 – Cotswold Water Park
CP37 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping outcomes	Policy number amended	CP57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping outcomes
CP38 - Ensuring protection of the historic environment	Policy number and name amended	CP58 - Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment
CP39 - Housing density	Policy deleted. Incorporated into CP57	N/A
CP40 - The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site and its Setting	Policy number amended	CP59 - The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site and its Setting
CP41 - Retail and leisure	New policies added: ‘Tourist development’ and ‘Hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities’	CP38 - Retail and leisure CP39 - Tourist development CP40 - Hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities
CP42 - Sustainable transport	Policy number amended	CP60 - Sustainable transport
CP43 - Transport and development	Policy number amended	CP61 - Transport and development
CP44 - Development impacts on the transport network	Policy number amended	CP62 - Development impacts on the transport network
CP45 - Transport strategies	Policy number amended	CP63 - Transport strategies
CP46 - Demand management	Policy number amended	CP64 - Demand management
CP47 - Movement of goods	Policy number amended	CP65 - Movement of goods
CP48 - Strategic transport network	Policy number amended	CP66 - Strategic transport network
CP49 - Flood risk	Policy number amended	CP67 - Flood risk
CP50 - Water efficiency and the River Avon Special Area of Conservation		CP68 – Water resources

CP51 - Pollution and phosphate levels in the water environment		CP69 – Protection of the River Avon SAC
N/A	New policy added: 'Air quality'	CP55 – Air quality
N/A	New policy added: 'Contaminated land'	CP56 – Contaminated land
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP4 - Spatial Strategy: Amesbury Community Area
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP5 – Porton Down
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP6 - Stonehenge
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP17 - Spatial Strategy: Mere Community Area
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP20 - Spatial Strategy: Salisbury Community Area
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP21 – Maltings/Central Car Park
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP22 – Salisbury Skyline
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP23 – Old Sarum airfield
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP24 - Spatial Strategy: Southern Wiltshire Community Area
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP25 – New Forest National Park
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP27 - Spatial Strategy: Tisbury Community Area
N/A	South Wilts Core Strategy policy - subject to separate sustainability appraisal	CP33 - Wilton Community Area

5.2 Core Strategy spatial vision and strategic objectives

- 5.2.1 The Core Strategy contains a spatial vision for Wiltshire and a series of strategic objectives. The spatial vision provides direction for development within Wiltshire and the strategic objectives have been developed to deliver this vision.
- 5.2.2 Both the vision and objectives have been assessed for their compatibility with the sustainability objectives set out in the sustainability appraisal framework as it is important they are in accordance with sustainability principles; this has helped in refining the vision and objectives as well as in identifying Core Strategy policy options. National guidance¹⁰ relating to sustainability appraisal recommends testing the plan objectives against the sustainability objectives in order to highlight any potential inconsistencies.
- 5.2.3 The spatial vision and strategic objectives were first introduced in the *Wiltshire 2026* consultation document in 2009. Since then the vision has been amended slightly and the objectives reduced from ten to six. The compatibility assessment of both vision and objectives is presented in Appendix E and a summary of the findings is presented below:

Core Strategy Spatial Vision

- 5.2.4 The Core Strategy spatial vision is:

'By 2026 Wiltshire will have stronger, more resilient communities based on a sustainable pattern of development, focused principally on Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury. Market towns and service centres will have become more self-contained and supported by the necessary infrastructure, with a consequent reduction in the need to travel. In all settlements there will be an improvement in accessibility to local services, a greater feeling of security and the enhancement of a sense of community and place. This pattern of development, with a more sustainable approach towards transport and the generation and use of power and heat, will have contributed towards tackling climate change.'

Wiltshire will be thriving and vibrant, where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality of life and good health in a safe, clean neighbourhood, appreciate a superb environment which makes the most of the natural landscapes and historic buildings and compliments them with exciting new buildings. It will be a place where people, irrespective of their background, can realise their potential and enjoy their lives.

Employment, housing and other development will have been provided in sustainable locations in response to local needs as well as the changing climate and incorporating exceptional standards of design. Partnership working with communities will have delivered a number of neighbourhood plans in a manner that allows the community to receive the benefit of managed growth'.

¹⁰ Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Plan Making Manual – Sustainability Appraisal
<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=152450>

5.2.5 The assessment of the vision in the Sustainability Appraisal Report published in June 2011 highlighted a number of areas where it was felt the vision could be stronger. These concerns were in relation to:

- social exclusion (particularly relating to rural areas)
- water resource management (particularly water scarcity and flood risk issues)
- waste management
- air quality
- health and wellbeing
- heritage assets (in addition to safeguarding the natural and built environment)
- high quality design.

5.2.6 The amended vision now incorporates some of those issues highlighted in the previous Sustainability Appraisal Report with references to '*stronger, more resilient communities*', '*enjoy a good quality of life and good health in a safe, clean neighbourhood*', '*makes the most of the natural landscapes and historic buildings*' and '*incorporating exceptional standards of design*'.

5.2.7 The vision, overall, is compatible with the vast majority of sustainability objectives. It is particularly strong in terms of compatibility with the social and economic objectives with a strong emphasis on providing growth, resilient communities, accessibility to services and social *inclusion*.

5.2.8 It is appreciated that the vision is an all encompassing statement and cannot be expected to cover all aspects of sustainability in detail. However, with the proposed level of growth in the Core Strategy there will be significant implications for water resource management and waste management, and increasing levels of traffic could exacerbate areas of poor air quality leading to more designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

5.2.9 It is recommended that the vision incorporates these issues as well as being strengthened in relation to the environmental objectives. In particular, the sustainability objectives aim to achieve protection and enhancement of biodiversity, landscapes and the historic environment whereas the vision refers to people appreciating '*a superb environment which makes the most of the natural landscapes and historic buildings and compliments them with exciting new buildings*'. Protection and enhancement of the environment is important not just for people but for the much wider range of sustainability benefits that can result.

5.2.10 Reference to 'historic buildings' could also be replaced by 'historic environment' as this would incorporate the wide range of heritage assets within Wiltshire's historic environment.

Core Strategy strategic objectives

5.2.11 The exercise carried out to compare the Core Strategy objectives with the sustainability objectives is designed to identify both potential synergies and

inconsistencies. This information has helped in developing reasonable policy options/alternatives during the development of the Core Strategy and has also helped refine the objectives of the Core Strategy itself.

5.2.12 The strategic objectives have been amended since the publication of the Core Strategy consultation in June 2011. The ten strategic objectives in the previous iteration of the Core Strategy were:

1. to deliver a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities
2. to address climate change
3. to provide everyone with access to a decent, affordable home
4. to help build resilient communities
5. to protect and enhance the natural environment
6. to safeguard and promote a high quality built and historic environment
7. to enhance the vitality and viability of town centres
8. to promote sustainable forms of transport
9. to ensure that infrastructure is in place to support our communities
10. to minimise the risk of flooding and effective water management.

5.2.13 The findings of the compatibility assessment of those objectives with the sustainability objectives are presented in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Core Strategy in June 2011.

5.2.14 These have now been narrowed down to six strategic objectives which are intended to reflect the six 'key challenges' which the Core Strategy identifies. The key challenges relate to economic development, climate change, providing new homes, resilient communities, environmental quality and infrastructure. The new strategic objectives are as follows:

1. delivering a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities and enhances the vitality and viability of town centres
2. addressing climate change
3. providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home
4. helping to build resilient communities
5. protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment
6. ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support our communities.

5.2.15 The compatibility matrix in Appendix E compares each of these objectives against the 17 sustainability objectives. This exercise highlights where problems may arise and it enables effective measures to be taken to reduce potential conflicts. The objectives have been found to be mostly compatible when considered against the sustainability objectives but there are a few inconsistencies and areas which could be improved. **It is noted that strategic objectives specifically relating to water management, flooding and transport have been removed and these are considered to be key sustainability issues that could be included in the objectives or supporting text.**

5.2.16 The key issues follow:

Strategic objective 1 - delivering a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities and enhances the vitality and viability of town centres

5.2.17 This objective has a focus on economic growth, including the provision of employment land and regenerating town centres. Areas of potential incompatibility are shown in Appendix E against sustainability objectives relating to air quality and climate change. The regeneration of town centres is likely to be very beneficial in sustainability terms but may also exacerbate existing air quality concerns in some town centres. Economic growth overall could also increase emissions through increased energy use and travel.

5.2.18 There are uncertainties regarding compatibility with the biodiversity, landscape and historic environment objectives – effects will depend on the level of growth concerned, location of development and type of industry involved. These effects can only really be established through assessment at the site level and the community area sustainability appraisal assessments go into more detail about individual sites.

Strategic objective 2 - addressing climate change

5.2.19 This objective addresses a major global issue that has the potential to significantly affect Wiltshire's economy, natural and built environments, health and wellbeing and social inclusion. It has been found to be compatible with all of the sustainability objectives because mitigating and adapting to climate change will potentially have a wide range of sustainability benefits.

5.2.20 It is recommended that the key outcomes include reference to sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) because these schemes have more than one purpose (e.g. biodiversity enhancement, water quality improvement, etc). They can play an important role in climate change adaptation.

Strategic objective 3 - providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home

5.2.21 This objective is considered compatible against most of the social and economic sustainability objectives because it is providing for the housing needs of local communities and this will also help the local economy in terms of providing a local workforce, increasing the vitality of town centres and viability of services and facilities.

5.2.22 It is understandable that objectives that promote housing growth, particularly when much of it will take place on greenfield sites on the edge of urban areas, will have some impacts upon some of the environmental objectives and this is highlighted. Areas of concern include increased traffic, effects on landscapes, biodiversity and the historic environment, effects on water resources and increased waste. However, this is a specific objective relating to housing growth and the Core Strategy contains strong policies to protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

Strategic objective 4 - helping to build resilient communities

- 5.2.23 This objective provides support for communities, enabling them to help themselves and improve their quality of life, foster a sense of community belonging, safety, social inclusion and self-sufficiency. It is considered either compatible or not relevant to all sustainability objectives. It is particularly strong in relation to sustainability objectives 11, 12 and 13.

Strategic objective 5 - protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment

- 5.2.24 This objective is considered either compatible or not relevant to all sustainability objectives and is particularly strong in relation to sustainability objectives 1, 2, 8 and 9.
- 5.2.25 The supporting text to the objective states that *'Wiltshire's rich and diverse natural, historic and built environments are a significant asset and this strategy will be based on taking steps to use these as a catalyst to attract inward investment in a manner which as far as possible also protects and enhances them'*. There is also the argument that these assets should be protected for their own sake not just to attract inward investment and this could be considered further under this objective.
- 5.2.26 In terms of the historic environment, development should conserve and enhance all designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings, and this could also be better incorporated into the supporting text to this policy.
- 5.2.27 **It is considered important that a discussion of the importance of protecting Wiltshire's water resources and avoiding flood risk is included in this objective. One of the key outcomes refers to 'Protection and improvement of the quality and quantity of Wiltshire's groundwater and surface water features, helping to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive' but this should be mentioned in the supporting text to the objective. Wiltshire contains many areas with environmentally sensitive watercourses and groundwater sensitivity and this should be considered a key issue.**
- 5.2.28 The key outcomes could refer to the opportunity for green infrastructure to provide drainage features to be included within green corridors etc. There will also be opportunities to reinstate or create additional natural, functional floodplain through the development process which could be incorporated into this objective.

Strategic objective 6 - ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support our communities

- 5.2.29 This objective incorporates provision of a wide-range of social, economic and environmental infrastructure and is considered compatible against all sustainability objectives. Social and physical infrastructure (eg transport improvements) can positively affect the environment, the economy and social well-being.
- 5.2.30 **It is noted that the original set of objectives included objectives specifically relating to water management, flooding and transport and that these are not represented specifically in the objectives now. These are key sustainability issues discussed in this report and it is assumed that these issues are covered by Objective 6, as well as Objectives 4 and 5. However, it could be made more explicit in the wording of the objective.**

5.3 Core policy 1: The Settlement Strategy

- 5.3.1 Core policy 1 sets out the different tiers of the settlement hierarchy and defines the type of development that is appropriate at each tier. In this way, the settlement strategy seeks to deliver appropriate and sustainable development across all settlements in Wiltshire.
- 5.3.2 The settlement strategy has been developed based on an understanding of the role and function of the settlements across Wiltshire and how they interact with their immediate communities and their wider hinterland. The evidence which has informed this understanding of the role and function of settlements is set out in the Settlement Strategy Topic Paper.
- 5.3.3 The **Core Strategy and** sustainability appraisal **have** considered options relating to i) the settlement strategy and ii) settlement boundaries. Details of these assessments are presented below.

Part 1: Settlement Strategy

- 5.3.4 The purpose of part 1 of this policy is to:
- understand what type of development is appropriate at which settlements and locations in Wiltshire
 - identify which settlements are the most appropriate locations of strategic growth.
- 5.3.5 **Since the publication of *Wiltshire 2026* in 2009, an additional tier of settlement has been introduced – Local Service Centres. Settlements now fall into the following categories (it is not considered that this affects the outcome of the sustainability appraisal significantly):**
- Principal settlements
 - Market towns
 - Local Service Centres
 - Large and small villages
- 5.3.6 **The sustainability appraisal reflects the introduction of Local Service Centres. This introduction is explained in Topic Paper 3 which accompanies the Core Strategy and is reflected in the consideration of a revised policy option 2 as shown below.**

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.3.7 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy):

Policy option	Description
1	Only identify strategic settlements
2	Identify a full hierarchy of settlements (including Local Service Centres) and locations where development is not appropriate. A caveat will be added to allow settlements to change their role through other planning documents
3	Identify strategic settlements and other settlements but do not define hierarchy

5.3.8 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	++/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	0	+/?	+/?
Option 2	+/?	0	0/?	?	+	0	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	-/?
Option 3	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	++/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	0	+/?	+/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.3.9 Significant benefits are envisaged in terms of housing provision through Options 1 and 3. Option 1 provides certainty about locations for strategic growth in Wiltshire and will allow other settlements to choose the level of development they feel is appropriate. Option 3 also provides certainty about locations for strategic growth and other settlements, but does identify areas where growth would be inappropriate.

5.3.10 A number of adverse effects have been predicted with all three options. However, the significance of many of these effects will depend on the location, type and size of any development proposed. It is difficult to assess further impacts without greater knowledge of individual developments.

5.3.11 Option 2, being more restrictive in nature, will not allow development in areas where it would be inappropriate. This means that there may be benefits in terms of biodiversity, flood risk and landscapes in those areas where development is not permitted, but there may also be economic and social impacts such as reducing employment opportunities and affordable housing provision. However, those smaller settlements that would be considered inappropriate for development would not greatly affect the overall supply of housing across the county.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.3.12 No significant adverse effects have been predicted with the three policy options. However, a number of minor adverse effects are likely.

- 5.3.13 It is important that development is promoted in appropriate locations where adverse environmental effects are minimised. This means avoiding or reducing impacts on biodiversity, landscapes, water resources, air quality and the historic environment. Many small, rural communities are located in areas that are environmentally sensitive and they do not have the range of services and infrastructure to support growth.
- 5.3.14 Policy must not be so restrictive, however, that economic and social opportunities are severely limited. This would lead to increases in out-commuting and reduced viability for those important services and facilities that remain in rural areas.
- 5.3.15 Maintaining a hierarchy will protect certain areas from inappropriate development. However, it needs to be flexible enough to meet the needs and wishes of local communities if they agree that they need a different level of growth and can provide justification for this.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.3.16 Options 1 and 3 are the only options where significant benefits are considered likely. However, although they might both lead to increased development, with housing provision and employment opportunities across a wider range of communities, much of this development may take place in communities that do not have the necessary infrastructure to cope. There would be significant pressures on the natural environment and on local infrastructure such as roads. It is therefore considered that, taking into account the balance of predicted effects, Option 2 would likely be the most sustainable option and this policy is carried forward in the Core Strategy.
- 5.3.17 It is considered that maintaining a settlement hierarchy would provide the protection that smaller communities require – removing a hierarchy does not provide certainty on smaller settlements role and function which could cause development pressure in rural locations and may lead to inappropriate development at unsuitable locations.
- 5.3.18 **The recommended policy (option 2)** will allow enough flexibility so that communities can decide what level of growth they want if it can be justified and leads to a more sustainable community. This can only be achieved through greater community involvement and possibly through the development of neighbourhood plans.

Part 2: Settlement boundaries

- 5.3.19 The purpose of part 2 of this policy is to:
- define the best method to control the location of development at settlements beyond strategic allocations.

What options have been considered?

- 5.3.20 The following options have been considered for this policy. **Option 2 has been reviewed and amended to reflect the current Core Strategy which retains existing**

Large Village boundaries but removes all Small Village boundaries (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Retain all existing settlement boundaries
2	Retain all Large Village settlement boundaries and remove all Small Village settlement boundaries
3	Remove all settlement boundaries

5.3.21 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	+/?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--/?	0	-	0	0	0	-	--
Option 2	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	++/?	++/?
Option 3	-/?	--/?	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	--/?	++/?	+/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	--/?	+/?	+/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.3.22 Significant benefits are considered likely through Options 2 and 3 with Option 2 considered to be the most sustainable option. Option 3, the removal of all settlement boundaries, is likely to result in significantly more housing but at the expense of other sustainability objectives, namely land & soil, landscapes and transport. This option would be likely to result in inappropriate development as decisions on applications are made on a case by case basis. This may then lead to inappropriate urban sprawl/ribbon development or a series of smaller developments that together could have cumulative effects in settlements that do not have the necessary infrastructure to cope with such development.
- 5.3.23 Evidence suggests that the removal of some settlement boundaries is necessary in some locations to allow suitable, small-scale and appropriate housing and employment development to take place to meet local needs. Identifying land for growth in sustainable locations where a need has been established and adjacent to settlements, particularly in rural areas, will allow new employment opportunities and the viability of existing services and facilities such as schools, shops and pubs to increase.
- 5.3.24 Significant adverse effects are also considered likely through Option 1. The current settlement boundaries are not considered fit for purpose as the boundaries were created through an arbitrary planning process with little community consultation. This

has created a shortfall in housing and new employment, especially in the rural areas, through overly restrictive boundaries excluding areas of developable land.

Applications that have been approved by the authority and by appeal bear testament to this situation and current boundaries are likely to continue to restrict housing and employment development impacting on the economy, employment and increasing social inclusion, especially in rural areas.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.3.25 The sustainability appraisal previously advised that settlement boundaries may need to be revised and that removing boundaries should only be considered where there is less pressure for major development, ensuring that significant development does not occur in inappropriate locations. This has helped in the revision of this policy with the removal of settlement boundaries for Small Villages.

5.3.26 The removal of boundaries should not lead to inappropriate development that would lead to loss of significant areas of greenfield land or high value agricultural land. Development should also be located where adverse impacts on rural and urban landscapes can be avoided or minimised. Removing settlement boundaries should only be considered where policy strictly controls the type and size of development that can come forward at those locations, and through consultation with the local community. The Core Strategy recognises this and states that 'any development at Small Villages will be carefully managed by Core Policy 2 and the other relevant policies of this plan'.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.3.27 Option 2 is considered the most sustainable option and this is taken forward in the Core Strategy. It will allow smaller settlements to expand in an acceptable and appropriate manner to meet local needs, without resulting in significant impacts associated with Options 1 and 3. Option 2 also allows for relaxation of boundaries of Large Villages where identified through a community-led approach. A limited amount of growth in a settlement can promote self-containment, reducing the need to travel and supporting local businesses. It can also provide much needed local employment and provide affordable housing to meet the needs of local families and young people who wish to remain in their community.

5.3.28 A flexible approach to settlement boundaries through Option 2 is considered likely to produce the most benefits in sustainability terms and if changes to settlement boundaries were to be brought forward through a neighbourhood plan or similar mechanism, this would allow the local community to get involved and allow benefits to be maximised.

5.4 Core policy 2: Delivery strategy

5.4.1 The delivery strategy aims to strengthen communities by allowing appropriate growth which readdresses the imbalance between employment and housing. The underlying

principle of the delivery strategy is to ensure that communities have a balance of services, jobs and homes.

5.4.2 The Core Strategy policy contains a number of different elements which have been addressed in this sustainability appraisal, relating to:

- provision of new employment land
- new housing provision
- use of previously developed land
- strategic development.

5.4.3 An assessment of all potential strategic housing and employment sites has been carried out and these are included within sections relating to each community area, in Appendix I (strategic housing sites) and Appendix J (strategic employment sites). Sustainability appraisal has been carried out on the proposed housing numbers for Wiltshire overall, proposed employment land and on the amount of previously developed land required, and alternatives to these. A summary of this work follows.

Provision of employment land

5.4.4 Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy, identifies ‘around 178ha of new strategic employment land to supplement that already built since 2006’ and it is stated that this will be provided by a combination of the following types of sites:

- New strategic employment allocations
- Provision of employment land as part of mixed use urban extensions
- Retained Local/District Plan allocations for employment land

5.4.5 The evidence base justifying this employment land requirement is set out in Topic Paper 7: Economy, which accompanies the Core Strategy Submission document, and in particular within section 6 of that topic paper.

5.4.6 This sustainability appraisal has been reviewed and now considers 2 additional reasonable alternatives to the 178 ha employment land requirement set out in the Core Strategy. These are:

- A lower requirement of 36 ha for the whole of Wiltshire
- A higher requirement of 213 ha for the whole of Wiltshire

5.4.7 The lower figure of 36 ha is based upon figures set out in the council’s evidence base document relating to future employment needs in Wiltshire¹¹ which forecasts the need for an additional 36 ha B1, B2 and B8 uses (including 20.4 ha for South Wilts).

¹¹ Future Employment Needs in Wiltshire – Employment Floorspace and Land Forecasts (Wiltshire Council, April, 2011)

The higher figure of 220 ha is based upon figures set out in the Wiltshire Workspace and Employment Strategy¹².

5.4.8 In this section, the sustainability appraisal is assessing the sustainability implications of the alternative Wiltshire-wide figures for employment land, not the location of this employment land. The assumption is made that 35% of this development would be on previously developed land as required by Core Policy 2. This assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of the assessment of strategic employment sites, and alternatives to those, is presented in the various community area sections 5.6 – 5.35 of this report.

Significant effects summary and conclusions

5.4.9 The assessment presented in Appendix H can be summarised as follows:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
1 – 36 ha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	0	-			
2 – 178 ha			-	-	-			-		+	+	+	+	++	-/?	++	++
3 – 213 ha				-				-		+	+	++	+	++	-/?	++	++

5.4.10 The assessment found that a requirement for provision of a much lower amount of employment land across Wiltshire (36 ha) would be likely to have significant adverse effects for the local economy and would be unlikely to meet forecasted employment demand to 2026. This in turn would have adverse impacts on a number of the social sustainability objectives, including education and skills, healthy communities and social inclusion.

5.4.11 This minimal requirement, not meeting employment needs across the county, would not generate the same level of traffic impacts directly as higher requirements but the result is likely to be that levels of out-commuting to areas such as Swindon, Bath and Bristol would increase significantly; this is an identified sustainability issue in Wiltshire that can be resolved by matching housing growth with employment more appropriately.

5.4.12 A much lower requirement would have some limited adverse impacts on all of the environmental sustainability objectives considered because the allocation of land will lead to some development in areas where a degree of impact is inevitable. However, the level of effect on the environmental objectives will be significantly lower if 36 ha of employment land is required by the Core Strategy.

¹² Wiltshire Workspace and Employment Strategy – Final Draft Strategy Document (DTZ, May 2009)

- 5.4.13 The significant effects associated with the two higher requirements for employment land are similar and it would only be possible to differentiate further between the two options in sustainability terms if information including location, type of industry and job numbers were known. Due to the relative shortage of brownfield sites in Wiltshire, but assuming at least 35% employment development is on brownfield land, the majority of employment development is likely to take place on Greenfield sites on the urban edge with subsequent environmental effects as discussed in Appendix H. Again, the level of effects depends on a wide range of determinants that is not available for this exercise.
- 5.4.14 There are likely to be greater environmental impacts from Option 3 - 213 ha, but potentially more significant benefits in terms of job availability, skills retention and inward investment and reductions in levels of deprivation and social exclusion. However, there is little point in allocating too much land for employment purposes if jobs are not being created due to the current economic climate and this may also prevent allocation of land to meet housing need.
- 5.4.15 The Core Strategy requirement for 178 ha of employment land in Wiltshire to 2026 is towards the higher end of provision considered in the available evidence base documents and this sustainability appraisal is not going to repeat the information and justification for figures contained within those reports.
- 5.4.16 Of the three options considered, in sustainability terms, option 1 is likely to be the least sustainable because it would not meet Wiltshire's employment needs and option 2 is marginally more sustainable than option 3. However, as previously stated, assessing a number of figures would lead to better results if more information was known on the location of such allocations and type of development concerned; the community area sections of this report summarise the assessment of strategic employment allocations at a more local level.

Wiltshire's future housing requirements

- 5.4.17 Wiltshire Council has undertaken a review of overall housing requirements within the authority area for the plan period 2006-2026. A sustainability appraisal has been undertaken to inform this review, assessing a number of alternatives to the Core Strategy's housing requirement, ensuring that sustainable development considerations have been integrated from the outset. This work has informed the overall housing requirements in the Core Strategy.
- 5.4.18 The review of housing requirements was in response to the announcement by the Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) confirming the coalition government's intention to abolish regional strategies. It is the intention that Wiltshire's housing requirements should be identified within the context of the current 'localism agenda', and a decision was made to reappraise housing need and to identify locally derived requirements in accordance with this agenda.

5.4.19 Prior to the decision to revoke regional strategies, the overall scale and distribution of new housing across the south west region had been established in the (un-adopted) South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). This document included local authority housing targets and targets for specific settlements – known as Strategically Significant Cities or Towns (SSCTs) – which included the Wiltshire settlements of Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge. Throughout the preparation of the South West RSS, a joint process of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was carried out, as required by law.

5.4.20 In Wiltshire there are a number of drivers and constraints that influence the overall scale of housing provision. The main drivers include:

- Population growth
- Housing need
- Economy
- Vacant and second homes

5.4.21 The main constraints are considered to include:

- Market factors
- Impact on environmental assets
- Infrastructure

5.4.22 It is recognised that a balance needs to be struck between delivering affordable, accessible and economically supportive housing, whilst ensuring deliverability and protection of environmental assets. This is where Sustainability Appraisal can play an important role in helping to influence the housing requirement, by ensuring that social, environmental and economic considerations are integrated into policy development.

5.4.23 The following key issues have been identified regarding housing requirements in Wiltshire which future policy will need to resolve:

1. Unsustainable out-commuting flows.
2. Provision of sufficient workforce to satisfy future employment opportunities.
3. Issues of housing affordability and the need to deliver affordable housing.
4. Bringing empty homes back into circulation.

5.4.24 In order to identify what might be an appropriate and justifiable approach to calculating the need for housing development, the drivers of housing supply were first considered in order to determine an aspirational supply, before refining this total in light of constraints and other policy-led assumptions. A number of projections have been undertaken which reflect the various assumptions:

- A natural change projection
- A population-led projection
- An employment-led projection
- A job-alignment projection.

5.4.25 These projections have produced outputs of a range of dwelling numbers required from between 20,900 and 56,800. **The sustainability appraisal has assessed the**

sustainability implications of a lower requirement (20,900), a higher requirement (56,800) and a medium range of between 35,800 and 42,100 dwellings.

- 5.4.26 This sustainability appraisal has considered whether there are likely to be any significant sustainability effects, positive or negative, of achieving the various alternative housing numbers. It makes recommendations on potential mitigation measures that could be taken to avoid or reduce significant adverse effects, and concludes what level of housing provision may be most desirable in sustainability terms.

Wiltshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (April 2010) and addendum (February 2012) – key housing issues

- 5.4.27 The Scoping Report, published by Wiltshire Council in 2010, forms the first stage of the ongoing sustainability appraisal for the Local Development Framework (LDF). That report, and subsequent addendum, highlighted a number of key sustainability issues regarding population and housing requirements in Wiltshire, including:
- Since 1971, Wiltshire has experienced higher population growth than at the national level and in relation to the rest of the south west region.
 - Single person households are predicted to rise from 29% in 2006 to 37% in 2026. This has an impact on housing demand and need for smaller dwellings.
 - Towns and villages in Wiltshire lack sufficient affordable housing and rented accommodation. It is hard for young people, in particular, to remain in their local communities.
 - The future expansion and role of Swindon will have a significant impact on development pressures in Wiltshire - Swindon has a major influence on housing demand, particularly in north Wiltshire.
 - Continuing military restructuring will increase housing demand in the Salisbury Plain area.

- 5.4.28 The Scoping Report acknowledges the high environmental value of much of the Wiltshire landscape, and that the need for new housing will place additional pressures on areas with landscape and biodiversity designations. It also states that housing provision must be fully supported by infrastructure to meet the needs of the whole community, and that additional housing should be balanced by providing additional employment opportunities.

Sustainability appraisal findings

- 5.4.29 This sustainability appraisal has assessed three alternative options for new housing in Wiltshire up to 2026:

Option 1: Housing range between 35,800 and 42,100 new dwellings

Option 2: 56,800 new dwellings

Option 3: 20,900 new dwellings

5.4.30 The sustainability appraisal team were initially asked to assess a housing requirement between 35,800 and 42,100 new dwellings (Option 1). However, this is a fairly narrow range and it was clear from consultation responses that other alternatives to these figures should be considered, as some individuals and community groups were advocating a much lower requirement whilst other organisations, mainly developers, were advocating a much higher figure. The review of housing requirements carried out by Wiltshire Council produced outputs of between 20,900 and 56,800 dwellings so a decision was made to assess the sustainability implications of provision at the lower and higher level also.

5.4.31 The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of likely effects is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
1 – Housing range 35,800 - 42,100	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-	-/?	-/?	++	+/?	+/?	+/?	+	-	++	++
2 – 56,800 dwellings	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-	-/?	-	++	+/?	+/?	++/?	+	-	++	++
3 – 20,900 dwellings	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-	-/?	-/?	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-

What are the likely significant effects of providing new housing in Wiltshire?

5.4.32 The assessment has shown that there are a number of likely significant effects, both positive and negative, when considering provision of housing. The majority of likely significant negative effects relate to those objectives that aim to protect and enhance the natural environment and reduce transport flows, whilst all of the likely significant positive effects relate to the social and economic objectives.

5.4.33 There are many factors that will influence what the **actual** effects will be – these include the location of development, design considerations, density of development and proximity to environmentally sensitive areas. At this stage, the sustainability appraisal can only highlight what the **likely** predicted effects might be, given current knowledge, with the aim of influencing the final decision on housing provision.

5.4.34 Overall, housing provision at a much lower level is likely to have fewer impacts on the natural environment, but fewer benefits for communities and the local economy. Housing provision towards the higher end of the range is likely to have greater impacts on the natural environment, but greater benefits for communities and the local economy.

Significant positive effects

- 5.4.35 Housing provision, at the right level and in the right place, will help meet the growing need for housing of all types in an area with a growing population. The level of housing will influence affordability, a key sustainability issue in Wiltshire, allowing more people to own and live in a decent home. Housing provision will also affect the self-containment of an area, enabling more or less of the populous to fulfil their daily needs within their community rather than having to travel elsewhere.
- 5.4.36 Increasing delivery may have a positive impact on housing affordability in Wiltshire, and should increase levels of affordable housing provision, particularly through options 1 and 2. Provision at the lower end of the range (option 3) would have less positive or more negative effects on affordability and would most likely not meet Wiltshire's housing needs. Consideration should be given, in particular, to affordability issues in rural areas, working with communities to provide much needed affordable housing in villages. Housing should also be located in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities, reducing the need to travel and providing employment locally which will help reduce out-commuting.
- 5.4.37 Increasing levels of housing provision can also have significant benefits for the local economy and employment opportunities. Housing can support the economy by providing a working age population that may attract employers to the area (or result in business start-ups).
- 5.4.38 It is vital that housing delivery is supported by a corresponding increase in employment opportunities, supporting the local economy and helping to reduce out-commuting (a key issue in Wiltshire). Housing delivery without investment in job creation will increase unsustainable out-commuting to places such as Swindon, Bath and Bristol.
- 5.4.39 Through the assessment, it is clear that provision of housing at the lower end (option 3) is unlikely to have any sustainability benefits because it will not meet Wiltshire's housing needs and would still result in adverse effects against the range of environmental objectives. Provision of housing at the higher end (option 2) is likely to result in the greatest number of benefits overall against social and economic objectives. However, this must also be considered against the increased significant impacts that are discussed in the following section.

Significant negative effects and potential mitigation measures

- 5.4.40 The proposed range of housing provision is likely to adversely affect all of the environmental related objectives, as well as transport, and the higher the provision the greater the impacts are likely to be. Providing a lower level of housing is likely to reduce these impacts. However, even by providing housing at the higher end of the range, there will be opportunities to mitigate some of the impacts highlighted through strong policies promoting environmental protection within the Core Strategy.

- 5.4.41 Option 2 is likely to lead to additional significant effects against objectives relating to biodiversity, waste, air quality and environmental pollution and landscape because of the significant additional area of land that would be required for this level of development. Option 3 is considered more likely to be able to avoid many of these significant impacts with development able to be located in more sustainable locations.
- 5.4.42 Location and design of development are very important considerations; careful consideration can help reduce the effects of development on biodiversity, water resources, waste production, landscape, flood risk, air quality and environmental pollution and the historic environment. Development should be located to avoid areas of high environmental sensitivity and protect and enhance other environmental and historical assets.
- 5.4.43 Given the rural nature of much of Wiltshire and the general lack of previously developed land compared with other more industrial areas, it is likely that much housing development will take place, unavoidably, on greenfield land. Wherever possible, areas of best and most valuable agricultural land should be protected from development and appropriate housing densities considered that will reduce loss of greenfield land overall.
- 5.4.44 Options 1 and 2 are likely to significantly increase demand for water from household use, even if measures are in place to reduce water use. There are significant pressures on riverine systems in Wiltshire and neighbouring authorities from water abstraction and elevated phosphate levels in the River Avon SAC. Strong measures to increase water efficiency in the home and reduce water use should be incorporated in all future development, and development should be located to avoid possible pollution to watercourses. Appropriate infrastructure will also be required to deal with foul and surface water, and to resolve current issues regarding phosphate levels.
- 5.4.45 Options 1 and 2 are also likely to significantly increase emissions that can cause climate change, mainly through energy use in the home and associated travel. It is important that all future housing development incorporates high levels of energy efficiency in the home to reduce emissions, with low/zero carbon technologies, renewable forms of energy on and/or offsite, and consideration of CHP and district heating schemes. Mixed-use development and significant investment in sustainable transport modes will reduce car use. However, it is very likely that private car use will increase considerably, and this poses sustainability concerns in a number of areas.

Summary and recommendations

- 5.4.46 The aim of this assessment has been to highlight the potential effects of providing housing in Wiltshire up to 2026, with a view to achieving development that is more sustainable. Sustainability appraisal can help ensure that sustainable development is pursued in an integrated manner, whereby development plans meet environmental, social and economic objectives together over time. Community involvement will be

an essential element in delivering sustainable development and creating safe and healthy communities.

- 5.4.47 It is important that when deciding on a level of housing provision, it is recognised that development, if properly planned, can have positive social and environmental benefits, and that environmental protection and enhancement can also provide important benefits for the economy and for health and well-being. The assessment has indicated that housing provision through options 1 and 2 is likely to lead to significant benefits in terms of economic development and social inclusion, but also some significant negative impacts on the environment, particularly at the higher end of the housing range.
- 5.4.48 Any housing provision in the range being considered is likely to have adverse effects on the natural environment and particularly at the higher end of the range. Specific issues that have been highlighted in the assessment include the potential loss of greenfield and high value agricultural land (given Wiltshire's rural location), increased pressures on water resources, increased greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and the effects of housing provision, and consequent population increase, on the need to travel.
- 5.4.49 It is acknowledged that many of the potential environmental impacts could be successfully mitigated or reduced through careful consideration of location and incorporation of high levels of sustainability. At this stage, however, the assessment is strategic and is not considering specific locations or specific development proposals. It is also worth noting the conclusion of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy Sustainability Appraisal which stated that "the pace of development will require strict adherence to policies that aim to protect and enhance the environment, both in terms of location and design". The sustainability appraisal has helped ensure that the Core Strategy contains such policies that will ensure this mitigation takes place.
- 5.4.50 The assessment has indicated that housing provision towards the lower end of the range (option 3) may not achieve required community and economic benefits, particularly in terms of meeting need for housing and affordable housing, attracting inward investment and infrastructure provision. Consequently, housing provision towards the higher end of the range (option 2) may lead to significant additional environmental impacts that would be difficult to mitigate and that may also adversely affect the achievement of other social and economic goals, leading to over-supply of housing that is not matched by employment growth.
- 5.4.51 It is likely that in order to best achieve a balance between protecting and enhancing the environment and pursuing housing growth that will lead to significant social and economic benefits, the mid-range housing scenario (option 1) should be pursued, provided there are strong links to Core Strategy policies that will ensure housing growth is sustainable and provided this is justified through the Core Strategy evidence base.

Previously developed land

- 5.4.52 Core policy 2 sets a target for development on previously developed land of 'at least 35%'. The NPPF states 'planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land'.
- 5.4.53 Alternatives to this target have been considered and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings follows.

What options were considered for this policy area in June 2011?

- 5.4.54 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	41% of development will be on previously developed land in Wiltshire.
2	35% of development will be on previously developed land in Wiltshire.
3	Separate community area targets will be set for development on previously developed land. The benefit of this would be that it could be tailored to the community area, for example, in an area with a large amount of redundant MoD land a higher target could be set and in an area with a lot of small rural villages a lower target could be set.

- 5.4.55 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	++	-	0	0/+	0/?	+	+/?	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	++/?	-
Option 2	-/?	+	-	0	0/+	0/?	0	0/?	+	?	0/?	+	0/?	0/?	0/?	+/?	?
Option 3	-/?	+/?	-/?	0	0/+	0/?	+	+/?	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	++/?	+

What significant effects were envisaged?

- 5.4.56 No significant adverse effects are thought likely through these policy options. The main area of concern is that too high a target is set that promotes development on previously developed land but at the same time prevents much needed housing and employment development, particularly in larger towns such as Trowbridge and Chippenham, where homes and jobs are needed but where previously developed land is not abundant.

- 5.4.57 The location of any sites will determine what environmental impacts may occur. Some sites, despite being previously developed, may be of high ecological value, particularly those sites which have been derelict for many years. Other sites may be in close proximity to areas or buildings of historic importance and any new development should be designed and constructed sensitively to these.
- 5.4.58 In terms of significant benefits, Options 1 and 3 are similar. Option 1 proposes a higher target and therefore will maximise development of previously developed land and the efficient and effective use of land. Development of previously developed land is also likely to significantly aid town centre regeneration; however this depends on whether town centre sites are developed and for what purpose they are developed.
- 5.4.59 Option 3 proposes higher targets in those areas that have larger amounts of previously developed land. This is therefore more likely to result in previously developed land sites in those areas being developed, with likely significant long-term benefits for urban and rural landscapes – pressures on greenfield sites in those locations may be less as a result, with an improved townscape. These benefits very much depend on the location of any development and for what use the land is being developed for.
- 5.4.60 It is not known what targets would be set under Option 3 and therefore difficult to assess effects at this stage. Some areas of Wiltshire such as Corsham have a relatively high amount of previously developed land sites but demand for new homes and employment land is not as high in Corsham as for larger towns such as Trowbridge and Chippenham. Should a proportionately larger number of houses and employment land be allocated for Corsham and other areas with previously developed land than those with little?
- 5.4.61 The significance of any benefits will depend on the location of sites that are being developed, the uses to which the site is being put and the effects this will have on provision of jobs, homes (and particularly affordable homes) and benefits for the local economy. If the overall benefits of greenfield development for a town or area are greater in sustainability terms than developing previously developed land sites, greenfield development should be considered.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects?

- 5.4.62 No significant effects were thought likely through any of the 3 options. However, as has previously been stated, a target should be found that balances environmental protection, through protecting sensitive areas of greenfield land and those that are valued locally for health and wellbeing, recreation and biodiversity, and allowing for housing and employment provision and the social, economic (and environmental) benefits this can bring.
- 5.4.63 As well as setting a target, development of previously developed land should be prioritised in town centres to help stimulate regeneration, benefiting the local

economy and reducing pressures on edge of town greenfield sites. Development of previously developed land within or near to town centres would benefit from proximity to good public transport services and access to key services and facilities, thereby reducing the need to travel and giving a greater choice of travel options.

5.4.64 Waste produced from land remediation should be recycled wherever possible and this issue should be discussed in policy supporting text or in the topic paper. This is likely to be more of an issue with higher targets. There also needs to be strong pollution prevention measures in place when remediating polluted sites.

Have any changes been made to this policy, or new options considered, since June 2011 that would be likely to lead to additional significant effects, and how has this affected the assessment?

5.4.65 A fourth option **has been** considered in relation to the effective use of land:

‘No target will be set for the amount of development delivered on previously developed land’

5.4.66 This new option takes account of the draft NPPF which makes no requirement for a local authority to set a target for development on previously developed land.

5.4.67 In its core planning principles, the draft NPPF states that ‘where practical and consistent with other objectives, allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value’ and that ‘planning policies and decisions should make effective use of land’. It will therefore be important to weigh up the benefits of making effective use of land and protecting land of a higher environmental value with the need for development and for economic growth.

5.4.68 The assessment of this option is presented in Appendix H. A summary of findings is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 4	-/?	-	0	0	-	0/?	-	?	-/?	++	-	+	-	0	-	+/?	+

5.4.69 In terms of significant effects, having no target for development on previously developed land is likely to place significant additional pressure on greenfield land on the edge of Wiltshire’s towns with subsequent landscape impacts. These effects would be long term and permanent. A high percentage of Wiltshire’s land area is designated as AONB and/or other highly valued landscape and this makes it more likely that adverse landscape impacts would occur.

- 5.4.70 A key priority in Wiltshire is the regeneration of market towns such as Chippenham, Trowbridge and Melksham which have areas of previously developed land within or close to their town centres. There are also existing industrial areas which require regeneration and rejuvenation to improve their viability and a large number of MOD sites which have become vacant eg Corsham. If the Council had no target for developing such areas this would damage attempts at town centre regeneration with effects on other areas of sustainability such as the viability of retail outlets and other key services/facilities that are located in town centres.
- 5.4.71 This option may be likely to give significant benefits in terms of housing provision with provision taking place at a faster rate and earlier in the plan period. Development of previously developed sites can be slower because of pollution issues and the cost of remediation and other complexities due to the previous use(s). Focusing new development on greenfield sites would reduce these delays and may be financially more viable for the developer. The relatively small amount of previously developed land in Wiltshire is also not sufficient to cater for the majority of Wiltshire's housing needs so this option will not affect provision of housing.
- 5.4.72 In terms of mitigating the potential adverse effects of this option, the loss of greenfield land anticipated and any landscape impacts could be reduced by considering higher densities and locating development in areas where landscape impacts will be minimised. Ensuring high quality design standards and ensuring that development is designed to be in keeping with local character could also reduce any impacts.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.4.73 Option 1 and Option 3 are likely to realise the greatest sustainability benefits in Wiltshire if a 41% target can be justified and if appropriate targets are set in each community area that promote previously developed land development but which do not make development unviable. Evidence of past trends from 1996-2010 has shown that 52% of housing completions in Wiltshire were on previously developed land so a higher target can be justified. **These are the recommended options.**
- 5.4.74 Option 2 (35%) will not lead to any significant adverse effects but may not sufficiently prioritise previously developed land development, leading to development of greenfield sites at the expense of town centre sites that would best aid town centre regeneration efforts. The Core Strategy is proposing a figure of 35% of development taking place on previously developed land and in sustainability terms this is not likely to produce the level of benefits as options 1 and 3.
- 5.4.75 Option 4 is not recommended because there would no longer be a focus on developing previously developed sites, leading to increased loss of greenfield land of a higher environmental value and subsequent landscape impacts. This would also reduce the potential for development of sites within or close to town centres and the subsequent regeneration gains this can have.

5.4.76 The justification for taking forward option 2 target of 35% in the Core Strategy is presented in Topic Paper 2 which accompanies the Core Strategy. It recognises that this figure ‘is slightly lower than historic rates of PDL delivery but this reflects Wiltshire’s rural setting and allows for the change to the definition of windfall in PPS3 to exclude residential gardens, parks and allotments’. One of the reasons given for setting this target is stated as ‘Wiltshire is rural in nature and the relatively low target of 35% reflects the fact that a significant proportion of development will need to be on greenfield land’.

5.5 Core policy 3: Infrastructure requirements

5.5.1 The anticipated level of economic and housing growth within Wiltshire over the next 20 years is expected to increase demand on local infrastructure and services. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that infrastructure and service requirements are appropriately secured and implemented and to achieve the Core Strategy objective of ‘to secure appropriate infrastructure and services’.

5.5.2 PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) requires the provision of essential infrastructure and that infrastructure and services are provided to support new and existing economic development and housing. PPS12 sets out the need for Local Planning authorities to adopt a co-ordinating role in the delivery of infrastructure. This role is expected to be undertaken through the Local Development Framework, or more specifically the Core Strategy. It states

“The core strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution”.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.5.3 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further evidence demonstrating why these options are being considered is contained within the infrastructure topic paper which accompanies the Core Strategy):

Policy option	Description
1	Status Quo - continue with the existing approach to securing planning obligations
2	Broader, more consistent approach to section 106 planning obligations but <u>do not</u> adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy
3	Adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy (<u>plus Option 2</u>)

5.5.4 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	0/?	-/?	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	0	-	-	0	0	-	0
Option 2	-	0/?	+/?	+	+	+	0	0	+	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?
Option 3	++	0/?	+	+/	+/	++	+	+	++	-/?	+/?	+/	+/	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?
				++	++	/?						++	++				
				?	?												

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.5.5 No significant effects, either positive or negative, are envisaged through Options 1 and 2. Both options, if continued or adopted, would be likely to result in minor effects or neutral effects.
- 5.5.6 Option 1 would continue to provide 'key' types of infrastructure such as education facilities and transport related facilities on a negotiated site-by-site basis, so some infrastructure would still be provided as a result of growth. However, these policies were adopted by different local authorities, they have been shown to be inconsistent and often rely on an inadequate evidence base. These policies cover a limited range of infrastructure and are unsuccessful in addressing the cumulative impacts of smaller developments. No significant effects are envisaged.
- 5.5.7 Option 2 performs slightly better than Option 1 and would possibly provide more benefits by seeking to meet a wider range of infrastructure needs. It would be based upon an up-to-date infrastructure planning evidence base and delivery plan but some infrastructure needs will not be met because they are not site-specific and Section 106 agreements would be severely limited in terms of what can be achieved by pooled contributions. No significant effects are envisaged.
- 5.5.8 Option 3 will provide a number of significant benefits because it would cover site-specific infrastructure as well as infrastructure covering a much wider area. Many infrastructure needs result not just from large developments but from many smaller developments across Wiltshire which have significant cumulative impacts. These developments often do not make appropriate levels of contributions and CIL would allow more scope for pooled contributions to local, sub-regional or regional infrastructure.
- 5.5.9 It is considered that Option 3 is likely to be able to make significant contributions towards biodiversity protection and enhancement through a GI network that can address habitat fragmentation caused by the cumulative impacts of developments, and provide many other health and wellbeing, recreational, economic and environmental benefits. Option 3 will also likely be the best vehicle for addressing impacts of developments that can often cover a wide area, including water resources, landscape issues, flooding and air quality. These impacts are often indirect and

secondary, occurring away from the development site and occurring over a long period of time.

- 5.5.10 Significant benefits could also be achieved through Option 3 in terms of social inclusion and cohesion, allowing local communities to be involved in decision-making over what funds are allocated to. Impacts of development often affect existing communities, putting pressure on local facilities and community services and CIL could fund small, local projects, or contribute towards wider schemes. Local people will have a very good idea what services aren't working and what needs improvement.
- 5.5.11 It is acknowledged in the assessment that there is much uncertainty over exactly how CIL will operate in practice. The CIL Bill (April, 2010) narrowed the scope of Section 106 agreements down to the provision of on-site infrastructure and affordable housing, while the rest of the benefits from development will be paid for through CIL. This means that a wide range of infrastructure will only be provided through CIL, restricting Section 106 agreements severely.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.5.12 The assessment is not predicting significant adverse effects as the policy options address provision of a wide range of infrastructure to meet the needs arising from housing and economic growth across Wiltshire. However, there are a number of issues which an infrastructure policy should address.
- 5.5.13 Levels of anticipated housing provision through the Core Strategy are lower than that proposed through the Regional Spatial Strategy, and therefore infrastructure provision could arguably also be lower. However, the growth proposed will lead to continued increases in traffic on Wiltshire's roads and there must be careful consideration of transport infrastructure, with a focus on sustainable transport modes, especially public transport, walking and cycling. Mixed-use development with local service provision will also reduce travel need.
- 5.5.14 Infrastructure needs will be wide and varied and it is not for this report to detail all that will be required. However, of particular importance in Wiltshire will be climate change mitigation and adaptation, dealing with levels of phosphates (and other pollutants) in rivers and providing adequate levels of affordable housing. The widely acknowledged issue of out-commuting should be addressed through creation of employment opportunities to match housing growth.
- 5.5.15 The policy could also consider including Green Infrastructure as essential infrastructure because of the wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits such provision will have. This is highlighted in the sustainability appraisal of the Green Infrastructure policy. PPS12 recognises the importance of green infrastructure, alongside social and physical infrastructure and is seen as essential to deliver sustainable communities and in underpinning sustainable development.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.5.16 Option 3 is the most favourable option when assessed against all sustainability objectives and when compared against the other two proposed alternatives. It is the only option capable of providing the wide range of infrastructure that will be needed across Wiltshire to meet need arising from proposed levels of housing and economic growth, and the only option that will allow the pooling of contributions in the long-term towards local and strategic infrastructure requirements to address the cumulative impacts of development. **Option 3 is carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.**
- 5.5.17 From 6th April 2010, it has been unlawful for a planning obligation to be taken into account when determining a planning application for a development, or any part of a development that is capable of being charged CIL, whether CIL is in operation or not, if the obligation does not meet all of the following tests:
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
 - (b) directly related to the development; and
 - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 5.5.18 **This effectively means that Options 1 and 2 are limited in their scope and unlikely to provide the range of infrastructure that Wiltshire needs.**

5.6 Core Policy 4: Spatial Strategy: Amesbury Community Area

- 5.6.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Amesbury Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal¹³ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.
- 5.6.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.
- 5.6.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from **www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy**.

¹³ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.7 Core Policy 5: Porton Down

5.7.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal¹⁴. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.7.2 The policy relates to the Porton Down Science Park and 10 ha of employment land which is allocated within the existing Local Plan and ensuring proposed development can meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. Although the policy states that no development will be permitted which will have an adverse impact on the SPA, SAC and SSSI, the detail of the proposals are required to make a thorough assessment of the potential impact. This should be established by project level HRA as proposed in the plan.

5.7.3 A more minor point is the level of traffic generation in a location which does not have good public transport links and which relies on a highly specialised rather than local workforce. A requirement for a Green Transport Plan for the Science Park (if there is not one already) and to accompany all development proposals should be considered. Mitigation/enhancement recommendations were:

- Requirement for a site wide Green Transport Plan especially in conjunction with development proposals that will increase traffic generation.

5.7.4 This policy has been amended and further background information provided including this statement from the Council: *“However, it should be noted that at the time of writing, a travel plan has been agreed and adopted as part of a recent application at the DSTL facility. The travel plan effectively covers the whole site but will need to be updated to take into account future development at Porton Down.”*. This statement satisfies the recommendation from the SA.

5.8 Core Policy 6: Stonehenge

5.8.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal¹⁵. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.8.2 This very specific policy has been mostly rated against the objectives as neutral because the wording which states that proposals “will be acceptable subject to

¹⁴ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

¹⁵ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

meeting the other requirements of the Core Strategy” should rule out adverse effect as these policies cover biodiversity, landscape and sites of historical significance. The policy is also closely related, and incorporated in, the other policies relating to the extension of existing businesses. The economic objectives relating to the tourism economy will be directly progressed by this policy. However the issue of tourist facilities at Stonehenge has been the subject of national debate for a long time and whilst it is relatively easy to assume that the effects on sustainability objectives should be benign the real effect will be dependent on the detail which will have to be subject to EIA and potentially HRA.

5.9 Core Policy 7 – Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area

5.9.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Bradford on Avon Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.9.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Bradford on Avon Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Bradford on Avon Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.9.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives																		
	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment	
Options																		
Option 1	--/?	-	-	0	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	+	+/?	+	+	+	-	+	+	
Option 2	--/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	+/?	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.9.4 The assessment has recorded a potential significant adverse effect with regards the biodiversity objective for both options. The potential for physical damage to sites and supporting habitats caused by the Draft Core Strategy is a significant issue where bats are the qualifying feature.

- 5.9.5 There are specific issues with development in Bradford on Avon in relation to impacts on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These issues have been highlighted through the sustainability appraisal and HRA Report previously. The preferred allocation for the town is a greenfield site adjacent to a greater horseshoe transition / hibernation roost. The majority of impacts in this area will probably come through cumulative effects of multiple small scale developments and it is possible that these cumulative effects will be addressed through a developers guidance document and project level AA.
- 5.9.6 The HRA Report states that issues associated with such sites are capable of being assessed and resolved through the provision and implementation of design guidance. Guidance is being prepared jointly by Natural England and Wiltshire Council and a Biodiversity SPD is planned that will cover design guidance for bats. AA is already taking place at the project level for development near Corsham.
- 5.9.7 The HRA Report recommends that the Core Strategy could go further by committing the Council to developing a process for ensuring that developments within 4km of the SAC will not have a significant adverse effect on it and that such a statement could be included in Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'. Such a statement would enable the HRA to conclude that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on the SAC.

- 5.9.8 To take account of the HRA recommendations, additional text has been added to the supporting text to Core policy 50 as follows:

'Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy'

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.9.9 Impacts relating to bats – it is likely that some development will give rise to project level AA and forthcoming design guidance for bats should provide information on reducing adverse effects.
- 5.9.10 Adverse effects would need to be avoided or minimised and this may restrict development on some parts of the Kingston Farm site. Specific measures should be taken to protect habitats of protected and notable species, especially bats at this location, and extensive ecological survey work undertaken in order to incorporate mitigation for impacts on bats.
- 5.9.11 The HRA Report has given examples of how effects can be avoided through design which include:
- mapping flight lines

- location and design of lighting
- provision of road crossings on key flight lines
- identification and protection of habitats used in the summer, e.g. veteran trees/old buildings
- retention/enhancement of linkages/corridors
- provision of new foraging sites for use in the winter.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.9.12 **Option 1 is marginally the most sustainable option and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.9.13 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to developments coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.
- 5.9.14 It is recommended that all appropriate mitigation measures are taken to avoid adverse impacts on bats, and other potential adverse effects, before development commences and that due consideration is given to the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Bradford on Avon

- 5.9.15 In the Core Strategy consultation document (June 2011) an additional potential strategic housing option was considered for Bradford on Avon at Land north of Holt Rd and subject to sustainability appraisal. The sustainability appraisal that accompanied the Core Strategy in June 2011 concluded that *'the Moulton estate (now Kingston Farm) site performs better against the range of sustainability objectives, and therefore should remain as the preferred strategic option'*.
- 5.9.16 In light of responses received from stakeholders during the consultation period June-August 2011, a review has been carried out of the sustainability appraisal assessment for both strategic sites under consideration. The full sustainability appraisal assessment, including the review of the original preferred option, is presented in Appendix I. A summary of assessment results and discussion of significant effects is given below:

Sustainability objective	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Bradford on Avon housing Options																	
Option 1- Kingston Farm (review)	-/?	-	-	-/?	-/?	-	-	-/?	-	+	+	+	+	+	-/?	+	++
Option 2- Land north of Holt Rd. (review)	-/?	-	-	-	0	-	-	-/?	-	+	+	+	+/?	+	-/?	+	++/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.9.17 The review of the Kingston Farm and Land north of Holt Rd. sites has resulted in a number of amendments being made to the assessment scores, most notably in relation to the climate change, housing and economic development assessment for Kingston Farm.
- 5.9.18 The number of new dwellings proposed (150) is relatively modest and whilst providing benefits for that objective is not considered significant and will not significantly improve the affordability issues in Bradford-on-Avon. It is also considered that development will not have significant benefits against the 'climatic factors' objective – this level of housing and employment growth will result in some additional emissions through energy use and travel no matter how sustainable the buildings are or what level of renewables are incorporated on site.
- 5.9.19 Mixed-use development on either site can provide a significant level of new employment land for Bradford-on-Avon that will help increase self-containment and help retain and attract businesses. However, there are specific traffic and air quality issues in the town which further development is likely to exacerbate and without long-term solutions being found this could damage the local economy.
- 5.9.20 A number of other specific concerns have been highlighted in the assessment, specifically relating to potential adverse effects on biodiversity, historic environment, landscapes and transport. **The council's 'Historic Landscape Assessment' (January 2012) refers to high likelihood of unknown archaeology at the Kingston Farm site and appropriate archaeological assessment must be undertaken. However, the effects highlighted are not considered significant in relation to the level of growth proposed for either site because mitigation measures (as described in Appendix I) are possible and achievable.**
- 5.9.21 With regards issues concerning bats and transport it is possible that cumulative effects in conjunction with multiple small scale developments throughout Bradford-on-Avon could pose future problems. However, the development of one large site could allow effective mitigation measures to be put in place to resolve significant issues.

- 5.9.22 In order to mitigate potential impacts on bats and to take account of the HRA recommendations, additional text has been added to the supporting text to Core policy 50 as follows:

'Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy'

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these two sites?

- 5.9.23 There are no likely significant adverse effects considered with either site. Specific concerns highlighted regarding bats, proximity to heritage designations, landscape, air quality and transport must be resolved prior to any development commencing – the location of new development, design quality and significant investment in sustainable transport solutions as well as highway/junction improvements to Holt Rd will allow development to go ahead avoiding potential significant effects.

Have any further options been considered for Bradford on Avon that might be considered 'reasonable alternatives' to the two strategic options?

- 5.9.24 In response to the June 2011 Core Strategy consultation a partial allocation of the land north of Holt Road site was suggested for around 50 dwellings, up to 45,000 sq ft of employment, and provision for required community facilities. It was suggested that the identified needs in Bradford on Avon could be appropriately addressed through this partial allocation in conjunction with the Kingston Farm site.
- 5.9.25 It was suggested that the Kingston Farm site would be unable to accommodate the entire strategic allocation of 150 dwellings and 2-3 hectares of employment at a development density in keeping with the local area, whilst also incorporating appropriate mitigation measures, hence the partial development of land north of Holt Road would allow the strategic housing requirement to be accommodated without significant adverse environmental impacts. It was also suggested that if both sites were allocated it would be likely that a more comprehensive package of transport related benefits could be delivered.
- 5.9.26 A combined site approach is not considered to be a reasonable alternative to the options already considered for future development sites in Bradford on Avon. This 'combined site' approach would lead to the development of a larger area of land with potentially greater biodiversity, landscape, heritage and transport impacts without providing a corresponding increase in the number of houses and employment delivered. The options for future development in Bradford on Avon are severely limited, with only a defined area of land to the east of the town currently excluded from the Green Belt (an area which includes the Kingston Farm site, the land north of Holt Road site and the Golf Course site).

5.9.27 It is therefore considered appropriate to take a prudent approach to the allocation of land so that options may remain for further development beyond the Core Strategy period. It is not considered that either site would be unable to accommodate 150 dwellings and 2-3 hectares of employment land and appropriate mitigation measures can be identified through the master planning process. Given that the 'combined site' is not considered to be a reasonable alternative and that both sites have been considered through the sustainability appraisal process, this alternative option has not been assessed further through the sustainability appraisal.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.9.28 It is clear from the assessment that development of 150 dwellings and 2-3ha employment land is possible on either site without causing significant adverse effects on the sustainability objectives. There are no absolute constraints to development at either site and mitigation measures to reduce or avoid those effects highlighted are possible.

5.9.29 There are greater biodiversity and landscape concerns with the Kingston Farm site owing to the adjacent woodland areas and position above the river valley. However, the site offers a specific opportunity to retain an existing employer in Bradford on Avon (the Moulton Bicycle Company which currently has premises in close proximity to the site) and this site is also slightly more accessible to the town centre which may provide opportunities to reduce private vehicle use to and from the town centre.

5.9.30 The site 'Land north of Holt Rd' is slightly less accessible to the town centre and there are also concerns regarding increased vehicle use of Cemetery Lane and the proximity of the Woolley Conservation Area. However, there are potentially less biodiversity and landscape impacts associated with that site.

5.9.31 **In light of the findings of the appraisal of both sites, the sustainability appraisal cannot make a clear recommendation. There are sustainability benefits and concerns with both sites and no site stands out clearly in sustainability terms.**

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Bradford on Avon

5.9.32 **The Core Strategy does not allocate any strategic employment sites in this community area.**

5.10 Core Policy 8 – Spatial Strategy: Calne Community Area

5.10.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Calne Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

- 5.10.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Calne Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Calne Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

- 5.10.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	- / ?	-	0	0	- / ?	- / ?	?	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	+
Option 2	- / ?	- / ?	- / ?	- / ?	?	- / ?	- / ?	-	- / ?	+	-	-	-	-	-	++	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.10.4 Likely significant benefits have been identified in relation to housing (Option 1 only) and for both options relating to economic development. A significant amount of housing is proposed in the community area which will deliver housing growth to meet local need, facilitating the delivery of affordable housing to address local demand and support job creation by ensuring there is an adequate supply of housing for employees of local businesses.
- 5.10.5 The combination of proposed housing and employment provision will likely have long term economic benefits for Calne providing this is matched by appropriate infrastructure provision, including sustainable transport solutions that help resolve the issues of traffic congestion in the town centre.
- 5.10.6 Likely significant adverse effects relate to the level of housing provision that will take place on greenfield land due to lack of brownfield sites in the community area, landscape impacts relating to the proximity of the AONB to the east and Special Landscape Area to the west and the effects of this level of development relating to transport which has already been highlighted as an issue in Calne.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.10.7 The requirement to meet the need for housing and jobs in the community area is likely to override the sustainability objective of protecting greenfield land, especially when there is a relative lack of brownfield sites within Wiltshire generally. Greenfield loss is irreversible. However, loss of greenfield land can be reduced by maximising effective/efficient use of land by building at maximum viable densities in sustainable locations that are close to (or within) the existing urban area. Wherever possible, agricultural land of a lower value should be prioritised where development has to take place on greenfield land.
- 5.10.8 Landscapes – much of Wiltshire is covered by AONB and SLA designations. In this community area, development should avoid impacting on these areas and detailed landscape assessments (strategic and site level) will be required to assess impacts further – this level of assessment is not possible through the sustainability appraisal. Location, design and landscaping/GI provision will be important considerations.
- 5.10.9 Transport – this level of growth will increase traffic volumes because public transport services are unlikely to provide a real alternative to car use for most trips. Significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is required, particularly if development located in edge of town locations, and to reduce through town traffic. The impact of any future development on the strategic road network must be taken into consideration with appropriate contributions to demand management solutions. The waste facilities located on the edge of Calne are also a particular source of heavy vehicles and further work is needed to identify an appropriate solution to reducing the impact of this traffic on the town.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.10.10 Option 1 is the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations**. The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.10.11 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.
- 5.10.12 It is recommended that further consideration is given to potential future cumulative impacts of traffic growth due to the combination of proposed housing/employment growth and waste related traffic. This could place particular additional pressures on the town centre with increased through traffic.

5.10.13 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011 noted that ‘the proposed amount of employment land in this policy (3.2ha) is unlikely to significantly affect levels of self-containment or reduce out-commuting’. It recommended consideration of a higher level of employment provision. The policy for Calne now includes provision of 6ha of employment land as a result of the sustainability appraisal, consultation responses and more up-to-date evidence.

Strategic housing allocations in Calne

5.10.14 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in **Calne**. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*¹⁶, **and those recommended as the most sustainable options**, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process¹⁷ which accompanies the Core Strategy.

5.10.15 **The strategic housing allocation in *Wiltshire 2026* for Calne was ‘Land north-east of Calne’ which consisted of four sites - Oxford Road, Penn Hill Farm, East Woodhill Rise and East of Calne. Table 4.4 shows that this was found to be the most sustainable option in the sustainability appraisal.**

5.10.16 **A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation in Calne without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.**

5.10.17 **This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:**

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Calne housing Options																	
Strategic site(s) <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	-/?	-	-	?	0	+/?	-	0	?	++	+	+	+	+/?	+	++	++
Without strategic site(s)	+/?	-/?	-	-	?	-	-	-/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	?	-	+	+

¹⁶ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

¹⁷ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

Summary and conclusions

- 5.10.18 The assessment of the amended policy for Calne, whereby no strategic housing sites are allocated, has shown the potential for a greater level of social and community benefits but with some short-term uncertainty in terms of sustainability implications. Benefits in terms of housing delivery and the local economy are likely but also subject to a greater level of uncertainty because it is not known what sites may come forward and in what location. The delivery of employment land may also be more difficult on smaller non-strategic sites than through a larger strategic allocation.
- 5.10.19 In Calne, of the original 500 dwellings that were proposed as an urban extension to north east Calne in the Wiltshire 2026 consultation document, 285 dwellings have since been granted planning permission via appeal. The remaining allocation in the town has been deemed to be non-strategic because whilst it would meet local housing need it does not have any significant impact on the strategic objectives for Wiltshire as a whole and can be delivered through an alternative mechanism.
- 5.10.20 Planning for future housing development through a future DPD, and especially through a neighbourhood plan in Calne will give the opportunity for the local community to plan development to meet their needs. This could enable development that offers a greater level of environmental protection and that meets wider social and economic needs through local knowledge. However, it is appreciated that planning on a strategic level also offers opportunities to mitigate environmental effects and could provide wider social and community benefits for the town as a whole.
- 5.10.21 It is likely that overall, a non-strategic approach to development in Calne will give some short-term uncertainties in terms of housing and employment delivery but in the medium-long term this delivery will be met through a DPD or mechanism such as a neighbourhood plan. This will allow the allocation and development of sites that can achieve greater and wider-ranging sustainability benefits that are shaped by communities to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of the local community. It will also enable the pace of housing delivery to be better managed across the plan period.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Calne

- 5.10.22 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a potential strategic employment site was considered for the Calne Community Area. This site is shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land east of Beversbrook Farm & Porte marsh Industrial Estate	3.2

- 5.10.23 This site has been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with the site and potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Calne strategic employment Options																	
Land east of Beversbrook Farm & Porte marsh Industrial Estate	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	0	+	-	+	+

Summary of likely significant effects

- 5.10.24 No significant effects are predicted. The size of site proposed is relatively small and there could be strong links with the existing industrial estate. The location of the site is remote from Calne town centre – it is therefore likely that private car use will increase in this area and investment in sustainable transport links should be in place to improve bus services and walking/cycling routes.
- 5.10.25 This is a greenfield site and although there are no specific biodiversity or landscape designations at this location, impacts are possible on rural character and protected species. Measures to reduce and/or avoid such impacts should be agreed before any development takes place.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects

- 5.10.26 No significant adverse effects considered likely at this location, depending on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

- 5.10.27 'Land east of Beversbrook Farm & Portemmarsh Industrial Estate' is the only site assessed through the sustainability appraisal.

5.11 Core Policy 9 – Chippenham Central Areas of Opportunity

- 5.11.1 Regeneration of the central area of Chippenham is a priority and a number of North Wiltshire Local Plan (2004) sites are saved by this strategy. This is being led by the Chippenham Vision Board representing key stakeholders in the town.
- 5.11.2 This policy supports the redevelopment of the following sites:
- Bath Road Car Park/Bridge Centre Site
 - Langley Park
- 5.11.3 In addition it proposes that the River Avon corridor will be enhanced for leisure and recreation uses in an environmentally sensitive manner and developed as an attractive cycle/pedestrian route connecting the town centre with the wider green infrastructure network, while conserving and enhancing its role as a wildlife corridor.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.11.4 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy as proposed with development benefiting from an over-arching vision
2	Develop sites as Option 1, but in accordance with standard planning policies and without the benefit of an over-arching vision

5.11.5 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+/?	+	0	+/?	?/+	0/?	0	+	+	+	+	+/?	+	+	++	++	+
Option 2	-	+	0	?	?	0	0	-/?	+/?	+	0	+/?	+/?	+	+	+/?	+/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.11.6 No significant adverse effects considered likely from implementation of this policy. Significant benefits can be expected through Option 1 which will be implemented through a Chippenham Central Area Master Plan, to be developed to provide a more detailed framework for the delivery of the regeneration opportunity sites. Option 1 is likely to lead to significant benefits in terms of transport and the local economy because the redevelopment of sites will aid town centre regeneration and benefit from proximity to public transport interchanges and other sustainable transport links.

5.11.7 Option 1, implementing the policy as proposed, is likely to have more significant and positive effects, as it benefits from a cohesive overall plan aimed at achieving sustainability goals as well as growth. The overall nature of the plan is likely to enable efficiency savings and the pooling of resources, again more likely to achieve a positive sustainability outcome.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.11.8 No significant adverse effects are considered likely through implementation of either option.

5.11.9 The sustainability appraisal has highlighted some potential conflicts between promotion of the river Avon corridor for leisure and recreation uses and the stated

aim to enhance its role as a wildlife corridor. Increased leisure and recreational use could cause significant disturbance to wildlife and wildlife habitats and this would require further assessment before development takes place.

5.11.10 Consideration of any remediation of contaminated sites must be given prior to any development in accordance with Core Strategy policy 'Contaminated Land'.

5.11.11 The sustainability appraisal has also highlighted the fact that some potential development sites are adjacent to or in close proximity to the river Avon and there may be flood risk concerns. Site specific Flood Risk Assessments may be required with appropriate mitigation of any flood risk concerns.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.11.12 Option 1 is considered the more favourable option in sustainability terms as sites would be developed in a holistic way through the development of a Masterplan covering the Chippenham central area **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** In addition to the redevelopment of these sites the river Avon corridor would be enhanced for recreational/leisure uses and as a wildlife corridor, giving a number of sustainability benefits as outlined. This enhancement would be unlikely if sites are redeveloped in a piecemeal fashion and the likelihood of cumulative adverse impacts would be greater.

5.11.13 There are potential conflicts between the promotion of the river Avon corridor for leisure and recreation and enhancement of its role as a wildlife corridor. Significantly increased recreational disturbance could adversely affect wildlife habitats in this area and this will require further research before development takes place.

5.11.14 Further consideration will also need to be given to potential cumulative impacts on the transport network in Chippenham town centre with the combination of growth in the town centre and at urban extensions on the edge of town. Proposed significant development in the north, east and south-west will all add to through town traffic and regeneration in the central area may add to this.

5.12 Core Policy 10 – Spatial Strategy: Chippenham Community Area

5.12.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Chippenham Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.12.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Chippenham Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Chippenham Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.12.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	--	-	-	-/?	-/?	--	-	-/?	++	++	++	++	+	-	++	++
Option 2	--/?	--	--/?	-	-/?	--/?	--	-/?	-/?	+	-	-	-	-	--/?	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.12.4 Significant effects highlighted relate mainly to the significant proposed levels of housing and employment growth in the principal settlement of Chippenham. The policy supports delivery of brownfield sites in or close to the town centre but these sites can only meet a proportion of the anticipated housing and employment need in Chippenham.

5.12.5 The level of growth proposed through Option 1 will have many benefits for the local economy in terms of providing modern accommodation for a local workforce, attracting skilled workers to the area and providing a larger customer base for local businesses. There are significant employment opportunities through provision of employment land. It is also likely that development on this scale can provide new and improved health, recreation, leisure and community infrastructure, on and off site and that will lead to increased participation in services and activities, increasing social inclusion and cohesion. These economic and community benefits are not considered

as likely through Option 2 as through a co-ordinated planning approach that allocates strategic sites.

- 5.12.6 Significant adverse effects are likely from both options in terms of land and soil resources, water resources, climatic factors and transport. These effects are again due to the high level of growth proposed – mitigation is possible but will require significant investment in water and energy efficiency, renewable provision and sustainable transport solutions that may affect investment in other forms of essential infrastructure.
- 5.12.7 Option 2 may lead to a more dispersed approach to development which may not provide the significant amount of infrastructure that Chippenham will need. This has led to Option 2 being considered likely to have significant effects against objectives relating to biodiversity, waste, flood risk and air quality. These areas are all likely to be significantly affected without a strategic approach to development and infrastructure management.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the significant adverse effects?

- 5.12.8 Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to provide renewable forms of energy on development sites, particularly through allocation of a large strategic development, and to link in with adjoining residential and employment areas.
- 5.12.9 Development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. Potential strategic allocations are on the edge of the urban area, some distance from the town centre, and strong investment will be required to improve public transport services and walking/cycling links, particularly linking with the town centre. Further traffic modelling is required, in particular gauging effects on Chippenham town centre and A350/A4, and also how effective future new highways infrastructure will be in resolving Chippenham's traffic issues; this should include possible provision of new distributor roads and dualling of the A350.
- 5.12.10 The requirement to meet the need for housing and jobs in the community area is likely to override the sustainability objective of protecting greenfield land, especially when there is a relative lack of brownfield sites in Chippenham and within Wiltshire generally. Greenfield loss is irreversible. However, loss of greenfield land can be reduced by maximising effective/efficient use of land by building at maximum viable densities in sustainable locations that are close to (or within) the existing urban area. Wherever possible, agricultural land of a lower value should be prioritised where development has to take place on greenfield land.
- 5.12.11 Development of brownfield sites – it should be noted that brownfield sites can be important habitats (in some cases a UK BAP priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land), and in these situations, reuse should not necessarily

be maximised. Appropriate ecological assessment of any brownfield site should be conducted prior to development to avoid adverse effects.

- 5.12.12 In terms of water resources, long term effects are likely from increased demand for potable water and specific concerns regarding the River Avon and its tributaries. All development must ensure that there are no adverse effects on water quality and that a sufficient sized buffer zone, with proper management procedures in place, is incorporated within the development. Dwellings must incorporate water efficiency measures and development should be assessed for impacts on groundwater and sufficient capacity within sewerage network. There must also be appropriate infrastructure in place to deal with foul and surface water.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.12.13 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.12.14 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.
- 5.12.15 It is suggested that the key issues in Chippenham which will need to be resolved before development takes place are traffic (particularly on A4 through town and A350) and potential impacts on the River Avon. With strategic development proposed in the north, east and south-west there is potential for significantly increased through-town traffic which solutions will need to be found for.

Potential strategic housing options in Chippenham

- 5.12.16 Core policy 10 proposes 4000 new homes in the town of Chippenham with 2250 new homes plus employment on strategic sites. The process that has been undertaken to allocate these sites has involved the consideration of a significant number of different strategic site options in and on the edge of Chippenham. All of these options have been subject to sustainability appraisal. This section describes the process undertaken to assess all potential strategic options through the sustainability appraisal. Where the main detail of the assessment work is contained within Sustainability Appraisal Reports that accompanied previous iterations of the Core Strategy, details of those reports and a link to that document are shown.

5.12.17 The Sustainability Appraisal Report¹⁸ that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026* in 2009 compared four potential strategic sites which could each deliver 4000 new dwellings in Chippenham as part of sustainable urban extensions. These were:

Table 5.2 – Chippenham strategic housing options – October 2009

Potential strategic option	Description
Option 1	An urban extension to the north of Chippenham for up to 800 dwellings combined with an urban extension to the east of the town for up to 2850 dwellings + Showell Farm employment site
Option 2	Eastern urban extension identified within Option 1, but with a higher number of dwellings, for up to 3650
Option 3	A southern urban extension site of up to 3650 dwellings
Option 4	A combination of the northern urban extension from Option 1 and the southern urban extension from Option 3, with a lower level of growth for up to 2850 dwellings

5.12.18 The Sustainability Appraisal Report concluded that ‘overall there is a high degree of similarity between the four options’ but that Options 1 and 2 were thought likely to be the most favourable in sustainability terms. Four likely significant negative effects were identified for all four options - these were for flood risk, air quality and pollution, climatic factors and transport. Likely significant positive effects were identified for Options 1, 2 and 4 relating to housing, the economy and employment. No likely significant positive effects were identified for Option 3. The discussion of sustainability effects for each option is detailed in Section 6.4 of that report and should be referred to for further information. Those findings helped to inform¹⁹ the council’s decision to include Option 1 as the preferred option to take forward in the *Wiltshire 2026* document.

5.12.19 Following on from that initial assessment in 2009 and taking consultation responses to *Wiltshire 2026* into account, a number of potential strategic site options were identified by the council. These sites were promoted to Wiltshire Council by developers and/or other stakeholders and subject to sustainability appraisal (these assessment findings were presented in the Sustainability Appraisal Report²⁰ that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011).

5.12.20 These findings have been reviewed, where appropriate, to take account of consultation responses received on that document. Those sites are shown in the following table and on the map following:

¹⁸ Wiltshire Sustainability Appraisal Report (Wiltshire Council, October 2009). Section 6.4 <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm>

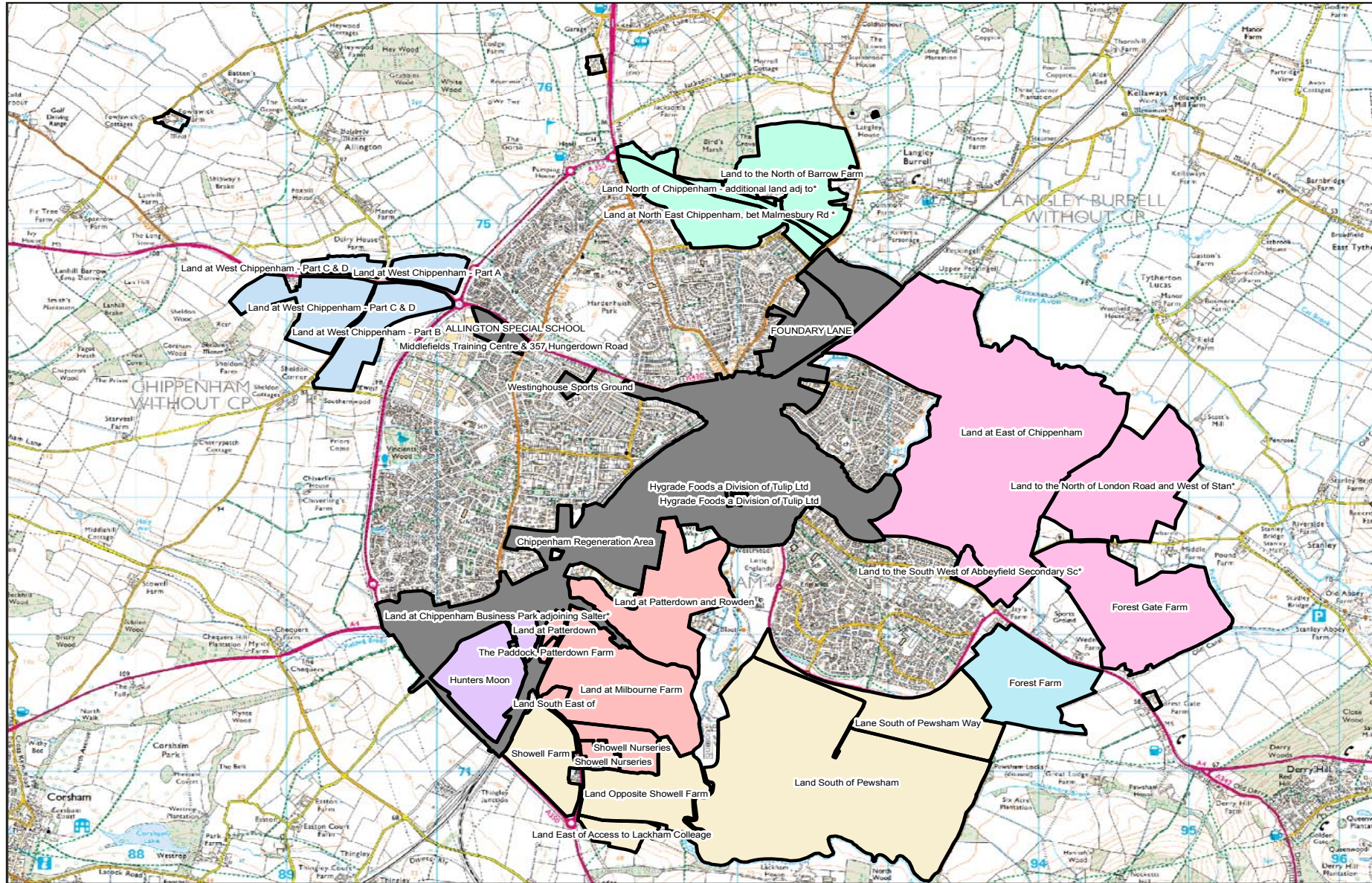
¹⁹ Para 5.B.7 ‘A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive (ODPM, 2005) states “It is not the purpose of the SEA to decide the alternative to be chosen for the plan or programme. This is the role of the decision-makers who have to make choices on the plan or programme to be adopted. The SEA simply provides information on the relative environmental performance of alternatives, and can make the decision-making process more transparent.

²⁰ Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation June 2011 (Wiltshire Council, June 2011) <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wcsconsult2011.htm>

Table 5.3 – Chippenham strategic housing options – March 2011

Potential strategic option	Description
1a - North Chippenham	Land North of Chippenham
1b - North Chippenham	Land north of Barrow farm and east of Birds Marsh Wood
2 - East Chippenham	Land East of Chippenham; land North of London Road and Stanley Lane; Abbeyfield School; Forest Gate Farm
3 – Forest Farm	Land at Forest Farm, south east of Chippenham
4 – South of Pewsham	Land south of Pewsham Way and land south of Pewsham; land opposite Showell Farm and land east of Lackham College and Showell Farm
5 – Patterdown and Rowden	Land at Patterdown and Rowden; The Paddock; Land at Milbourne Farm; Showell Nurseries;
6 – Hunters Moon	Hunters Moon; Land at Chippenham Business Park
7 – West Chippenham	Land at West Chippenham
8 – Town centre strategic site	Chippenham town centre

Option	Shaded area on map
1a/1b	Turquoise
2	Pink
3	Light blue
4	Yellow
5	Rose
6	Violet
7	Blue
8	Grey



- 5.12.21 The sustainability appraisal of those options highlighted a number of sustainability issues and likely significant effects but did not recommend one particular option above other options because one option did not stand out above all others in sustainability terms. It was reiterated that there are few specific environmental constraints that would prevent development taking place at any of the sites and that development could conceivably take place in a number of different locations to maximise the strengths that each location offers, avoiding areas of particular environmental concern, including the River Avon corridor, Rowden Conservation Area and Birds Marsh Wood and reducing impacts concerning landscape and transport. It recommended that further consideration be given to the locations for strategic housing in Chippenham, taking account of the findings of that work and further consultation with stakeholders.
- 5.12.22 The findings of the assessment of those nine options were given consideration by the council in its decision to include two strategic options for Chippenham in the Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011; Option 1 proposed the majority of new housing development in the north-east and south-west of Chippenham whilst Option 2 proposed the majority of new housing be dispersed between strategic sites in the north-east, south-west and east.

Table 5.4 – Chippenham strategic housing options – June 2011

Potential strategic option	Description
1	Delivery of suitable brownfield sites in the town; Non Strategic site - land SW Abbeyfield School; North Chippenham site allocation – 750 dwellings; South West Chippenham area of search – up to 1500 dwellings.
2	Delivery of suitable brownfield sites in the town; Non Strategic site - land SW Abbeyfield School; North Chippenham site allocation – 750 dwellings; South West Chippenham area of search – up to 800 dwellings; East Chippenham site allocation (Rawlings Green) – up to 700 dwellings.

- 5.12.23 The sustainability appraisal of these two options concluded that ‘both distribute development on a number of sites which could mean there are fewer environmental impacts as there are opportunities to avoid development in proximity to sensitive environmental receptors. The more dispersed nature of these new options will allow adverse impacts to be reduced as development is not concentrated in one place. There will be a more localised impact of development distributed over several areas of the highway network, although perhaps reduced scope to deal with highway capacity issues in a coherent manner and to deal with significant infrastructure requirements’.
- 5.12.24 The sustainability appraisal went on to say that ‘there are no absolute constraints to development at any of the sites and because both options score similarly...it is very difficult to recommend a favourable option. The areas of most concern include transport impacts and impacts on areas that include the River Avon and meadows, Birds Marsh Wood and the town centre and Rowden Conservation Areas. Development proposals that have the least impacts on these sensitive areas, as well as proposing significant additional measures to reduce other sustainability concerns, will likely be the most favourable way forward.’
- 5.12.25 Following on from further consultation with interested stakeholders and developers between June-August 2011, the council considered two further strategic options as

described in the following table - Option 3 proposes the majority of new dwellings to the east of Chippenham; Option 4 excludes development to the north of Chippenham with strategic growth located solely in the south of Chippenham. A review of the sustainability appraisal findings of the initial two options (Table 5.4) has also been undertaken, taking into account representations received during that consultation.

Table 5.5 – Chippenham additional strategic housing options – February 2012

Potential strategic option	Description
3	Delivery of suitable brownfield sites in the town; Non Strategic site - land SW Abbeyfield School; North Chippenham site allocation - 750 dwellings East Chippenham site allocation (Rawlings Green) - Up to 700 dwellings East Chippenham site allocation - Up to 800 dwellings at Harden's Farm and New Leaze Farm (Chippenham 2020)
4	Delivery of suitable brownfield sites in the town; Non Strategic site - land SW Abbeyfield School; Land to the south of Chippenham including Showell Farm – 2250 dwellings

5.12.26 All options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment of each option is presented in Appendix I. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
Strategic Option 1	-/?	--	-/?	--	-/?	--/?	--	-/?	-/?	++	+/?	+	+/?	+	-/?	++	++
Strategic Option 2	-/?	--	-/?	--	-	-/?	--	-/?	-	++	+/?	+	+	+	-/?	++	++
Strategic Option 3	-/?	--	-/?	--	-/?	--/?	--	0	-/?	++	+/?	+	+/?	+	-/?	++	++
Strategic Option 4	-/?	--	-/?	--	-/?	--/?	--	-/?	-/?	++	+/?	+/?	+/?	+	-/?	++	++

Discussion of likely significant effects – Option 1:

5.12.27 Option 1 proposes locating the majority of new dwellings and employment at North Chippenham and at the south-west area of search. A much smaller number of dwellings could be located on brownfield sites in/near the town centre and on land south-west of Abbeyfield School but these sites could not meet housing demand for Chippenham alone.

5.12.28 The scale of new development proposed means that significant adverse effects are likely in terms of increased water demand, impacts on air quality and other forms of environmental pollution, climatic impacts and transport. These impacts will have long-

term implications for Chippenham and it is important that new development strongly considers mitigating these impacts from the outset. Option 1 will also potentially lead to the loss of a large area of Grade I and II agricultural land which extends south from Chippenham west of the river which is considered significant compared to the loss of land of a lower grade.

- 5.12.29 Transport impact is arguably the key issue with all options being considered. This scale of development is likely to increase impacts of traffic throughout Chippenham, with consequent impacts on air quality, and significant investment will be required in sustainable transport systems that lead to a modal shift in how people travel. It is recognised that substantial investment will also be needed to upgrade highways infrastructure, which may include dualling of the A350 and a new southern distributor road.
- 5.12.30 The key issue associated with Option 1 relates to the impact of the development on the A350. With the A350 corridor being constrained, placing additional demand on it leads to more reassignment of traffic and additional delays on the local road network. Mitigation measures for Option 1 would most likely focus on improving the operation of the A350 corridor to reduce traffic pressure and address the impact that reassigned traffic would have on local roads.
- 5.12.31 The area of search to the south-west around Patterdown and Showell Farm is less accessible by sustainable transport modes, being approx 2-3km from Chippenham town centre, depending on where development is located. However, provision of a walking/cycle path along the River Avon will encourage some travel into the town centre by walking and cycling. This may increase congestion in the town centre however there is good access to the strategic road network (A350 and M4) from this area and proximity to existing areas of employment and retail along the Bath road and to Chippenham Community Hospital which may prevent some car journeys being made.
- 5.12.32 There is concern at the financial implications of the significant investment that may be needed in highways infrastructure to cope with the additional traffic resulting from development and how this will impact on the provision of other essential social and environmental infrastructure such as healthcare and community facilities. It is acknowledged that a certain level of essential infrastructure, including community facilities would need to be provided as part of any significant new development but necessary investment in transport infrastructure could affect the level of provision.
- 5.12.33 The strategic sites to the north and south-west, although likely to include sustainable transport links and the possibility of new bus services, will increase the possibility of additional car journeys significantly. New distributor roads, whilst possibly allowing greater access to the A350, A4 and M4, are likely to make car travel more attractive, despite any improvements in public transport services.
- 5.12.34 Areas of potential significant environmental impact from Option 1 include the River Avon and associated habitats, Rowden Conservation Area (an open rural landscape designated for its historic character and significance) and Birds Marsh Wood.

However, there are possibilities for mitigation of effects on these areas including buffer zones and management and therefore they have not been scored as significant in the assessment.

- 5.12.35 This option will have significant economic benefits for Chippenham and the surrounding area in terms of housing and employment provision which will significantly benefit the local economy and the economy of Wiltshire as a whole. The amount of new housing proposed will significantly extend housing choice, providing modern accommodation for an expanding workforce, attract skilled workers (and their families) to the area and provide a larger customer base for local businesses. New employment provision will also help reduce the issue of out-commuting.
- 5.12.36 The proposed sites are likely to be large mixed-use developments and the size of these sites allows for provision of a significant area of green infrastructure, open space, community and sport and recreation facilities that can increase opportunities for healthy lifestyles. Employment and educational facilities are also likely to be incorporated that may increase self-containment and social inclusion.

Discussion of likely significant effects – Option 2

- 5.12.37 Option 2 proposes locating the majority of new dwellings at the north Chippenham site allocation, south-west area of search and at Rawlings Green. This option would see a more dispersed pattern of development with 2250 new dwellings spread evenly between three strategic locations. It is considered likely that this approach will lead to less environmental impacts than other options because development could be located to better avoid sensitive environmental receptors. It is also likely that new development will be located closer to the existing urban edge and therefore closer to public transport, services and facilities in the town centre.
- 5.12.38 The scale of new development proposed means that significant adverse effects are likely in terms of increased water demand, climatic impacts and transport. This is the same for all strategic options assessed due to the level of growth proposed. These impacts will have long-term implications for Chippenham and it is important that new development strongly considers mitigating these impacts from the outset.
- 5.12.39 This option, with only 700-800 new dwellings at each strategic location, will be better able to avoid such a large loss of Grade I and II agricultural land as other options considered because fewer houses are proposed in each location.
- 5.12.40 This more dispersed pattern of development may allow avoidance of some of the landscape impacts associated with much larger developments to the east and south-west, with smaller, more concentrated development adjacent to the existing urban area. However, with this option, adverse landscape impacts that may result from development will be dispersed over a wider area.
- 5.12.41 Areas of potential significant environmental impact from Option 2 include the River Avon and associated habitats/tributaries, Rowden Conservation Area (**an open rural landscape designated for its historic character and significance**) and Birds Marsh

Wood. There are possibilities for mitigation of effects on these areas including buffer zones and management and therefore they have not been scored as significant in the assessment.

- 5.12.42 English Heritage have pointed to the Historic Landscape Assessment for the Wiltshire Core Strategy²¹ (January 2012) and the potential for archaeological constraints to development at Rawlings Green and that development should be located and designed appropriately to avoid impacts on the listed building and Medieval and Roman settlement remains. Again, it is considered that mitigation is possible to avoid any impacts through appropriate archaeological assessment, design and location of development.
- 5.12.43 Transport impact is arguably the key issue with all options being considered. The dispersed nature of this option may result in the dispersal of traffic impacts over a wider area. However, this may also result in fewer impacts in terms of air quality than locating the majority of development in one main location. Strategic development south and north of Chippenham will have good access to the strategic road network (A350) and land at Rawlings Green has good proximity to the railway station, nearby employment areas and the northern section of the A350 via the proposed northern distributor road.
- 5.12.44 Option 2 will avoid the need for an eastern distributor road and therefore avoid environmental impacts and expenditure associated with a new road in this location. The proposed road link over the railway line, connecting the Rawlings Green development and Monkton Park to the north Chippenham development and the A350 north is a key piece of infrastructure likely to mitigate some of the impact of developing the Rawlings Green site. However, modelling work undertaken²² shows some degree of impact on the operation of the town centre, related in part to the constrained A350 corridor, especially at its northern end, which may lead to reassignment of traffic through local roads. Some traffic generated by the Rawlings Green development and bound to destinations west, south and east is likely to use the town centre road network to reach the A4 Bath Road, the A4 London Road or the A350 South.
- 5.12.45 The level of development in the south west, proposed as part of this option would still add pressure to the A350, and some mitigation would also be required in this case along this strategic corridor. Improvements at junctions would form the most likely approach, and dualling would be less likely to be a consideration.
- 5.12.46 Like other options, this option will have significant economic benefits for Chippenham and the surrounding area in terms of housing and employment provision which will significantly benefit the local economy and the economy of Wiltshire as a whole. The amount of new housing proposed will significantly extend housing choice, providing modern accommodation for an expanding workforce, attract skilled workers (and their families) to the area and provide a larger customer base for local businesses. New employment provision will also help reduce the issue of out-commuting.

²¹ Historic Landscape Assessment for the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Land Use Consultants, January 2012)

²² Transport Strategy for Chippenham – Land Allocation Report (SKM Colin Buchanan, January 2012)

Discussion of likely significant effects – Option 3

- 5.12.47 Option 3 proposes locating the majority of new dwellings to the north and east of Chippenham. A much smaller number of dwellings could be located on brownfield sites in/near the town centre and on land south-west of Abbeyfield school, but these sites could not meet housing demand for Chippenham alone.
- 5.12.48 The scale of new development proposed means that significant adverse effects are likely in terms of increased water demand, impacts on air quality and other forms of environmental pollution, climatic impacts and transport. These impacts will have long-term implications for Chippenham and it is important that new development strongly considers mitigating these impacts from the outset.
- 5.12.49 This option could lead to the loss of a large area of Grade II agricultural land around Rawlings Farm and a smaller area of Grade II north of New Leaze Farm, depending on the exact location of development. However, land at Rawlings Green has relatively good accessibility being within 1-1.5 km of the railway station and Chippenham town centre and has good access to the large employment area to the north via Cocklebury lane. These sustainability factors may outweigh the desire to protect higher grade agricultural land.
- 5.12.50 Areas of potential significant environmental impact from Option 3 include the River Avon and River Marden and associated habitats and Birds Marsh Wood. The valleys associated with those rivers may also potentially be affected. However, there is clear potential for mitigation and enhancement of effects on these areas including buffer zones and management and therefore they have not been scored as significant in the assessment.
- 5.12.51 English Heritage have pointed to the potential for archaeological constraints to development at Rawlings Green highlighted in the Historic Landscape Assessment for the Wiltshire Core Strategy²³ (January 2012) and that development should be located and designed appropriately to avoid impacts on the listed building and Medieval and Roman settlement remains. Again, it is considered that mitigation is possible to avoid any impacts through appropriate archaeological assessment, design and location of development.
- 5.12.52 Transport impact is arguably the key issue with all options being considered. The delivery of a sizable development to the east of the river Avon is likely to have a significant impact on the operation of the town centre road network. Modelling work undertaken²⁴ predicts heightened levels of congestion on approaches to the gyratory in the town centre and in particular on the A420 approach. If unmitigated this would also put additional pressure on the Pewsham Way/Avenue La Fleche route in and out of the town centre, as traffic generated from the development would seek to reach the strategic road network on the other side of town. The A4 Bath Road would also experience impact.

²³ Historic Landscape Assessment for the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Land Use Consultants, January 2012)

²⁴ Transport Strategy for Chippenham – Land Allocation Report (SKM Colin Buchanan, January 2012)

- 5.12.53 However, this option is likely to be accompanied by delivery of an eastern distributor road. This is a major piece of new highway infrastructure. It would connect with the road link over the railway proposed as part of the Rawlings Green development and, in conjunction with the northern distributor road delivered by the North Chippenham site, would lead to the delivery of an 'eastern bypass' to the town between the A350 and the A4 London Road. This is likely to mitigate some of the impact of Option 3 on traffic conditions in the town centre, as well as providing an alternative route north to east to traffic currently travelling across the town. However, it is likely that locating development to the east of the town centre would still generate some east to west movements across the town trying to reach routes to the south (A350 south) and west (A4, A420) and the mitigation package would not necessarily address all potential impacts.
- 5.12.54 Some parts of the eastern strategic site (around Rawlings Farm and south/west of Harden's Farm) are closer to the town centre and railway station than the northern section of the south-west area of search, and this may make access easier to the town centre for residents by walking and cycling. However, the proposed eastern allocation, at its nearest point to the town centre, is a distance of between 1-1.5km from the town centre and a development of this size will generate significant additional traffic. Provision of a new distributor road will mitigate some impacts on the town centre but could also make travel by car an attractive option and will not encourage a significant modal shift to other sustainable forms of transport.
- 5.12.55 This option will have significant economic benefits for Chippenham and the surrounding area in terms of housing and employment provision which will significantly benefit the local economy and the economy of Wiltshire as a whole. The amount of new housing proposed will significantly extend housing choice, providing modern accommodation for an expanding workforce, attract skilled workers (and their families) to the area and provide a larger customer base for local businesses. New employment provision will also help reduce the issue of out-commuting.
- 5.12.56 Land at east Chippenham would be likely to support a large mixed-use development and the size of the site allows for provision of a significant area of green infrastructure, open space, community and sport and recreation facilities that can increase opportunities for healthy lifestyles. Employment and educational facilities are also likely to be incorporated that may increase self-containment and social inclusion.

Discussion of likely significant effects – Option 4

- 5.12.57 Option 4 proposes locating the majority of new dwellings and employment development south of Chippenham.
- 5.12.58 The scale of new development proposed means that significant adverse effects are likely in terms of increased water demand, impacts on air quality and other forms of environmental pollution, climatic impacts and transport. Option 4 will also potentially lead to the loss of a large area of Grade I and II agricultural land which extends south from Chippenham west of the river which is considered significant compared to the

loss of land of a lower grade. This will depend on the exact location of new development.

- 5.12.59 Transport impact is arguably the key issue with all options being considered. This option focuses all strategic growth in the south of Chippenham and the key issue associated with this option is the impact of the development on the A350. With the A350 corridor being constrained, placing significant additional demand on it leads to more reassignment of traffic and additional delays on the local road network. Mitigation measures for Option 4 would most likely focus on improving the operation of the A350 corridor to reduce traffic pressure and address the impact that reassigned traffic would have on local roads.
- 5.12.60 Some parts of the area of search to the south-west, particularly the area around Hunters Moon, are less accessible by sustainable transport modes than other potential sites, being approx. 2-3km from Chippenham town centre. Mitigation in the form of sustainable transport links to the town centre along the river corridor are proposed and there is good access to the strategic road network (A350 and M4) from this area, however the overall level of traffic, particularly on the A350 is likely to increase considerably. Proximity to existing areas of employment and retail along the Bath road and to Chippenham Community Hospital may help reduce some car journeys from this part of Chippenham.
- 5.12.61 Areas of potential significant environmental impact from Option 4 include the River Avon and associated habitats and Rowden Conservation Area (**an open rural landscape designated for its historic character and significance**). However, there are possibilities for mitigation of effects on these areas including buffer zones and management and therefore they have not been scored as significant in the assessment.
- 5.12.62 This option will have significant economic benefits for Chippenham and the surrounding area in terms of housing and employment provision which will significantly benefit the local economy and the economy of Wiltshire as a whole. The amount of new housing proposed will significantly extend housing choice, providing modern accommodation for an expanding workforce, attract skilled workers (and their families) to the area and provide a larger customer base for local businesses. New employment provision will also help reduce the issue of out-commuting.
- 5.12.63 The south west area of search is likely to be a large mixed-use development and the size of the site allows for provision of a significant area of green infrastructure, open space, community and sport and recreation facilities that can increase opportunities for healthy lifestyles. Employment and educational facilities are also likely to be incorporated that may increase self-containment and social inclusion.

Potential mitigation measures for likely significant adverse effects

- 5.12.64 Planning policy guidance advises it is desirable to retain the highest quality agricultural land for future food production. Given the greenfield nature of the strategic sites and insufficient number of brownfield sites in Chippenham to meet

potential housing need, mitigation measures are likely to involve trying to avoid developing areas of higher grade agricultural land together with building at maximum viable densities to reduce land loss. Locating development adjacent to the existing urban area would also give better access to local facilities and public transport links, allowing densities to be maximised.

- 5.12.65 All development should meet high levels of energy and water efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential on the strategic sites to provide renewable forms of energy and heat on site, and to link in with adjoining residential/employment areas.
- 5.12.66 Impacts concerning air quality and noise are most likely to be caused by increased traffic volumes. Development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use, with improved public transport services, walking and cycling routes linking with the town centre. Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the car and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes.
- 5.12.67 Regarding transport impacts, mitigation measures for development in the south-west are likely to focus mainly on the A350. Mitigation measures for Options 1 and 4 could have the potential to unlock major capacity constraints on the A350 and have the potential to bring wider benefits to the town, although this will depend on how much additional capacity is delivered.
- 5.12.68 For Option 2 transport mitigation measures may need to be spread more widely across town. The delivery of a new road link across the railway line will bring additional benefits to the town centre, delivering an additional road link into the Monkton Park area and the railway station. An eastern distributor road would not be required for this option.
- 5.12.69 For Option 3, a new 'eastern bypass' to the town between the A350 in the north and the A4 London Road in the east would need to be delivered. This scheme has the potential to relieve the town centre's road network from north to east through traffic while delivering the additional access route into the Monkton Park area and to the railway station. However, this mitigation package is potentially the most expensive, and would not necessarily address all potential impacts that locating development at the opposite end of the town from the strategic road network would generate.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.12.70 This appraisal has examined four strategic options for development in Chippenham and highlighted the likely significant effects of each option. A number of positive and negative significant effects are considered likely with each option and these have been highlighted taking into account the latest information available to the sustainability appraisal officer. All four proposed options promote brownfield sites in the town, which are favoured in sustainability terms, and include land south-west of Abbeyfield School. However, the vast majority of new development will be required on strategic greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area.

- 5.12.71 It is considered that there are no absolute constraints to development in sustainability terms for any of the options and at any individual site location. Significant adverse effects are envisaged for all options against sustainability objectives relating to land and soil, water and climatic factors – this is due to the level of growth proposed. Significant benefits are envisaged for all options against sustainability objectives relating to housing, economy and employment, again because of the level of growth proposed.
- 5.12.72 Mitigation is possible to reduce the significance of some of these effects and is likely to take place at site level and at the wider transport network level including through measures to reduce transport impacts, reduce environmental impacts and measures to maximise the sustainability standards of new buildings to increase energy and water efficiency, including renewable energy provision.
- 5.12.73 Options 1, 3 and 4 are considered likely to lead to significant adverse effects on the sustainability objectives relating to air quality and environmental pollution and transport because the majority of new development would be concentrated in one location. Option 2, however, is not considered likely to lead to significant adverse effects in these areas because of the dispersed nature of development; this would result in the dispersal of traffic impacts over a wider area with no specific concentration of impacts. Strategic development will have good access to the strategic road network (A350), including Rawlings Green via a new railway crossing which also has good proximity to the railway station and employment areas to the north.
- 5.12.74 Option 2 will avoid the need for an eastern distributor road between Rawlings Green and London Road, thus avoiding many of the effects relating to air quality, noise and light pollution and loss of tranquillity in that part of Chippenham. The proposed road link over the railway line, connecting the Rawlings Green development and Monkton Park to the north Chippenham development and the A350 north is a key piece of infrastructure likely to mitigate some of the impact of developing the Rawlings Green site. However, modelling work undertaken²⁵ shows some degree of impact on the operation of the town centre, related in part to the constrained A350 corridor.
- 5.12.75 The sustainability appraisal has stated the importance of resolving existing transport issues and future transport issues associated with new development. It acknowledges that parts of the eastern development area (particularly land at Rawlings Farm) are more accessible to the town centre and railway station than the south-west area of search. However, transport modelling undertaken²⁶ suggests that because the eastern side of Chippenham is further from the strategic road network ie A350 this may lead to greater transport impacts as traffic generated from the development would seek to reach the strategic road network with additional cross town movements.

²⁵ Transport Strategy for Chippenham – Land Allocation Report (SKM Colin Buchanan, January 2012)

²⁶ Transport Strategy for Chippenham – Land Allocation Report (SKM Colin Buchanan, January 2012)

- 5.12.76 Mitigation measures in terms of new highway infrastructure and highway improvements are likely to be significant (estimated at £21-22m²⁷) whichever option is taken forward and there is concern that this cost will reduce the amount of investment made in other essential social and environmental infrastructure. It is essential that transport mitigation schemes are able to bring wider benefits to the town and it is considered that schemes involving town centre traffic improvements, a new railway crossing and improvements to the A350 are more likely to achieve greater sustainability benefits.
- 5.12.77 The decision as to which option to take forward in terms of sustainability effects is likely to hinge on the relative advantages and disadvantages of a dispersed versus non-dispersed approach. A non-dispersed approach is likely to concentrate impacts in one or two locations and these impacts will possibly be greater in terms of the environmental objectives. A dispersed approach could spread impacts over a wider area; these effects are less likely to be as significant against the environmental objectives but any cumulative effects of developing a number of sites will need to be considered.
- 5.12.78 Previous sustainability appraisal work undertaken post *Wiltshire 2026* stated that development could conceivably take place in a number of different locations to maximise the strengths that each option offers, avoiding areas of particular environmental concern, including the River Avon corridor, Rowden Conservation Area and Birds Marsh Wood and reducing impacts concerning landscape and transport.
- 5.12.79 Development adjacent to the existing urban area is considered more sustainable than development that is divorced from the urban area as it is likely to be able to take advantage of existing services, facilities and infrastructure and be able to contribute more to regeneration of the town centre because of closer proximity. Proximity to existing public transport services and public transport interchanges in the town centre is also likely to reduce the need to travel, facilitate a modal shift to sustainable transport modes thus improving air quality and congestion levels.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment sites in Chippenham

- 5.12.80 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Chippenham Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Table 5.6 – Chippenham strategic employment options – June 2011

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Hill Corner	9.1
Hunters Moon	4.99
Showell Farm	28.85

²⁷ Transport Strategy for Chippenham – Land Allocation Report (SKM Colin Buchanan, January 2012)

5.12.81 In addition to those sites the Council has been made aware of a number of other potential employment sites in the Chippenham Community Area and these are shown below:

Table 5.7 – Chippenham additional strategic employment options – February 2012

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land near M4 Junction 17 (Sealy Farm)	22.9
Land off A350	30.0
Kington Park, Kington Langley	3.1

5.12.82 All potential sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Summary of assessment scores

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
1. Hill Corner	-/?	-	-	-/?	0	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+/?
2. Hunters Moon	-	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+/?
3. Showell Farm	-/?	--	-	-/?	-/?	--/?	--/?	-	-	0	+	+	+	+/?	--/?	++/?	++
4. Land near Junction 17 M4	-/?	--	++	-	-/?	--/?	--/?	-	-	0	+	+/?	+	+	--	+	++/?
5. Land off A350	-	--	-	-	-	--/?	-	-	-	0	+	+	+	+	--	++/?	++/?
6. Kington Park	-	?	-	-	0/?	-/?	-/?	?	-	0	+	+	+	+	-/?	+/?	+/?

Summary of likely significant effects – Hill Corner

5.12.83 No significant effects considered likely. Refer to assessment in Appendix J for details of effects.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Hill Corner

5.12.84 No significant effects considered likely.

Summary of likely significant effects – Hunters Moon

5.12.85 No significant effects considered likely, either positive or negative. No specific constraints to development in terms of effects on any designated areas. Refer to assessment in Appendix J for details of effects.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Hunters Moon

- 5.12.86 No significant adverse effects considered likely at this location, depending on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.

Summary of likely significant effects – Showell Farm

- 5.12.87 The size of this proposed employment site means there are likely to be significant benefits for the local economy and employment opportunities.
- 5.12.88 Showell Farm, however, is divorced from Chippenham town centre and is not adjacent to the urban area. Because of its location there are likely to be significant impacts relating to traffic, air noise and light pollution. The extent of any impacts will depend on the design of any future development, the exact location of any development and types of employment uses. The A350 already experiences major congestion and this development is likely to significantly add to this unless some form of mitigation is undertaken on the A350 and roads leading into the town centre.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Showell Farm

- 5.12.89 Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the car and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. The effects of transport must also be established through further transport modelling. Potential future dualling of A350 may need to be considered. The effects of noise and light pollution can be reduced through landscaping, tree planting and restricting employment uses on this site.
- 5.12.90 Any development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. A development of this size has the potential to significantly increase emissions of greenhouse gases.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land near Junction 17 (Sealy Farm)

- 5.12.91 There are no absolute environmental constraints to development in this location, subject to further ecological, landscape and archaeological assessment. There is a SSSI just north of the site which would require protection from development impacts but few other specific biodiversity, landscape or heritage designations to restrict development.
- 5.12.92 Some likely significant adverse effects have been noted in the assessment. A site of this size will lead to the loss of a significant area of agricultural land, although none is of the higher value Grades I and II, and the site does not have good access to local facilities, public transport links and key infrastructure within Chippenham.
- 5.12.93 Due to the size of the site, its location adjacent to the M4 and A350 and substantial storage/distribution uses proposed there are likely to be significant impacts relating to transport and emissions to air. The location is approx 6km from Chippenham town

centre which will not encourage or promote use of or investment in sustainable modes of transport. Cumulative impacts also likely with other proposed development in Chippenham and existing traffic using Junction 17, as well as increasing traffic volumes on the A350.

- 5.12.94 Significant benefits are likely in relation to proposals for waste recycling facilities in the northern section of this site adjacent to the motorway. This section is already allocated in the Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations DPD as potential site for MRF/Waste transfer, Local Recycling, IWR/Transfer and Waste treatment. There is another waste allocation within 500m of this part of the site and the proposals strongly promote reduction, recovery, re-use and recycling of waste in a location with good access to the highway network and at least 1km from the nearest settlement.
- 5.12.95 Significant benefits through what is likely to be substantial employment opportunities on a large mixed-use site with good access to the national road network. This will provide many new jobs for local people and allow local businesses to expand and also attract inward investment to the area. There are some concerns over the extent of storage/distribution/services uses which may employ mainly lower-skilled workers which would not significantly reduce out-commuting to larger centres. Employment in this location is also unlikely to help meet the Chippenham Vision objectives regarding town centre regeneration which is a key sustainability issue for Chippenham.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects - Land near Junction 17 (Sealy Farm)

- 5.12.96 In terms of transport related impacts and subsequent emissions to air, further transport assessment should be undertaken to assess cumulative effects on air quality and on the existing road network, including a capacity assessment on J17. Innovative sustainable transport solutions should be considered to reduce transport impacts and increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes.
- 5.12.97 One of the key sustainability issues for Chippenham, and promoted through the Chippenham Vision, is to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre. This is also a key objective of the draft NPPF which also states that 'planning policies... should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable'. The benefits that development in this location will have for the regeneration of Chippenham town centre must be made clear in order to enhance overall sustainability.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land off A350

- 5.12.98 There are no absolute environmental constraints to development in this location, subject to further ecological, landscape and archaeological assessment. There is potential for impacts relating to noise, light and air pollution to affect the White, Hey and Grubbins Woods County Wildlife Site to the west of the site which would require

protection from development impacts but few other specific biodiversity, landscape or heritage designations to restrict development.

5.12.99 Significant adverse effects are most likely to relate to land and soil resources, air quality and environmental pollution and transport. This is a large potential employment site on greenfield land that will generate significant additional traffic volumes, particularly on the A350 and roads leading into the town centre. It is acknowledged that this site is closer to the town centre compared with other potential employment sites assessed of a similar size. However, the site is separated from the urban area by the A350 and this could reduce accessibility to the town centre and reduce the effectiveness of travel to the town centre by sustainable transport modes.

5.12.100 Benefits considered likely to be significant relate to economic development and employment provision. The size of this site can enable a range of employment opportunities which could significantly benefit the local economy. However there are concerns that if the site was developed predominantly for distribution uses this would restrict employment opportunities and may not significantly help reduce out-commuting which tends to be dominated by higher skilled/managerial level employees.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects - Land off A350

5.12.101 The relative lack of brownfield development opportunities in Chippenham means that greenfield sites will be needed to meet Chippenham's employment needs and the loss of some greenfield can therefore be expected.

5.12.102 Significant investment will be required to mitigate transport and air quality impacts, including congestion on the A350 and other roads. Cumulative impacts with other development can be expected and additional infrastructure will need to be considered to deal with future issues. As well as physical infrastructure such as dualling of the A350 (which is only likely to be justifiable in combination with other significant development), a range of innovative sustainable transport solutions should be considered to reduce additional traffic volumes that are likely from development in this location.

Summary of likely significant effects – Kington Park

5.12.103 The extent of effects resulting from development at this site will depend on the location of any proposed development and what future uses are proposed. At the time of undertaking the assessment of Kington Park the proposed location of any new development was not known and this made it difficult to assess likely future effects.

5.12.104 Kington Park has good access to the A350 and M4 but is approx 2.5-3km from Chippenham town centre. Any increase in traffic volumes, including additional lorry movements, associated with additional development will add to traffic pressures on the A350 but given the location this could presumably avoid additional town centre

through traffic. Access to the site by sustainable transport modes is more limited than any potential sites closer to Chippenham town centre.

- 5.12.105 There are few environmental constraints at this location. There is the potential for indirect effects concerning air, light and noise pollution on the areas of ancient woodland to the west of the site and it is not known if development proposals would adversely affect facilities at Chippenham golf course. No other specific issues have been raised in the assessment.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Kington Park

- 5.12.106 No significant adverse effects have been found but further information would be required on what development is proposed and the exact location of development. Any potential significant effects are likely to relate to impacts of development on the A350 and further transport assessment, to include mitigation measures, would be required to accompany any proposals.
- 5.12.107 Any new development should include appropriate mitigation in terms of landscaping and habitat enhancement to reduce biodiversity and landscape implications.

What are considered the most sustainable employment sites in sustainability terms?

- 5.12.108 The two smaller sites (Hill Corner and Hunters Moon) are likely to lead to lesser environmental effects generally because of their size but also unlikely to give the benefits of the larger employment sites in terms of economic growth and employment. Of the larger proposed employment sites (Showell Farm, Sealy Farm and Land off A350) it is difficult to identify a site that is clearly more sustainable than others against the sustainability objectives and a more detailed assessment at site level would be required. All of the larger sites are relatively remote from Chippenham town centre and on Greenfield land, and significant impacts are considered likely relating to land and soil resources, air quality, climatic factors and transport.
- 5.12.109 Site option 4 (Sealy Farm) is not considered likely to have the same level of economic benefits for Chippenham town centre because of its location, making it unlikely to help meet Chippenham Vision objectives regarding town centre regeneration. However, proposals at this site for waste management facilities will give significant benefits.
- 5.12.110 At the time this assessment was carried out (December 2011), details of what development is proposed at Kington Park were not available to the SA team. The assessment has therefore been undertaken considering just the location of the existing site at Kington Park only.

5.13 Core Policy 11 – Spatial Strategy: Corsham Community Area

5.13.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Corsham Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.13.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Corsham Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Corsham Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.13.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	+	-	-	+/?	-/?	-/?	+	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	++
Option 2	--/?	-/?	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+	-	-	-	-	-/?	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.13.4 Significant adverse effects are likely through Option 2 with regards biodiversity and water resources. These effects are considered significant because there would be less control over the level and location of new development through Option 2 than through a specific Core Strategy policy.

5.13.5 There are specific issues with development in Corsham in relation to impacts on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These issues are associated with bat roosts in certain underground Bath stone mines and these have been highlighted through the sustainability appraisal and HRA Report previously. The majority of impacts in this area will probably come through cumulative effects of multiple developments and it is possible that these cumulative effects will be addressed through a developers guidance document and project level AA.

5.13.6 Guidance is being prepared jointly by Natural England and Wiltshire Council and a Biodiversity SPD is planned that will cover design guidance for bats. AA is already taking place at the project level for development near Corsham. Development in the Corsham community area is likely to trigger project level AAs, particularly for ex-MoD sites on the west side of Corsham as these are sold off for development.

5.13.7 The HRA Report recommends that the Core Strategy could go further by committing the Council to developing a process for ensuring that developments within 4km of the SAC will not have a significant adverse effect on it and that such a statement could be included in Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'. Such a statement would enable the HRA to conclude that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on the SAC.

5.13.8 To take account of the HRA recommendations, additional text has been added to the supporting text to Core policy 50 as follows:

'Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy'

5.13.9 Water resources – Corsham is entirely within a groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 and there should be careful consideration of the types of development proposed and its location. A specific Core Strategy policy can address this issue to avoid adverse effects in combination with reducing water demand through water efficiency requirements addressed in other Core Strategy policies.

5.13.10 Option 1 will have significant benefits for housing and employment provision to meet local need and this will have important long-term economic benefits. Corsham has seen significant housing growth in recent years and the provision of 6Ha employment land will help address the imbalance that has occurred, helping to increase self-containment and provide some economic diversification away from MOD employment. The policy also addresses the issue of the need for improved services and facilities that have not accompanied housing growth in recent years.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.13.11 Impacts relating to bats – it is likely that some development will give rise to project level AA and forthcoming design guidance for bats should provide information on reducing adverse effects. Effects would need to be avoided or minimised and this may restrict future uses on some sites in Corsham. Specific measures should be taken to protect habitats of protected and notable species, especially bats at this location, and extensive ecological survey work undertaken in order to incorporate mitigation for impacts on bats.

5.13.12 The HRA Report has given examples of how effects can be avoided through design which include:

- mapping flight lines
- location and design of lighting
- provision of road crossings on key flight lines
- identification and protection of habitats used in the summer, e.g. veteran trees/old buildings
- retention/enhancement of linkages/corridors
- provision of new foraging sites for use in the winter.

5.13.13 Development of brownfield sites – it should be noted that brownfield sites can be important habitats (in some cases a UK BAP priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land), and in these situations, reuse should not necessarily be maximised. Appropriate ecological assessment of any brownfield site should be conducted prior to development to avoid adverse effects.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.13.14 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and ensuring development in sustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations**. The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

5.13.15 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

5.13.16 It is recommended that prior to any development taking place, the potential cumulative effects on bats from development sites in different locations is given consideration and that particular consideration is given to avoiding inappropriate development that may adversely affect the groundwater Source Protection Zone that Corsham lies within.

Strategic housing allocations in Corsham

5.13.17 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in **Corsham**. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal

Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*²⁸, and those recommended as the most sustainable options, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process²⁹ which accompanies the Core Strategy.

5.13.18 The strategic housing allocation in *Wiltshire 2026* for Corsham was ‘sites to the west of the town, including land adjacent to Box School and Hartham Quarry’. The sustainability appraisal concluded that ‘none of the sites can be identified as clearly more favourable in SA terms than any other. The sites all perform relatively poorly’. A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation in Corsham without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.

5.13.19 This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Corsham housing Options																	
Strategic site(s) <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	--	--	-	-	0	?	--	0	-	++	?	+	?	+/?	-/?	-/?	-/?
Without strategic site(s)	+/?	+/?	-	-/?	?	-	-	-/?	?	+	+/?	++/?	+/?	?	-	+	+

Summary and conclusions

5.13.20 *Wiltshire 2026* originally proposed just 100 dwellings as a strategic site on land west of Corsham. The site has not been taken forward as it is deemed to be non-strategic. This is because whilst it would meet local housing need it does not have any significant impact on the strategic objectives for Wiltshire as a whole and can be delivered through an alternative mechanism.

5.13.21 The assessment of the amended policy for Corsham, whereby no strategic housing sites are allocated, has shown the potential for a greater level of social and community benefits if sites come forward through a neighbourhood planning approach, but with some short-term uncertainty in terms of housing and employment delivery. Benefits in terms of housing delivery and the local economy are likely but also subject to a greater level of uncertainty because it is not known what sites may come forward and in what location. The delivery of employment land did not form part of the original strategic allocation but future sites may be for mixed-uses.

5.13.22 Planning for future housing development through a future DPD, and especially through a neighbourhood plan in Corsham will give the opportunity for the local

²⁸ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

²⁹ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

community to plan development to meet their needs. This could enable development that offers a greater level of environmental protection and that meets wider social and economic needs through local knowledge. However, it is appreciated that planning on a strategic level also offers opportunities to mitigate environmental effects and could provide wider social and community benefits for the town as a whole.

5.13.23 Uncertainties have been highlighted in the assessment because future non-strategic sites are not known at this stage. Future non-strategic growth in Corsham must give particular consideration to its location within the Cotswold AONB and the potential for impacts on bats associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC. There is also the opportunity for sites to be brought forward that will develop redundant MOD land in accordance with Core Policy 37 of the Core Strategy, avoiding the loss of Greenfield land, and it is considered that development of these sites would lead to greater sustainability benefits overall.

5.13.24 It is likely that overall, a non-strategic approach to development in Corsham will give some short-term uncertainties in terms of housing and employment delivery but in the medium-long term this delivery will be met through a DPD or mechanism such as a neighbourhood plan. This will allow the allocation and development of sites that can achieve greater and wider-ranging sustainability benefits that are shaped by communities to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of the local community. It will also enable the pace of housing delivery to be better managed across the plan period.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Corsham

5.13.25 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Corsham Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land east of Leafield Industrial Estate	3.35
Land Rear of Fiveways	7.7

5.13.26 Potential sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
East of Leaffield Industrial Estate	-/?	-	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0/?	0/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+/?
Rear of Fiveways	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	0	+/?	+	0	+	-	+	+/?

Summary of likely significant effects – Land east of Leaffield Industrial Estate

5.13.27 No significant effects considered likely, either positive or negative. No specific constraints to development in terms of effects on any designated areas.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land east of Leaffield Industrial Estate

5.13.28 No significant adverse effects considered likely at this location, depending on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land rear of Fiveways

5.13.29 There is a potential significant effect in terms of impacts on the nearby Bath and Bradford on Avon bats SAC and Box mine SSSI located to the south west. There is a need to maintain and enhance major flight lines and there are constraints re lighting, noise and vibration resulting from this.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land rear of Fiveways

5.13.30 Effects would need to be avoided or minimised and this may restrict employment uses on this site. Specific measures should be taken to protect habitats of protected and notable species, especially bats at this location, and extensive ecological survey work undertaken in order to incorporate mitigation for impacts on bats.

5.13.31 The HRA Report has given examples of how effects can be avoided through design which include:

- mapping flight lines
- location and design of lighting
- provision of road crossings on key flight lines
- identification and protection of habitats used in the summer, e.g. veteran trees/old buildings
- retention/enhancement of linkages/corridors
- provision of new foraging sites for use in the winter.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

5.13.32 Option 1 'East of Leaffield Industrial Estate' is the more favourable of the two sites and the one recommended for inclusion.

5.14 Core Policy 12 – Spatial Strategy: Devizes Community Area

5.14.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Devizes Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.14.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Devizes Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Devizes Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area
3	Restrict development of all types, especially in the town centre in order to match traffic generation to capacity of road network

5.14.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	--	-	-	-	-/?	--	-	-/?	++	-	+	+	+	--	+/?	++
Option 2	-/?	--	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	--	-/?	-/?	+	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	+
Option 3	0	-/?	0	?	0	-/?	-	0/?	-	+	0	0	0	0	-	-/?	-/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.14.4 Significant adverse effects are only considered likely through implementation of Options 1 and 2; these effects are likely in the areas of land and soil, air quality and environmental pollution, climatic factors, landscape impacts and transport, and relate to the level and potential location of proposed new development. Option 3 would lead

to a much more reduced level of growth that would be less likely to lead to such impacts and no significant adverse effects have been attributed to this option.

- 5.14.5 Much of the proposed growth is directed to Devizes. There is a very small amount of brownfield land in Devizes, no strategic housing allocations are identified but it is assumed most housing development will be located on greenfield sites. This development, depending on the location, and the strategic employment site at Horton Rd, are likely to significantly impact on the North Wessex Downs AONB to the north of the town.
- 5.14.6 Proposals for 2150 new homes in the community area will significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions through energy use and transport. This proposed growth will also exacerbate the key issue in Devizes relating to traffic levels and consequent air quality concerns. This may not be as significant an issue with a more restricted level of growth (Option 3) but may be even more of an issue through Option 2 which may lead to higher levels of growth.
- 5.14.7 The Core Strategy has highlighted that traffic congestion has led to several Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) being declared in Devizes town centre and potential health impacts of this are highlighted in this sustainability appraisal. Measures to improve air quality in Devizes need to be considered and could be seen as a constraint to further growth in the short term.
- 5.14.8 Option 1 will have significant benefits in terms of housing and employment provision. However, for economic benefits to be maximised in Devizes the issues of transport and air quality must be resolved as further congestion will have economic impacts. Options 2 and 3 provide no certainty that an appropriate level of growth will be achieved to meet need.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.14.9 The significant adverse effects noted could be significantly reduced by reducing the requirement for new homes built in the community area. This would have the effect of reducing environmental impacts, particularly relating to the AONB, reducing impacts on air quality and climatic factors and reducing traffic volumes. However, it is understood that only further development is likely to provide the transport related investment that Devizes needs and the right balance will need to be found in that respect.
- 5.14.10 Development should meet high levels of energy and water efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to provide renewable forms of energy on development sites in Devizes but this will have to be pursued on a site by site basis due to the absence of strategic housing allocations, and in accordance with other Core Strategy policies.

- 5.14.11 Development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use by investing in sustainable transport solutions that offer a real choice of modes. Future growth is constrained by congestion in the local highway network and some alleviation can be achieved through upgrades to existing junctions to be delivered in combination with current committed and future housing growth. The impact of any future development on the strategic road network must be taken into consideration with appropriate contributions to demand management solutions.
- 5.14.12 Development should be avoided, where possible, where it would adversely impact on the AONB or where it would significantly impact upon rural character. Good quality design is required that reflects local character and reduces impacts on the AONB. A more detailed landscape assessment should be undertaken to assess impacts and identify suitable mitigation for likely effects on the AONB, particularly when there are no strategic housing allocations for Devizes but a large housing requirement. There may be significant cumulative impacts from a number of smaller development sites and these may be more difficult to mitigate.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.14.13 Although Option 3 would potentially lead to significantly less environmental impacts (depending on the extent development is restricted) it would not allow local housing and employment needs to be met or provide investment to resolve the issues Devizes faces. Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to developments coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects.
- 5.14.14 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding requirements for infrastructure provision and ensuring development in more sustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.14.15 As noted in the assessment, further development in Devizes on the scale proposed is likely to cause particular impacts on the AONB and place further pressures on the road network and air quality. Any future development should consider ways to avoid these effects with the result that an overall reduction in impacts is achieved overall with Core Policies 51, 55 and 60/61/62 (transport) being of particular relevance when considering ways of avoiding and reducing effects.

Strategic housing allocations in Devizes

- 5.14.16 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in Devizes. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*³⁰, and those recommended as the most sustainable options, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process³¹ which accompanies the Core Strategy.
- 5.14.17 The strategic housing allocation in *Wiltshire 2026* for Devizes was ‘a number of sites to the north-west, north-east and south of the town’. These are shown in Table 4.4 as Options 1, 2 and 4. The sustainability appraisal concluded that Option 2 was more favourable in sustainability terms. A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation in Devizes without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.
- 5.14.18 This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Devizes housing Options																	
Strategic site(s)	-	-	-	--	0	--	--	0	-	++	+	+	?	0	--	-	-
<i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	-	0/-	-	--	0	--	--	0	-	++	+	+	?	?	--	++	++
(Options 1,2,4)	-	-	-	--	0	--	--	0	?	+	-	+	?	?	--	-	-
Without strategic site(s)	-/?	--/?	-	--	0/?	--	--	-/?	-/?	++/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	?	--	+/?	+/?

Summary and conclusions

- 5.14.19 In the *Wiltshire 2026* consultation document, 700 dwellings were proposed on three sites on land to the north east, north west and south east of Devizes. The sites were not taken forward as they were deemed to be non-strategic. These three sites will meet local housing need and potentially provide some for the Devizes Community Area but Topic Paper 12 states that they won't have any further significant impact on the strategic objectives for Wiltshire as a whole and could be delivered through an alternative mechanism.

³⁰ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire's future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

³¹ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

- 5.14.20 It is considered likely that the provision of a similar number of dwellings on non-strategic sites in Devizes will result in a number of significant positive and negative effects. The original strategic allocation consisted of three greenfield sites and due to the current lack of brownfield sites in the town, it could be assumed that the majority of future non-strategic development will also take place on greenfield sites on the urban edge. The assessment has noted the likelihood of some short-term uncertainty in housing delivery because there are no strategic allocations, but in the medium-long term it is likely that housing needs will be met through a number of other mechanisms.
- 5.14.21 The significance of sustainability effects in Devizes will depend on the level of community input into the location of development sites and the type of development that occurs. The greater the community involvement ie bringing forward neighbourhood plans, the greater the level of social benefits there are likely to be. It is not known at this stage how many dwellings may come forward as a result of the neighbourhood planning process. There is some uncertainty associated with how sites will come forward and therefore some sustainability implications are also uncertain.
- 5.14.22 The original strategic allocation contained an element of employment land and this accounted for the significant benefits attributed to Option 2 in terms of economy and employment objectives in the *Wiltshire 2026* sustainability appraisal. Core Policy 12 of the Core Strategy now allocates 8.4ha of employment land at 'Land between A361 and Horton Road' and therefore it is unlikely that non-strategic sites will include the same level of employment land. Therefore significant benefits have not been attributed to those two objectives in the current assessment.
- 5.14.23 All future non-strategic housing sites must take into consideration the three significant issues regarding development in Devizes – impacts on the AONB, impacts on the local highway network and air quality. Future development must proactively seek to reduce impacts and not add to them. The location of development and consequent impacts on landscape and the road network will be key considerations.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Devizes

- 5.14.24 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Devizes Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land between A361 & Horton Road	8.43
Land to the west of Hopton Park	Not specified

- 5.14.25 Potential sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites

most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Land between A361 & Horton Rd	-	-/?	-	?	-	-/?	-/?	0	-	0	-	+	0	+	-/?	++	++
Land to the west of Hopton Park	-	-/?	-	?	-	-/?	-/?	-	-	0	0	+	0	+	-/?	++	++

Summary of likely significant effects - Land between A361 & Horton Road

5.14.26 Development at this site is likely to significantly affect landscape character and potential to affect the setting of the AONB. The location of the site on the edge of the town facing towards the AONB creates the potential for impacts upon the local landscape character and setting of the national designation.

5.14.27 Significant benefits likely in terms of employment provision and local economy.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land between A361 & Horton Road

5.14.28 Sensitive landscaping, limiting building heights, materials and palette, particularly around the more visible northern and eastern edges of the development will be required and sensitive landscaping / screening alongside the Public Right of Way.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land to the west of Hopton Park

5.14.29 Development at this site is likely to significantly affect landscape character and potential to affect the setting of the AONB. The location of the site on the edge of the town facing towards the AONB creates the potential for impacts upon the local landscape character and setting of the national designation.

5.14.30 Significant benefits likely in terms of employment provision and local economy.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land to the west of Hopton Park

5.14.31 Sensitive landscaping, limiting building heights, materials and palette, particularly around the more visible northern and eastern edges of the development. Sensitive landscaping / screening alongside the Public Right of Way.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

5.14.32 Both sites are comparable in terms of significant effects. Both sites could have significant economic benefits but significantly adverse landscape impacts because of the proximity of the North Wessex Downs AONB. Option 2 boundary runs right up to the border with the AONB; it is debateable if this would lead to greater landscape impacts than Option 1. It is recommended that further detailed landscape assessment is undertaken that is beyond the scope of this sustainability appraisal.

5.15 Core Policy 13 – Spatial Strategy: Malmesbury Community Area

5.15.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Malmesbury Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.15.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Malmesbury Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Malmesbury Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.15.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	++	+	+	+	0	-/?	++	+
Option 2	-/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	--/?	-/?	+	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.15.4 Significant effects likely through both options due to loss of greenfield land. Few opportunities to develop brownfield sites in the community area means most development will take place on greenfield land and this is considered significant in the context of Malmesbury.

- 5.15.5 Option 2 may lead to development in more unsustainable locations that would also lead to significant adverse effects in relation to Malmesbury's historic environment. The proposed policy states that future development will be carefully managed to ensure the high quality built environment including the important historic assets - such as Malmesbury Abbey and Conservation Area, are protected and these areas may be put at risk without a specific policy.
- 5.15.6 Significant growth is not planned for Malmesbury but the level of proposed housing will significantly contribute towards alleviating affordability issues in the area and combined with the provision of employment land will provide opportunities for economic growth. Option 2 provides no certainty of level of employment, housing or infrastructure provision which could damage the local economy through under provision of affordable housing and essential infrastructure that Malmesbury needs.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.15.7 The requirement to meet the need for housing and jobs in the community area is likely to override the sustainability objective of protecting greenfield land, especially when there is a relative lack of brownfield sites within Wiltshire generally. Greenfield loss is irreversible, however loss of greenfield land can be reduced by maximising effective/efficient use of land by building at maximum viable densities in sustainable locations that are close to (or within) the existing urban area. Wherever possible, agricultural land of a lower value should be prioritised where development has to take place on greenfield land.
- 5.15.8 Development in any location must respect the local character of the area where development is taking place. Malmesbury has a high quality historic environment with few opportunities to bring forward development on previously developed land. It is possible that a greenfield site will need to be identified towards the latter half of the plan period and this should not lead to adverse landscape or heritage impacts that will damage the setting and economy of the town.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.15.9 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and ensuring development in sustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations**. The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.15.10 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate

mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this would not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

5.15.11 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011 noted that the proposed amount of employment land in this policy (0.9ha) is unlikely to significantly affect levels of self-containment or reduce out-commuting. It recommended consideration of a higher level of employment provision. The policy for Malmesbury now includes provision of 3ha of employment land as a result of the sustainability appraisal, consultation responses and more up-to-date evidence and this is likely to give further benefits in the community area.

Strategic housing allocations in Malmesbury

5.15.12 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in **Malmesbury**. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*³², **and those recommended as the most sustainable options**, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process³³ which accompanies the Core Strategy Pre-Submission document in February 2012.

5.15.13 **The strategic housing site allocated in *Wiltshire 2026* for Malmesbury was ‘three sites to the north east of Malmesbury’. This is shown in Table 4.4 as Option 2. The sustainability appraisal concluded that Options 2 and 3 were more favourable. A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation in Malmesbury without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.**

5.15.14 **This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:**

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Malmesbury housing Options																	
Strategic site(s) <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	-	-	-	-	?	+	--	0	0	++	+	+	?	+	+/?	-	-
Without strategic site(s)	-/?	-/?	-	-/?	?	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	++	+/?	++/?	+/?	?	-	+	?

³² Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

³³ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

Summary and conclusions

- 5.15.15 Topic Paper 12 explains that '200 dwellings were proposed to the north of Malmesbury in the Wiltshire 2026 consultation document. The remaining allocation in the town is non-strategic because whilst it would meet local housing need it does not have any significant impact on the strategic objectives for Wiltshire as a whole and can be delivered through an alternative mechanism.'
- 5.15.16 A neighbourhood plan is currently being developed in Malmesbury and is looking at a range of sites in and around the town for housing development. It is likely that this plan, involving the local community, will find a suitable and sustainable site or sites to meet some of the remaining housing need in Malmesbury (of the 760 dwellings to be delivered in Malmesbury through Core Policy 13, only 270 remain to be identified). This community led approach will give significant benefits against sustainability objective 12 and the removal of the original strategic site in Malmesbury should not adversely impact housing delivery in the medium-long term.
- 5.15.17 In the assessment of effects, it is considered that this relatively low level of future housing provision in Malmesbury has the potential for some limited and local adverse effects against some of the environmental objectives and transport. However, this would be the case for any future development likely to take place on greenfield land and effects will be better known when sites come forward. The neighbourhood plan will also be subject to its own sustainability appraisal.
- 5.15.18 Planning for future housing development through a neighbourhood plan in Malmesbury will give the opportunity for the local community to plan development to meet their needs. This could enable development that offers a greater level of environmental protection and that meets wider social and economic needs through local knowledge. However, it is appreciated that planning on a strategic level also offers opportunities to mitigate environmental effects and could provide wider social and community benefits for the town as a whole.
- 5.15.19 It is considered that the non-strategic approach to housing development through Core Policy 13 will not adversely affect housing delivery and there are likely to be greater sustainability benefits through a community led approach.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Malmesbury

- 5.15.20 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a potential strategic employment site was considered for the Malmesbury Community Area. This site is shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land at the garden centre	3.63

- 5.15.21 This site has been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with the site and potential mitigation measures

to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Strategic employment Options																	
Land at the garden centre	0/?	-	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+

Summary of likely significant effects

5.15.22 No significant adverse effects considered likely at this location, depending on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects

5.15.23 No significant effects considered likely, either positive or negative. No specific constraints to development in terms of effects on any designated areas.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

5.15.24 The site named 'Land at the Garden Centre' is the only site assessed through the sustainability appraisal and therefore the only site that can be recommended.

5.16 Core Policy 14 – Spatial Strategy: Marlborough Community Area

5.16.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Marlborough Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.16.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Marlborough Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Marlborough Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.16.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Option 2	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	- /?	+	-	-	-	-	- /?	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.16.4 A modest level of growth of 850 new homes is proposed for the community area, taking account of Marlborough’s location entirely within the AONB and other environmental constraints. Few significant effects have been noted in the assessment, except for Option 2 in relation to landscape impacts because this option provides no certainty over the proposed level of housing and employment growth and would give fewer safeguards than including a specific policy in the Core Strategy.

5.16.5 Although not considered a significant effect, development within the town of Marlborough, and other smaller settlements, will need to give particular consideration to the rivers Kennet and Og and areas of flood risk associated with those, including any wildlife habitats.

5.16.6 The proposed level of employment has increased to 3ha which will give greater benefits against the relevant sustainability objective but this is not considered significant.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.16.7 It is recognised that Marlborough will need a modest amount of new homes and employment during the plan period but development should be avoided where it would adversely impact on the AONB or where it would significantly impact upon rural character. Good quality design is required that reflects local character and a more detailed landscape assessment should be undertaken to assess impacts and establish the most suitable locations for growth. There may be significant cumulative impacts from a number of smaller development sites and these impacts must be effectively mitigated given Marlborough’s location entirely within the AONB.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.16.8 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations and

has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.

The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

- 5.16.9 Future development in and around Marlborough will need to give particular consideration to any potential impacts on the AONB and on the rivers Kennet and Og if development is in close proximity to those rivers.
- 5.16.10 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects (hence the number of uncertainties highlighted in the assessment) and this would not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Marlborough

- 5.16.11 Section 4.3 of this report outlines the potential strategic housing options that were considered for each community area in 2009; these were included in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the *Wiltshire 2026* consultation document. This included two alternative strategic housing sites for Marlborough – ‘Land west and east of Salisbury Rd’ and ‘Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane’. ‘Land west and east of Salisbury Rd’ was considered more favourable in sustainability terms and was carried forward as the preferred option.
- 5.16.12 ‘Land west and east of Salisbury Rd’, however, was not included in the June 2011 Core Strategy consultation document because it was no longer considered to be a strategic site. However, that decision has since been reviewed by the spatial planning team and a decision made to include it once more. A review of the original sustainability appraisal has been carried out because the allocation boundary has changed with the site to the east now excluded. The assessment of ‘Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane’ has also been reviewed. A summary of the review is presented below, and a comparison of the two options shown. The full sustainability appraisal review is presented in Appendix I.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Site Options																	
Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane (review)	--	-	-	-	0/?	-	-	-	--	++	+/?	+	-/?	-/?	--/?	+/?	0/+
Land west of Salisbury Rd.	--	-	-/?	-/?	0	-	-	-	-/?	++	+/?	+	?	-/?	-	+/?	0/+

Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane - what significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.16.13 Significant benefits are likely in relation to housing provision because housing provision on this site would directly address this objective.
- 5.16.14 Significant adverse effects are likely in relation to biodiversity, landscape and transport. The site is in close proximity to a SSSI, Strategic Nature Area (SNA) and a County Wildlife Site (CWS), and although direct loss of habitats is not considered likely here there are potential impacts regarding recreational pressure, disturbance and impacts on bat foraging grounds.
- 5.16.15 Because of the location within the AONB, there are potential landscape implications with the site's position.
- 5.16.16 It is considered that there are significant potential transport implications with this site because of its location further away from the town centre than the other option being considered and it has limited access for road vehicles. The site has very poor access along a single carriageway with little opportunity for mitigation and there are potential cumulative effects with development that has already taken place at the old St John's school site, increasing traffic on Chopping Knife Lane considerably.

Land adjacent to Chopping Knife Lane - what mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects?

- 5.16.17 With regards landscape issues, further detailed landscape assessment will be required to establish effects and how these will be mitigated. Sensitive design is required that respects the AONB setting, appropriate landscaping and location of new homes to reduce impacts within the site.
- 5.16.18 Because of the potential for increased through town traffic exacerbating issues around the AQMA there must be strong sustainable transport links with the town centre, St John's school and nearby Business Park. A variety of schemes should be pursued to encourage public transport use and maximise sustainable transport options because there is a strong possibility that the development will generate additional car journeys into the town centre and through town to Swindon.
- 5.16.19 Specific mitigation is required to avoid effects on bat roosts and foraging habitat. This may include buffering of commuting corridors with suitable landscaping, open space and GI provision in appropriate areas. Loss or damage to hedgerows should also be avoided and this may reduce developable area. Further and extensive ecological assessment will be required to ensure development avoids adverse effects on bats and that it will lead to an enhanced biodiversity situation throughout the site.

Land west of Salisbury Rd. - what significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.16.20 There are a number of potential significant issues with development at this site which are detailed in Appendix I. Of these issues, the potential biodiversity and landscape impacts are considered likely to be significant because of the location of the site in proximity to Savernake Forest SSSI, Marlborough Railway Tunnel CWS and within the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- 5.16.21 Marlborough Railway Tunnel CWS meets the criteria of a SSSI and is a bat hibernacula of national significance; as such it must be afforded significant weighting in the planning process. A nationally important population of barbastelle bats also breeds during the summer in nearby Savernake Forest. A particular concern within the site and along its boundaries is commuting corridors used by bats to access these summer/winter roosts which may be adversely affected by development.
- 5.16.22 Because of the location within the AONB, there are potential landscape implications with the site's position. The promoter of the site has undertaken a landscape and visual assessment of the site which demonstrates that it is possible to bring forward development in a way which is sensitive to Marlborough's setting within the AONB through strong landscaping on the edge of the development and within it. The Crown Estates wider landholding also offers the potential for further landscaping and visual enhancement of the AONB.
- 5.16.23 A number of other concerns have been highlighted in the assessment including part of the site being located within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3, potential effects on the adjacent historic park & garden and likely increases in traffic volumes which could increase through town traffic and exacerbate air quality issues in the AQMA along the A346. There are also issues regarding infrastructure provision with development placing additional pressures on local services such as GP surgeries and schools which are known to be at capacity.

Land west of Salisbury Rd. - what mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects?

- 5.16.24 Specific mitigation is required to avoid effects on bat roosts and foraging habitat. This may include buffering of commuting corridors with suitable landscaping, open space and GI provision in appropriate areas. Loss or damage to hedgerows should also be avoided and this may reduce developable area. Further and extensive ecological assessment will be required to ensure development avoids adverse effects on bats and that it will lead to an enhanced biodiversity situation throughout the site.
- 5.16.25 With regards landscape issues, further detailed landscape assessment will be required to establish effects and how these will be mitigated. Sensitive design is required that respects the AONB setting, appropriate landscaping and location of new homes to reduce impacts within the site.

Summary

- 5.16.26 Both site options are likely to considerably impact on biodiversity and landscape designations in this area. It is acknowledged that the impacts will depend on the exact location of development and any mitigation measures incorporated to reduce these impacts.
- 5.16.27 The site at Chopping Knife Lane is more remote from the town centre and is located in a less accessible position on a single carriageway. There are potential cumulative effects with development that has already taken place at the old St John's school site, increasing traffic on Chopping Knife Lane considerably, and this is regarded as a significant issue with this site.
- 5.16.28 The site west of Salisbury Rd performs slightly better in sustainability terms than Chopping Knife Lane **and is recommended to be carried forward in the Core Strategy.**

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Marlborough

- 5.16.29 The Core Strategy does not allocate any strategic employment sites in this community area.

5.17 Core Policy 15 – Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area

- 5.17.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Melksham Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

- 5.17.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Melksham Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Melksham Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

- 5.17.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	--	--	-	-	-/?	--	-/?	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	+
Option 2	-/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	-	--/?	--	-/?	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.17.4 Significant benefits for the community area in terms of housing and likely subsequent benefits for the local economy through Option 1. 2040 new homes are proposed, of which 1930 will be in Melksham and this should help address shortfalls in affordable housing and contribute towards delivering improved infrastructure, particularly in terms of regenerating the town centre, a key issue in the town.
- 5.17.5 Melksham is identified as a location for new strategic employment growth and an increased provision of 6ha will enable greater diversification of the employment base which is currently dominated by a single employer. It will also allow more opportunities for Melksham residents, many of whom currently commute to larger centres such as Chippenham, Trowbridge and Bath.
- 5.17.6 Significant adverse effects are likely from both options in terms of land and soil resources, waste, water resources, climatic factors and transport due to the high level of growth proposed for Melksham – mitigation is possible but will require significant investment in water and energy efficiency, waste infrastructure, renewable provision and sustainable transport solutions that may affect investment in other forms of essential infrastructure.
- 5.17.7 Air quality – Option 2 has been assessed as likely to be significant as it may bring forward developments in less sustainable locations and result in an increased level of growth. A significant score has not been attributed to Option 1 because there are currently no specific air quality concerns in Melksham in the form of AQMAs. Strong mitigation will be required, particularly in terms of sustainable transport solutions in order to prevent future issues.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.17.8 Infrastructure - residual growth in Melksham should help address the shortfall in affordable housing and contribute towards delivering improved infrastructure. In particular, growth should contribute towards town centre regeneration and the revitalisation of the retail and employment offer.
- 5.17.9 Town centre - improving Melksham's town centre is a priority and the preparation of a 'town plan' or similar document (e.g. neighbourhood plan), may provide a useful step to help achieve the aspirations of the local community. Wherever possible, key

community services and facilities should be located within or well related to the town centre to help promote and deliver the requisite regeneration. This should include consideration for how to best provide for the proposed new community campus for the town, which would offer a number of services and facilities, including leisure uses.

- 5.17.10 Land and soil - the requirement to meet the need for housing and jobs in the community area is likely to override the sustainability objective of protecting greenfield land, especially when there is a relative lack of brownfield sites within Wiltshire generally. Greenfield loss is irreversible, however loss of greenfield land can be reduced by maximising effective/efficient use of land by building at maximum viable densities in sustainable locations that are close to (or within) the existing urban area. Wherever possible, agricultural land of a lower value should be prioritised where development has to take place on greenfield land.
- 5.17.11 Climatic factors - development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to provide renewable forms of energy on development sites, particularly through allocation of a large strategic development, and to link in with adjoining residential and employment areas.
- 5.17.12 Transport - development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. Potential sites likely to be on the edge of the urban area and strong investment will be required to improve public transport services and walking/cycling links, particularly linking with the town centre. Further traffic modelling is required, in particular gauging effects on Melksham town centre and A350.
- 5.17.13 Water resources - long term effects are likely from increased demand for potable water and specific concerns regarding the River Avon which runs through Melksham. All development must ensure that there are no adverse effects on water quality and that a sufficient sized buffer zone is maintained for any development close to the river. Dwellings must incorporate water efficiency measures and development should be assessed for impacts on groundwater and sufficient capacity within sewerage network. There must also be appropriate infrastructure in place to deal with foul and surface water.
- 5.17.14 Waste - appropriate levels of waste infrastructure should be provided, including recycling facilities in convenient locations. Development should be designed to reduce waste during construction and operational phases.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.17.15 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and ensuring development in sustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations**. The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as

and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

5.17.16 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

Strategic housing allocations in Melksham

5.17.17 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in **Melksham**. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*³⁴, **and those recommended as the most sustainable options**, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process³⁵ which accompanies the Core Strategy Pre-Submission document in February 2012.

5.17.18 **The strategic housing site allocated in *Wiltshire 2026* for Melksham was ‘four sites on greenfield land to the east of Melksham and between Melksham and Bowerhill’. This is shown in Table 4.4 as Option 2. The sustainability appraisal concluded that Option 2 was the more favourable. A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation in Melksham without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.**

5.17.19 **This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:**

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Melksham housing Options																	
Strategic site(s) <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	-	-/?	-	?	0	+/?	+	?	-/?	++	+	+	+	+/?	+/?	++	++
Without strategic site(s)	-/?	-/?	-	-	0/?	-	-	-/?	-/?	++/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	?	-	+/?	+/?

³⁴ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

³⁵ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

Summary and conclusions

- 5.17.20 In the *Wiltshire 2026* consultation document, 400 dwellings were proposed to the east of Melksham. The sites were not taken forward as they were deemed to be non-strategic. Topic Paper 12 states that 'whilst this site would meet local housing need and provide some employment opportunities for the Melksham Community Area it does not have any further significant impact on the strategic objectives for Wiltshire as a whole. An appropriate site (or sites) in Melksham could be delivered through neighbourhood planning or a site allocations development plan document.'
- 5.17.21 It is considered likely that the provision of a similar number of dwellings on non-strategic sites in Melksham will result in a number of significant positive and negative effects. The original strategic allocation consisted of four greenfield sites and due to the current lack of brownfield sites in the town, it could be assumed that the majority of future non-strategic development will also take place on greenfield sites on the urban edge. The level of housing delivery is also likely to significantly impact on the sustainability objectives relating to water resources and climate change, mainly due to increased water usage and increased emissions of greenhouse gases through energy use and transport.
- 5.17.22 The assessment has noted the likelihood of some short-term uncertainty in housing delivery because there are no strategic allocations, but in the medium-long term it is likely that housing needs will be met through a number of other mechanisms.
- 5.17.23 The significance of sustainability effects in Melksham will depend on the level of community input into the location of development sites and the type of development that occurs. The greater the community involvement ie bringing forward neighbourhood plans, the greater the level of social benefits there are likely to be. It is not known at this stage how many dwellings may come forward as a result of the neighbourhood planning process. There is also some uncertainty associated with how sites will come forward and therefore some sustainability implications are also uncertain.
- 5.17.24 Bringing sites forward in Melksham through a community led approach will give the opportunity for the local community to plan development to meet their needs. This could enable development that offers a greater level of environmental protection and that meets wider social and economic needs through local knowledge. However, it is appreciated that planning on a strategic level also offers opportunities to mitigate environmental effects and could provide wider social and community benefits for the town as a whole.
- 5.17.25 The original strategic allocation contained an element of employment land and this accounted for the significant benefits attributed to Option 2 in terms of economy and employment objectives in the *Wiltshire 2026* sustainability appraisal. Core Policy 15 of the Core Strategy now allocates up to 6ha of employment land at Hampton Business Park, which is a saved West Wiltshire District Plan allocation, and therefore it is unlikely that non-strategic sites will include the same level of employment land. Therefore significant benefits have not been attributed to those two objectives in the current assessment.

5.17.26 It is considered that the non-strategic approach to housing development through Core Policy 15 will not adversely affect housing delivery and there are likely to be greater sustainability benefits through a community led approach. However, when sites come forward in the future through whichever delivery mechanism, further assessment of those sites will be required to assess sustainability implications.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Melksham

5.17.27 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Melksham Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land at Berryfield	21.91
Land South of A365/North of Bowerhill	5.6

5.17.28 Proposed sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Land at Berryfield	-/?	-	0	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	0	+	++/ ?	+	+/?	-/?	++/ ?	++
Land South of A365/ North of Bowerhill	-/?	-	0	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	0	0/?	+	0	+	-	+	+/?

Summary of likely significant effects - Land at Berryfield

5.17.29 This is a large greenfield site, the majority of which is Grade I agricultural land and much of this will be lost through development. The site is remote from Melksham town centre, is not adjacent to Melksham urban area and does not have good access to local facilities, public transport links and key infrastructure.

5.17.30 The location of this site is likely to lead to significant impacts on air quality and noise/light in this rural location. Transport impacts on local roads, particularly the A350 and Semington Rd, will be exacerbated because of the location of the site and its size.

- 5.17.31 Depending on the actual size of employment provision and future uses, significant benefits can be expected through job creation and secondary benefits for other businesses, benefiting not just the local economy but the economy further afield.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land at Berryfield

- 5.17.32 This size development is not recommended in this location. Locating development adjacent to Melksham urban area would give better access to local facilities and public transport links than a more remote development site such as this. Grade I agricultural land should be avoided wherever possible.
- 5.17.33 Innovative sustainable transport schemes would be essential to reduce impacts of road vehicles and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. The effects of noise and light pollution could be reduced through landscaping, tree planting and restricting employment uses on this site and the size of site means that there is potential for mitigation of climate change impacts. Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land South of A365/North of Bowerhill

- 5.17.34 No significant effects envisaged. This is a relatively small site with potential minor impacts associated with development of a greenfield site and benefits for the local economy through employment opportunities.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land South of A365/North of Bowerhill

- 5.17.35 No significant effects considered likely, either positive or negative. No specific constraints to development in terms of effects on any designated areas.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

- 5.17.36 There are no specific environmental constraints to development at either site. Option 2 is a relatively small site and is showing no significant effects. Option 1 will have significant positive and negative impacts, mainly due to its size and location - it is fairly isolated and remote from the town centre, is not adjacent to Melksham urban area and does not have good access to local facilities, public transport links and key infrastructure. Development at 'Land at Berryfield' is preferable due to its location – however whether this site can fulfil Melksham's employment needs will need to be decided.

5.18 Core Policy 16 – Melksham link project

5.18.1 This is a new policy introduced since June 2011 that seeks to provide protection for the proposed Melksham link route of the Wilts & Berks canal and addresses concerns expressed in the June 2011 consultation about its' protection.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.18.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Proposed route for the Melksham Link to be protected by Core Strategy policy, with caveat that environmental concerns would need to be satisfactorily addressed.
2	Do not include specific policy to protect route of canal link project. Retain references to the project in the supporting text, as set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (June 2011).

5.18.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+/?	0	?	+/?	+/?	0	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+	0	0	0	+	+	+
Option 2	-/?	-/?	?	-/?	-/?	0	0	-/?	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.18.4 No significant effects, either positive or negative, have been found through the assessment. However, many more benefits are envisaged through including a policy in the Core Strategy, including ensuring adequate environmental protection during construction and afterwards.

5.18.5 In the river Avon valley in particular there are major flood risk concerns that will need to be considered before any work can start. Other issues concerning water pollution and effects on water abstraction will also need to be sorted out.

- 5.18.6 Much of the Melksham link will take a new course and this gives significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and for establishing safe and convenient sustainable transport routes, including linking with adjoining footpaths.
- 5.18.7 Economic benefits will be maximised if this project is linked with town centre regeneration. The two projects are compatible and the link project should enable more people to access and use the town centre.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.18.8 As currently worded, the policy states that proposals will need to demonstrate no overall adverse effects on cultural heritage and the natural environment. Potential adverse effects on water resources and flood risk need to be included here and the policy could achieve greater long-term benefits by ensuring protection and enhancement of the cultural, historic and natural environment.
- 5.18.9 It has been stated that this project is unlikely to go ahead without 'enabling development' to finance the project. The Council has not allocated sites on or adjacent to the route to provide this enabling development. This should be addressed in policy, as well as highlighting the many benefits this project can bring to regeneration in the town centre.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.18.10 Option 1 gives a greater range of benefits than option 2 **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations**. The inclusion of a policy in the Core Strategy will give greater weight to the Melksham link project, ensuring adequate environmental protection and providing a link between this project and the key issue of town centre regeneration.
- 5.18.11 The sustainability appraisal has highlighted that the policy could achieve greater long-term benefits by ensuring protection and enhancement of the cultural, **historic** and natural environment, and that potential adverse effects on water resources and flood risk should be addressed in the policy. The policy wording has now been amended to reflect that recommendation.

5.19 Core Policy 17: Spatial Strategy: Mere Community Area

- 5.19.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Mere Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal³⁶ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.

³⁶ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.19.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.

5.19.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy.

5.20 Core Policy 18 – Pewsey Community Area

5.20.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which set out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Pewsey Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.20.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Pewsey Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Pewsey Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.20.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-/?	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
Option 2	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	0	0	-/?	-/?	+/?	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.20.4 No significant effects are envisaged in Pewsey community area through either option. The scale of development proposed throughout the community area is at a modest level. Option 1 is more likely to provide benefits by addressing specific issues and

providing the right level of housing, employment and infrastructure that the community needs.

- 5.20.5 Specific issues highlighted in the assessment include the high quality landscape with the AONB designation covering a significant proportion of the community area, including the whole of Pewsey; this will have a major influence on the type and location of any new development. Because no strategic allocations are listed there may be potential for significant cumulative impacts from a number of smaller development sites and a more detailed landscape assessment should establish mitigation for these potential effects.
- 5.20.6 The high biodiversity value of the River Avon through the community area is an important consideration for all new development as is the A345 which has received a significant increase in HGV use in recent years.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.20.7 Strong consideration must be given to the AONB when deciding on the level, type and location of any new development with development likely to occur in larger settlements like Pewsey and Burbage which are entirely within the AONB. Site specific landscape assessments may be required for all new developments.
- 5.20.8 Development near to the River Avon must avoid adverse effects on water quality and consideration given to avoiding areas of flood risk associated with the river.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.20.9 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and ensuring development in sustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.
- 5.20.10 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.
- 5.20.11 It is recommended that particular consideration is given to the effects of any new development on the AONB, specifically cumulative effects, as and when development proposals come forward.

Strategic housing allocations in Pewsey

5.20.12 The Core Strategy does not allocate any strategic housing sites in this community area **and there were no allocations in previous iterations of the Core Strategy.**

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Pewsey

5.20.13 The Core Strategy does not allocate any strategic employment sites in this community area **and there were no allocations in previous iterations of the Core Strategy.**

5.21 Core Policy 19 – Spatial Strategy: Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area

5.21.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which sets out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.21.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.21.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	-	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	++
Option 2	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	++	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.21.4 Significant adverse effects are considered likely through Option 2 with regard to transport. A modest level of growth is proposed in the community area but there are specific issues regarding an over reliance of J16 of the M4 and poor provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages in the area. With most new housing likely to be directed to Royal Wootton Bassett this is a key issue to be resolved. A proposed cycle way between Royal Wootton Bassett and Windmill Hill Business Park avoiding J16 of the M4 will only give limited mitigation.
- 5.21.5 There are specific issues concerning future growth at Swindon and coalescence issues with settlements such as Purton and Lydiard Millicent; development to the west of Swindon could erode the character and distinctiveness of these settlements.
- 5.21.6 Significant benefits from level of housing proposed and strategic employment status (employment provision has increased from 3.7ha to 5ha since June 2011 which may give greater benefits). This will help reduce out-commuting from Royal Wootton Bassett which has a smaller employment base than might be expected for a town of its size and clearly acts as a dormitory settlement to Swindon. The strategic location of Royal Wootton Bassett on the M4 and low number of jobs compared to the population provides an opportunity to expand the employment base significantly. A recent decision to maintain an MoD presence at RAF Lyneham, following the relocation of the RAF Hercules transport fleet, is also a significant boost to the local economy.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the significant adverse effects?

- 5.21.7 Sustainable transport solutions are needed to reduce the over reliance on J16 of the M4. There is a large out-commuting flow from Royal Wootton Bassett to Swindon and J16 is the only reasonable route. Contributions from future development could resolve current and future transport issues, but strategic employment status will help increase self-containment somewhat.
- 5.21.8 The North Wessex Downs AONB is approximately 4km to the south-east of Royal Wootton Bassett and particular consideration should be given to views to and from the AONB for any future development proposals.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.21.9 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

- 5.21.10 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.
- 5.21.11 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011 recommended that the proposed amount of employment land (3.7ha) could be increased to increase self-containment and reduce out-commuting to Swindon which is a significant issue. The policy now includes provision of 5ha of employment land as a result of the sustainability appraisal, consultation responses and more up-to-date evidence.
- 5.21.12 Effective consultation between Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council is needed to resolve issues regarding planning west of Swindon. Given the proximity of Swindon to the east of the community area, planning needs to ensure development at Swindon is as balanced and sustainable as possible while also affording appropriate protection to rural areas.
- 5.21.13 The sustainability appraisal notes that a comprehensive assessment of potential development sites around Swindon has been conducted by Swindon Borough Council to identify the most sustainable locations for development, and these are outlined in the emerging Swindon Core Strategy. That assessment concluded that development to the West of Swindon, including within the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area, is unnecessary and does not represent the most sustainable option for future growth in Swindon.
- 5.21.14 The Wiltshire Core Strategy also does not allocate any strategic housing sites in this community area and therefore no further sustainability appraisal work has been undertaken. Reference should be made to the Swindon Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report³⁷ for details of the assessment of sites at West of Swindon.

Strategic housing allocations in Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade

- 5.21.15 The Core Strategy does not **now** allocate any strategic housing sites in **this community area**. Details of **all** potential strategic options considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026*³⁸, **and those recommended as the most sustainable options**, are outlined in Table 4.4 of this report. Further information regarding why the decision was made to remove strategic sites can be found in Section 7.0 of Topic Paper 12: Site selection process³⁹ which accompanies the Core Strategy Pre-Submission document in February 2012.
- 5.21.16 **The strategic housing site allocated in *Wiltshire 2026* was ‘A collection of sites to the south of the town, including Lower Woodshaw Farm’. This is shown in Table 4.4 as**

³⁷ Swindon Borough LDF Core Strategy and Development Management Policies – Revised Proposed Submission Document Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment
<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/corestrategy>

³⁸ Wiltshire 2026 – Planning for Wiltshire’s future (Wiltshire Council, October 2009)

³⁹ Topic paper 12: Site selection process – Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation (Wiltshire Council, January 2012)

Option 5. The sustainability appraisal concluded that this Option was the more favourable in sustainability terms.

5.21.17 A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of strategic sites from the Core Strategy had not been assessed through the sustainability appraisal. However, in the case of Royal Wootton Bassett, the former proposed strategic site for 150 dwellings has been granted planning permission on appeal and therefore there is no requirement for those dwellings to come forward on non-strategic sites. An assessment of the sustainability implications of bringing forward those dwellings on non-strategic sites in the future is therefore not necessary. In the Core Strategy pre-submission document, the requirement of 920 dwellings for Royal Wootton Bassett town has all been provided for through completions (2006-11) or specific permitted sites.

West of Swindon

5.21.18 The *Wiltshire 2026* document considered three strategic options for development at 'West of Swindon'; those options were located either fully or partially in the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area. Those options were considered because the need for an urban extension consisting of 3000 dwellings to meet anticipated growth at Swindon was outlined in the *Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy 2006 – 2026*.

5.21.19 Swindon Borough Council had previously published a Sustainability Appraisal Report for consultation on these three options in February 2009. At the time of publication of *Wiltshire 2026* the assessment was updated by Wiltshire Council to take account of consultation responses received by Swindon Borough Council and this update was included in the *Wiltshire 2026* Sustainability Appraisal Report.

5.21.20 A summary of the findings of the updated assessment is shown below (refer to Table 4.4 of this report for details of options):

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
Preferred Option	+	-	-	-	+	-/?	+	0	+	++	+/?	+	++	?	-	++	++
Alternative Option 1	-/?	-	-	-	+	-/?	+	0	-	+	+	+	?	?	-	-	-
Alternative Option 2	?	-	-	-	0	+	+	0	-	++	+/?	+	++	?	+	++	++

5.21.21 The sustainability appraisal concluded that 'overall, there are few changes to the findings of this updated SA assessment, and the original. There is little difference between the assessment findings for the Preferred Option (Option 1) and Alternative Option 2. It is however clear that Alternative Option 1 is less sustainable. In particular, the proximity to the M4 would be likely to increase commuting, and would also generate noise and air pollution issues. However, it should be stressed that likely significant effects were identified for all three options, and appropriate mitigation will be required for any of the options to be taken forward'.

- 5.21.22 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that includes the detailed assessment of these options can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm
- 5.21.23 The strategic housing site allocated in *Wiltshire 2026* for West of Swindon was 'Land at Pry Farm, Ridgeway Farm and Moredon Bridge'. This is shown in Table 4.4 as Option 1 and the sustainability appraisal found that Option to be the most sustainable.
- 5.21.24 The Wiltshire Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document does not now allocate any strategic sites at West of Swindon. It states that 'a comprehensive assessment of potential development sites around Swindon has been conducted jointly between Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council to identify the most sustainable locations for development. These are outlined in the emerging Swindon Core Strategy. The study outlines which sites have been assessed and concludes that development to the west of Swindon, including within the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area, is unnecessary and does not represent the most sustainable option for future growth in Swindon. However, there is a permitted site at Moredon Bridge, on the west of Swindon and an explicit allowance of 200 homes has been made for this development within the housing requirement'.
- 5.21.25 The key supporting documents to the Wiltshire Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document includes a paper entitled 'The Swindon Small Scale Urban Extensions Evidence Review Paper'⁴⁰. That document consolidates the evidence that was produced to support the emerging Core Strategies for Wiltshire and Swindon and explains the rationale behind the non allocation of sites at west of Swindon within the Wiltshire Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document (February 2012). That document should be referred to for further information as to why strategic allocations have been removed from West of Swindon.
- 5.21.26 A number of consultation respondents have since questioned why the removal of this strategic allocation from the Core Strategy has not been fully assessed through the sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered appropriate to undertake further assessment of the situation without the strategic housing allocation, compared with the original sustainability findings of the strategic allocation.
- 5.21.27 This assessment is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the results and discussion is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
West of Swindon Options																	
Strategic site(s) <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	0	-	++	+/?	+	++	?	-	++	++
Without strategic site(s)	-	-	0/-	0/-	-	0/-	0/-	0	-	+	0/+	0/-	0/-	0/-	-	+	-

⁴⁰ *The Swindon Small Scale Urban Extensions Evidence Review Paper* (Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council, February 2012)

Summary and conclusions

- 5.21.28 This assessment has compared the sustainability implications of the previous strategic allocation of 3000 dwellings West of Swindon with the current policy which has no strategic allocations West of Swindon but includes a permitted site for 200 dwellings at Moredon Bridge. It is understood that the Moredon Bridge site is currently being developed and therefore the sustainability and environmental impacts will have been established at the local level prior to development taking place.
- 5.21.29 The significantly reduced amount of development now proposed West of Swindon is likely to have far fewer impacts against the majority of the environmental sustainability objectives, as well as transport. However, development at Moredon Bridge will have some limited impacts on sensitive receptors including Bradley Meadow, the River Ray corridor and the Community Forest site and because of its location on the urban edge of Swindon.
- 5.21.30 The previous strategic allocation was considered likely to lead to significant benefits for housing provision, community infrastructure, the local economy and for employment opportunities because of the significant level of development proposed. The current proposed policy, however, will not lead to this level of benefits and because Moredon Bridge is for sole housing, there will be significantly reduced employment opportunities as no employment land is included.
- 5.21.31 The comparison of policies has clearly shown the markedly different sustainability implications of the two approaches. The current policy of no strategic development will maintain the intrinsic character of the countryside to the west of Swindon but will not lead to the social and economic benefits that a large strategic urban extension could have. It is important to note when considering these two approaches, however, that the key reason for development West of Swindon (within Wiltshire) is to meet the housing and employment needs of Swindon, not Wiltshire, and evidence compiled by Swindon Borough Council for their Core Strategy has shown that development West of Swindon on the scale previously proposed is not necessary.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade

- 5.21.32 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Former St Ivel factory	11.04
Land to the west of Templars Way	3.71
Extension to Interface	4.0

- 5.21.33 Proposed sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of

the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Former St Ivel factory	0	++	-	0	+	-/?	-/?	-/?	+	-	+	+	0	+	-	++	++
Land to the west of Templars Way	-	-/?	-	?	-	-/?	-/?	0	-	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+
Extension to Interface	-/?	0/?	-	?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+

Summary of likely significant effects - Former St Ivel factory

5.21.34 Significant economic benefits likely through employment provision. There is potential for significant adverse effects on a listed building in proximity to this site - Wincanton Transport Depot and an adjacent scheduled monument - Post Mill Mound. Significance of effects will depend on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Former St Ivel factory

5.21.35 The Wincanton Transport Depot should be retained and reused as part of a masterplanning approach within a sensitive setting, including adjacent buildings. Sensitive landscaping to the north east of the site required, closest to Pound Mill Mound. Development at this location may have a positive effect over current condition in the long-term.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land to the west of Templars Way

5.21.36 Significant economic benefits likely through employment provision. No significant adverse effects considered likely at this location. There are no specific environmental constraints to development.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land to the west of Templars Way

5.21.37 No significant adverse effects envisaged.

Summary of likely significant effects - Extension to Interface

- 5.21.38 The site is located within flood zone 2 and this could be a major restriction to development, although previous development at the site may have already provided flood alleviation measures and compensatory flood storage – this requires further investigation.
- 5.21.39 There will be a range of social and economic benefits but these are not considered significant due to relatively small site.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Extension to Interface

- 5.21.40 Extensive SuDS may be required. Location within flood zone 2 may prevent new development. Early consultation with the Environment Agency advised as potentially contrary to PPS25.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

- 5.21.41 Development is preferred at Options 1 and 2. There would be significant economic benefits through Option 1 but any development must ensure that the Wincanton Transport Depot is retained within a sensitive setting, including adjacent buildings, and that sensitive landscaping reduces adverse impacts on the SAM Pound Mill Mound. Development should enhance current condition of these assets. Option 3 is located in flood zone 2 and it is unclear whether previous development at the site has already provided flood alleviation measures and compensatory flood storage – consultation with Environment Agency required.

5.22 Core Policy 20 - Spatial Strategy: Salisbury Community Area

- 5.22.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Salisbury Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴¹ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.
- 5.22.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.
- 5.22.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy.

⁴¹ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.23 Core Policy 21: Maltings/Central Car Park

5.23.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴². No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.23.2 The policy seeks to facilitate growth in Salisbury consistent with its role in the HMA. This growth will not be confined to retail but will also encompass leisure and cultural uses to complement the existing primary and secondary retail frontages. Salisbury has the highest and densest population in the plan area and as such is the most sustainable location for these traffic generating uses. This will not however assist those in rural locations with limited access to public transport or on lower incomes. Whilst this is the most sustainable location, parking should not be at a level to encourage use of the private vehicle rather than other modes of transport where it is available and there is potential for adverse impact on the SA objectives regarding air quality and congestion. This impact will be mitigated to some extent due to the fact that the site is mixed use and also incorporates 200 dwellings.

5.23.3 Generally the policy performs well and the sensitivity of the site and the issues relating to biodiversity and river quality are well covered to avoid the potential for adverse impact. The policy will have long-term and cumulative positive impacts for the economy. Mitigation/enhancement recommendations were:

- The level of parking should be the minimum required for the development to function so that there is not an incentive to drive when public transport services are available.

5.23.4 The policy has now been amended to incorporate comments from the SA and HRA.

5.24 Core Policy 22: Salisbury Skyline

5.24.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴³. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

⁴² South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

⁴³ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

- 5.24.2 This policy will help to protect the distinctive historic landmark of the cathedral spire, which will have indirect benefits for the economy and design standards. The only negative impact identified is that the policy does reduce potential for the efficient use of land; however, this is modified and will be allowed if economic benefit and no harm to the skyline can be demonstrated.

5.25 Core Policy 23: Old Sarum airfield

- 5.25.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴⁴. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

- 5.25.2 Any development permitted would be in a sustainable location and provides opportunities to put walking and cycling links in place to Salisbury centre. It is also near the Beehive Park and Ride.
- 5.25.3 Concerns had been raised regarding water abstraction and the corresponding impact on biodiversity and the potential for impact on the Old Sarum SAM. These are clearly recognised in the policy and the historic and ecological value of the area will be well protected from intrusive new development. Equally the policy protects the continued use of the site but also seeks to achieve community benefit from any development which is permitted.
- 5.25.4 A positive outcome for sustainability objectives is expected from this policy.

5.26 Core Policy 24 - Spatial Strategy: Southern Wiltshire Community Area

- 5.26.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Southern Wiltshire Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴⁵ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.
- 5.26.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.

⁴⁴ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

⁴⁵ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.26.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy.

5.27 Core Policy 25: New Forest National Park

5.27.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴⁶. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.27.2 The National Park brings prosperity to South Wiltshire as it is an integral part of the whole area's attraction for tourists. Therefore the policy will have positive and long-term benefits for the local economy, particularly for tourist accommodation and Salisbury City Centre. The policy will also have direct positive impacts for the SA objectives relating to heritage, culture, biodiversity and landscape. However, the proximity of a National Park may lead to an increase in house prices which leads to difficulties for young people trying to enter the housing market. The performance of the policy could be slightly improved by taking a more positive and proactive approach to development that would have a positive impact on the social and economic wellbeing of local communities, rather than stating that development should simply not have a negative impact.

5.27.3 Mitigation/enhancement recommendations were:

- Although this needs to be a controlling policy, consideration could be given to taking a more positive approach to the provision of affordable housing and community facilities, which will have a positive impact on the social wellbeing of the area.

5.27.4 The policy was originally amended as recommended, which has improved its' performance against social SA objectives. However the HRA Steering group concluded that the more restrictive original policy wording was more appropriate in protecting the New Forest Natura 2000 site. The policy wording was therefore reverted.

5.28 Core Policy 26 – Tidworth Community Area

5.28.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which sets out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Tidworth Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

⁴⁶ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.28.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Tidworth Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Tidworth Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.28.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	+/?	--	-	-/?	-	--	?	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	++
Option 2	-/?	-/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	--	-	--/?	+	-	-	-	-	-	++	++

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.28.4 Significant benefits from the proposed level of new housing and 12ha of employment provision. A significant amount of housing is proposed in the community area which will deliver housing growth to meet local need, facilitating the delivery of affordable housing to address local demand and support job creation by ensuring there is an adequate supply of housing for employees of local and new businesses.

5.28.5 The combination of proposed housing and employment provision will likely have long term economic benefits for the community area providing this is matched by appropriate infrastructure provision, including sustainable transport solutions. ‘Super garrison’ status will affect housing and employment demand and it is important that this is given due consideration. Option 2 is unlikely to meet community needs for infrastructure and affordable housing.

5.28.6 Significant adverse effects are likely with regards waste, water resources, climatic factors and transport because of the level of growth being proposed and Option 2 gives more uncertainties because it would leave decisions to a later stage rather than dealing with issues through the Core Strategy. Some of these effects can be mitigated through on-site measures and through other Core Strategy policies.

5.28.7 Option 2 is more likely to lead to landscape impacts due to proximity of North Wessex Downs AONB to Ludgershall.

- 5.28.8 There is a specific issue regarding sewage disposal in this community area and this issue will need to be resolved through appropriate future infrastructure provision. Any development on brownfield sites should consider risks from historic contamination to ground and surface waters and remove any established risk by carrying out appropriate remediation.
- 5.28.9 The inclusion of a strategic site at Drummond Park, Ludgershall gives particular concerns regarding impacts on the AONB and avoidance of impacts is best dealt with through a strategic policy process. If development takes place on brownfield land only at Drummond Park it has been established that, subject to suitable landscaping, the land to the south west of the A342 could be developed without unacceptable impact on the AONB. However, any proposed development on greenfield land near to that site, particularly north of the A342, will require further detailed landscape assessment.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.28.10 All new development must incorporate, or contribute to measures to reduce waste and energy and water usage associated with the development. These are issues associated with the level of growth proposed and 'Super Garrison' proposals.
- 5.28.11 Transport - development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. Policy requires proposals to carry out a transport assessment, identifying appropriate mitigation against any significant impact on transport users, local communities and the environment. Traffic demand management and containment solutions will be needed to limit the impact of new development on the A303. Other improvements should include enhanced public transport connectivity, including a local bus service in Tidworth, and improved rights of way and cycling links between Tidworth and Ludgershall.
- 5.28.12 The Environment Agency has advised that water supply, foul and surface water disposal and water cycle study should be identified as a possible constraint. Mitigation measures **should be** agreed before development takes in place in this community area. There may also be specific issues relating to flood risk and surface water management on brownfield sites, especially at Drummond Park.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.28.13 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations **and has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

5.28.14 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

5.28.15 It is recommended that further consideration is given to the impacts of development on water supply, foul and surface water disposal in this community area, as highlighted by the Environment Agency and that an appropriate water cycle study is in place. These issues could be addressed in the policy to avoid problems in future when development comes forward.

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Tidworth Community Area

5.28.16 The Core Strategy allocates a strategic housing site in this community area at Drummond Park (MSA) Depot for 475 dwellings. This has been subject to sustainability appraisal previously and details of all potential strategic housing sites considered for Tidworth in the sustainability appraisal are outlined in Section 4.3 of this report.

5.28.17 A summary of assessment scores is shown below for all options considered:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Strategic Options (refer to Table 4.4)																	
1	-/?	-	-	-	0	-	++	0	0	++	+/?	+	?	+/?	-	++	++
2	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-/?	++	+/?	+	?	0	-	-	-
3	+/?	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-/?	++	+/?	+	?	0	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-/?	++	+/?	+	?	0	-	-	-

5.28.18 The sustainability appraisal concluded that although Option 1 performs most favourably, there is little difference between each of the other options, and overall a number of likely significant negative effects would impact on any of the sites.

5.28.19 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that includes the detailed assessment of these options can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Tidworth Community Area

5.28.20 The Core Strategy allocates a strategic employment site in this community area at 'Land North of Tidworth Road'. This is an existing saved Kennet Local Plan allocation and has therefore not been subject to sustainability appraisal.

5.29 Core Policy 27: Spatial Strategy: Tisbury Community Area

5.29.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Tisbury Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴⁷ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.

5.29.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.

5.29.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy.

5.30 Core Policy 28 – Trowbridge Central Areas of Opportunity

5.30.1 The regeneration of the central area of Trowbridge is a priority and a number of development sites have been identified. The Trowbridge Master Plan identifies 18 character areas (areas of opportunity) which are shown in the Core Strategy under this policy. Development of these sites is expected to incorporate a sustainable mix of retail, leisure, business and residential uses and be compatible with core policy 34 and the emerging Trowbridge Town Centre Master Plan.

What options have been considered?

5.30.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy as proposed – Wiltshire Core Strategy to provide policy support to the emerging Trowbridge town centre master plan supporting high quality and sustainable development
2	Do not provide policy support for a Trowbridge town centre master plan but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and

⁴⁷ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

5.30.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	++	?	+	+/?	+	+/?	+/?	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	++	++
Option 2	?	+/?	?	0/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	?	?	?	-/?	-	0	-	-	-/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.30.4 Significant effects can be expected in the areas of land and soil, poverty and deprivation, community facilities, economy and employment. In all cases, Option 1, implementing the policy as proposed, is likely to have a significant and positive effect. There are no significant negative effects associated with either Option 1 or Option 2.

5.30.5 The main reason for the effects identified are that the proposed policy would deliver a planned town centre master plan for Trowbridge which is specifically designed to regenerate brownfield sites, deliver high quality and sustainable development, and deliver enhancements to the retail, leisure, service and employment provision within Trowbridge. This would lead to the area becoming more popular for visitors and employers, providing new jobs and making substantial improvements to the area more generally.

5.30.6 The Trowbridge Vision areas of opportunity will allow opportunities to make enhancements to the River Biss corridor flowing through Trowbridge which has lost biodiversity value since the river was canalised. There will also be opportunities to reduce flood risk, enhance the centre of Trowbridge in terms of townscape and design and allow enhancements to the historic environment.

5.30.7 Although the effects of Option 2 are more uncertain, an unplanned approach is less likely to deliver the same overall level of enhancement. Any market led regeneration is likely to be on a piecemeal basis with a higher risk of uses being promoted which do not offer the greatest potential to improve the central area of Trowbridge overall.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.30.8 There are no significant negative effects identified for either Option 1 or Option 2.

5.30.9 Development proposals, in all cases, should take opportunities to enhance the environmental quality of the centre of Trowbridge, especially along the River Biss

corridor. Significant improvements can be made to biodiversity value of this area through development, improving the area for wildlife and people, whilst taking opportunities to reduce areas of known flood risk. Proposals should avoid adversely affecting any heritage assets within Trowbridge town centre.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.30.10 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option as it provides more opportunity to deliver plan objectives and deliver positive enhancement against several sustainability criteria. **Option 1 has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.**

5.31 Core Policy 29 – Spatial Strategy: Trowbridge Community Area

5.31.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which sets out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Trowbridge Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.31.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Trowbridge Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Trowbridge Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.31.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	--	-	--	-/?	-/?	--	-	-	++	+	++	+	+	-	++	++
Option 2	--/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	--	-/?	-/?	+	-	-	-	-/?	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.31.4 For both options, likely significant adverse effects have been recorded in relation to land and soil resources, water resources and climatic factors. For Option 2 there are additional significant adverse effects relating to biodiversity, waste, transport, flood risk and air quality. All of these issues relate to the significant level of growth that is proposed for the principal settlement of Trowbridge, much of which will be located on greenfield land.
- 5.31.5 The Trowbridge Vision and this core policy promote the development of brownfield sites within the existing urban area. However the focus for development in the town centre relates to retail, leisure and key services. There are insufficient brownfield sites available to meet the identified housing need for Trowbridge and so greenfield development is also necessary. Although the Ashton Park urban extension is entirely greenfield, through a master planning process it is possible that many of the identified likely significant effects can be reduced or avoided.
- 5.31.6 All likely significant benefits relate to Option 1 because the market led approach of Option 2 is more uncertain and the market is less likely to deliver the same level of balanced job growth. As the level of growth would be uncertain, planning for future infrastructure provision would be more difficult.
- 5.31.7 The strategic growth in Trowbridge poses a number of different sustainability concerns which have mostly been addressed through the policy. Infrastructure requirements to deliver this growth include the need for a new secondary school to the south-east of Trowbridge, improvements to the highway network (particularly the A350) and provision of cultural, health and recreational facilities to meet local needs.
- 5.31.8 The policy recognises that villages on the edge of Trowbridge, particularly Hilperton, Southwick North Bradley and West Ashton have separate and distinct identities as villages. In order to reflect the importance of maintaining the character and identity of these villages as separate communities, it proposes that open countryside will be maintained to ensure these villages are not compromised by wider development pressure.
- 5.31.9 There are specific issues with Ashton Park regarding the River Biss and two large areas of ancient woodland which contain Bechstein's bats roosts which are protected under the Habitats Directive. The master planning process for Ashton Park and the core policy contain a number of requirements for mitigating impacts on the woodland and Biss which include enhancement and providing better management of these biodiversity assets through woodland extension and buffers, alternative open space provision and access arrangements.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.31.10 A number of potential effects have been identified above relating to this growth area. A key issue is town centre regeneration and opportunities must be taken to develop brownfield sites near to the town centre to aid regeneration in line with core policy 28. However, it is also important that edge of town development, such as that proposed

at Ashton Park, is well integrated to the town centre, with good pedestrian and public transport linkages.

- 5.31.11 Ashton Park is large enough to incorporate a range of infrastructure to reduce many of the impacts identified, including provision of renewable forms of energy to meet the needs of the development. Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. Opportunities to develop an effective low or zero carbon strategy for the proposed strategic site should be maximised through the development of a Sustainable Energy Strategy in line with core policy 41.
- 5.31.12 Transport – although the policy states that strategic growth will facilitate delivery of strategic improvements to the A350, particularly at Yarnbrook and West Ashton where existing junction arrangements are over capacity, it is not currently clear what other highways infrastructure will be put in place to cope with this level of growth and what arrangements are being considered to incorporate sustainable transport modes. The emerging Trowbridge Transport Strategy should inform the detailed master plan for the proposed strategic site. Significant investment will be required to improve public transport services and walking/cycling links, particularly linking with the town centre.
- 5.31.13 Development of brownfield sites – it should be noted that brownfield sites can be important habitats (in some cases a UK BAP priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land), and in these situations, reuse should not necessarily be maximised. Appropriate ecological assessment of any brownfield site should be conducted prior to development to avoid adverse effects.
- 5.31.14 Water resources - long term effects are likely from increased demand for potable water and specific concerns regarding the River Biss. All development must ensure that there are no adverse effects on water quality and that a sufficient sized buffer zone is maintained for any development close to the river. Dwellings must incorporate water efficiency measures and development should be assessed for impacts on groundwater and sufficient capacity within sewerage network. There must also be appropriate infrastructure in place to deal with foul and surface water.
- 5.31.15 The reduction in proposed employment provision from 30ha to 25ha for Trowbridge since June 2011 is acknowledged but the current proposal is still considered likely to lead to significant benefits for Trowbridge and against the economy and employment sustainability objectives.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.31.16 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations. **Option 1 has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be

taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

5.31.17 As the location and scale of development in option 2 is uncertain, this has greater potential to lead to less sustainable development. In particular, this option would make planning holistically for the effective delivery of essential infrastructure more difficult and would therefore be less likely to meet the identified needs of the town. . Any specific effects would depend on the location and type of development and the nature of any mitigation measures proposed which are uncertain and therefore more difficult to plan strategically.

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Trowbridge

5.31.18 The Core Strategy allocates two strategic housing sites in this community area at West Ashton Road and Ashton Park. Various housing options have been subject to sustainability appraisal previously, including various sites which are now referred to as ‘Ashton Park urban extension’; these are detailed in Section 4.3 of this report.

5.31.19 The West Ashton Road site is a saved West Wiltshire District Plan allocation and has therefore not been subject to further sustainability appraisal.

5.31.20 A summary of assessment scores is shown below for all options considered:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Strategic Options (refer to Table 4.4)																	
1	-/?	-	-	-	-	++	-	0	?	++	+	+	+	+	++	++	++
2	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	0	?	++	+/?	+	+/?	+/?	?	++	++
3	-	-	-	-/?	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	+	?	+/?	+/?	-	-	-	-
4	-/?	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-/?	?	++	+/?	+	+/?	+	?	++	++

5.31.21 The sustainability appraisal concluded that ‘Option 1 has been identified as the most favourable option. This site would allow a single coherent sustainable urban extension to be delivered, with a number of likely significant positive effects identified. Options 2 and 4 have a similar SA performance and are also favourable, however, the use of separate sites, across different parts of the town, does reduce the scale of likely positive effects identified. Option 3 is clearly the most unfavourable option and cannot be regarded as sustainable’.

5.31.22 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that includes the detailed assessment of these options can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Trowbridge

5.31.23 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Trowbridge Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Bradford road	4.47
Land north of Yarnbrook	Total site area 56.71 (Employment 15.0)
Land west of White Horse Business Park	25.29
West Ashton road allocation	14.04

5.31.24 Proposed sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Bradford road	-	-	0	-	--	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+/?
Land north of Yarnbrook	-/?	--	0	-/?	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	-	++/?	+	+/?	-/?	++/?	++
Land west of White Horse Business Park	-/?	--	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+	++/?	+	+/?	-/?	++/?	++
West Ashton road allocation	-/?	--	0	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	--	++/?	+

Summary of likely significant effects - Bradford road

5.31.25 One significant adverse effect relating to flood risk. Site is in close proximity to the River Biss and flood zones 2 and 3. No other significant positive or negative effects considered likely.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Bradford road

5.31.26 Development should avoid flood zones 2 and 3. A Surface Water Management Strategy may be required to demonstrate equivalent to greenfield runoff post development. Appropriate consideration would need to be given to measures to deal with surface water, including use of SuDS.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land north of Yarnbrook

- 5.31.27 This site is likely to lead to a number of both adverse and beneficial significant effects. The location does not contain any specific biodiversity, landscape or heritage designations. However, the River Biss is an important and ecologically important area and is in close proximity to this site.
- 5.31.28 The entire site is greenfield. Future development may lead to significant demand for water and there is potential for pollution of the River Biss during the construction and operational stage. The size of the proposed site is likely to significantly increase impacts on air quality and noise/light as well as emissions of greenhouse gases.
- 5.31.29 Transport - development in this location is likely to significantly increase traffic, including on the A350, where capacity issues already exist at West Ashton and Yarnbrook. The site is remote from Trowbridge town centre, it is divorced from White Horse Business Park by the railway and public transport connectivity is poor at this location. However, strategic development on this site could facilitate the delivery of significant improvements to the strategic road network, which would be of wider value to Trowbridge. As the site is located close to the A350, any employment development could have easy access to the strategic road network, thus helping to reduce through town traffic.
- 5.31.30 This development would, however, have significant long-term economic and social benefits for Trowbridge and the wider area through provision of employment opportunities, supporting local businesses directly and indirectly and allowing opportunities for inward investment. Employment will also help reduce issues of unemployment, social exclusion and deprivation.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land north of Yarnbrook

- 5.31.31 The River Biss corridor will require strong protection and enhancement with a significant buffer zone required.
- 5.31.32 If development is to occur in this location, concentrating development adjacent to White Horse Business Park would allow better access to existing services/facilities and public transport services.
- 5.31.33 Any further growth would need to be assessed for impacts on groundwater and sufficient capacity within sewerage network. Development should aim to meet a high BREEAM score for water efficiency and should be located to avoid possible pollution to watercourses and have appropriate infrastructure in place to deal with foul and surface water.
- 5.31.34 Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the car and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. The emerging Trowbridge Transport Strategy should inform the detailed master plan for the proposed strategic site. Significant investment in road infrastructure is required.

Opportunities to develop an effective low or zero carbon strategy for the proposed strategic site should be maximised through the development of a Sustainable Energy Strategy in line with core policy 41.

Summary of likely significant effects – Land west of White Horse Business Park

- 5.31.35 This is a relatively large greenfield site in agricultural use. Development in this location would lead to significant loss of greenfield land. The size of the site means it is likely to significantly increase impacts on air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and noise/light in this rural location. Development could also lead to adverse impacts on the settlement of North Bradley including leading to coalescence with Trowbridge. Site is remote from the town centre and is not adjacent to the urban area of Trowbridge. There are poor public transport services here and development will significantly increase traffic on the A350 and A363.
- 5.31.36 Depending on the actual size of employment provision and future uses, significant benefits can be expected through job creation and secondary benefits for other businesses in the area.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land west of White Horse Business Park

- 5.31.37 Concentrating development adjacent to White Horse Business Park would allow better access to existing services/facilities and public transport services, and would avoid coalescence issues with North Bradley. However, the focus should be on developing the remaining brownfield sites in Trowbridge town centre.
- 5.31.38 Other mitigation measures similar to that for 'Land north of Yarnbrook' with regards reducing impacts on air quality, noise, light and transport, and a particular focus on reducing impacts on North Bradley would be required.

Summary of likely significant effects - West Ashton road allocation

- 5.31.39 A relatively large site – development would lead to the loss of a significant amount of greenfield land in a slightly isolated location that does not have good access to the town centre or to public transport services. There is likely to be a significant increase in vehicular traffic joining West Ashton Rd, travelling through town or to the A350 - already major congestion issues at West Ashton.
- 5.31.40 Significant benefits for the local economy through employment opportunities, although there are concerns over congestion issues and the slightly isolated position that doesn't benefit from any existing employment activity in the immediate area.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – West Ashton road allocation

- 5.31.41 Major investment in road infrastructure would be required at this site, including potential new distributor road if forming part of larger mixed-use development. Strong promotion of (and investment in) public transport and walking/cycling routes linking to the town centre will be required. The emerging Trowbridge Transport Strategy should be referred to in this regard.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

- 5.31.42 The sustainability appraisal has highlighted a number of significant adverse effects with each of the four options. Option 1 is likely to generate less significant effects than the other three options but will not meet Trowbridge's need for employment land. It is recommended that a combination of Options 1, 3 and 4 are carried forward, as long as the recommended mitigation measures are implemented to avoid/reduce impacts concerning flood risk, transport and North Bradley.

5.32 Core Policy 30 –Trowbridge Low-Carbon/Renewable Energy Network

- 5.32.1 The purpose of this policy is to support the delivery of a district low-carbon or renewable energy/ heat network in Trowbridge Town Centre.

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.32.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Policy supporting the principle of a district energy/ heat network in Trowbridge included within the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This would also identify any key development sites and safeguard any land critical for the schemes delivery (for example for heat pipes). Supporting details outlined in subsequent Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
2	Policy supporting the principle of a district energy/ heat network in Trowbridge not included in the Wiltshire Core Strategy, but included in subsequent Development Plan Document (DPD) or Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Trowbridge.
3	Fail to incorporate Core Strategy policy.

- 5.32.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0/?	+	0	-/?	-/?	+	++	-	0	0	+/?	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?
Option 2	0/?	+	0	-/?	-/?	+	++	-	0	0	+/?	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?
Option 3	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.32.4 No significant adverse effects envisaged.
- 5.32.5 Significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions likely through Options 1 and 2. Maximising opportunities to deliver district heating and energy networks can make significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions which are locally very important. This approach is highly consistent with national policy and could help to make a significant contribution to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire. If such schemes could be successfully implemented they may also have value in promoting similar approaches elsewhere.
- 5.32.6 Adverse effects – there may be some very localised and limited impacts on groundwater and surface water, including the River Biss, and potential for some development in areas of flood risk. These effects cannot be determined at this time and will depend on the type, size and location of any development which is not currently known. Further consideration can be given in future sustainability appraisal work that may accompany a Trowbridge Masterplan SPD.
- 5.32.7 Option 3 (no policy) would have mainly neutral effects because there would be no implementation of a local energy network. In this case, the situation regarding local air quality and greenhouse gas emissions could be expected to worsen.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.32.8 No significant adverse effects envisaged. However, there must be consideration of protecting and enhancing biodiversity within areas covered by this scheme and appropriate ecological assessment carried out. There may be opportunities for enhancement of the River Biss corridor through the proposals outlined.
- 5.32.9 Any development would need to be assessed for impacts on ground and surface water and should be located to avoid possible pollution to watercourses. Many of the potential sites highlighted are in close proximity to the River Biss and any potential adverse effects must be avoided before development takes place.
- 5.32.10 To significantly reduce impacts on air quality and climate, a more radical approach is needed with policies for district energy/ heat networks right across Wiltshire, in new and existing developments, including strong policies for renewable energy provision,

energy efficiency improvements in all new and existing buildings and significant investment in sustainable transport networks.

- 5.32.11 Proposals should avoid adversely affecting any heritage assets within Trowbridge town centre.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.32.12 Options 1 and 2 are most favourable because they are supporting the principle of a district energy/ heat network in Trowbridge, whereas Option 3 is not. **In sustainability terms there is little difference between whether the principle of a district energy/ heat network in Trowbridge is included within the Wiltshire Core Strategy or in a subsequent DPD. Including it in the Core Strategy may be beneficial as it may allow development to come forward earlier.**

5.33 Core Policy 31 – Spatial Strategy: Warminster Community Area

- 5.33.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which sets out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Warminster Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

- 5.33.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Warminster Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Warminster Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

- 5.33.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	+	+	0	-	++	++
Option 2	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	-	+/?	-	-/?	-/?	?	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.33.4 Significant benefits for the community area in terms of housing and employment provision and likely subsequent benefits for the local economy through Option 1. 1770 new homes are proposed, of which 1650 will be in Warminster and this should help address shortfalls in affordable housing and contribute towards delivering improved infrastructure, particularly in terms of regenerating the town centre.
- 5.33.5 Significant level of growth directed almost exclusively to Warminster. The majority of new dwellings will be located at the West Warminster Urban Extension. Significant adverse effects relate to the effects of this proposed growth on land and soil resources, water resources, landscapes and transport. For Option 2 additional significant effects recorded for biodiversity, waste, air quality and climatic factors.
- 5.33.6 Warminster has limited locational opportunities for new development due to a range of environmental constraints, including the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. New development will need to be carefully managed to ensure appropriate mitigation is implemented and provides an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and existing capacity for surface water run-off to reduce flood risk.
- 5.33.7 There are specific flood risk issues. Although development can avoid areas of flood risk at the proposed urban extension to the west of Warminster, Coldharbour Lane, near Bath Road, is a known flood risk area and the Environment Agency have advised that a Level 2 SFRA is required for Warminster to identify the flood risk now and in the future, from all sources of flooding, and to inform an overarching strategy for the management of flood risk, particularly with respect to surface water drainage. It is possible that parts of the areas planned for growth may be at risk of fluvial flooding. The spatial strategy set out for Warminster is not informed by a Level 2 SFRA.
- 5.33.8 Significant effects on the AONB and Special Landscape Area to the west are likely, including Cley Hill. These designations are within 0.5km of the proposed urban extension including 900 dwellings. There are significant views across the site from Cley hill and other points and further landscape assessment is required to resolve outstanding issues. The core policy requires development to be sensitive to the setting of the AONB and by providing a buffer along the northern and western edges of the site. More detailed landscape assessment is required to ensure appropriate mitigation is incorporated through the detailed master planning phase.
- 5.33.9 It would be desirable to have better public rights of way links over the A36 to allow better access to the countryside. At present, two of the three public rights of way involve walking over the A36 itself, something which will discourage many future residents from accessing the countryside.
- 5.33.10 Transport implications for Warminster from this level of growth are significant, particularly relating to the A36 and cross-town traffic. The urban extension has excellent access onto the A36 but it is also likely to significantly increase traffic movements on that road. A requirement of the policy is that a sustainable transport solution for pupils attending Kingdown Secondary School is required, however what

this would entail is not known and further details on mitigation of effects on the A36 are required.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.33.11 Strong consideration of mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the landscape designations to the south and west is required, to include more detailed landscape assessment. Careful location of new development, high quality design and green infrastructure provision all have a role in reducing impacts but this should be clarified through further assessment. Further consideration of safe and convenient public rights of way over the A36 is needed to allow future residents to access the countryside to the west of the A36.
- 5.33.12 Development should meet high levels of energy and water efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to provide renewable forms of energy on the West Warminster strategic allocation and this should be further explored. Opportunities to develop an effective low or zero carbon strategy for the proposed strategic site should be maximised through the development of a Sustainable Energy Strategy in line with core policy 41.
- 5.33.13 The proposed strategic site for Warminster includes some floodplain. Surface water runoff is a problem with limited storm drainage capacity in Warminster and focusing development on the urban extension provides an opportunity to reduce the existing flood risk to the town by upgrading the existing drainage network. Master planning for the proposed urban extension will need to include appropriate mitigation for surface water management – in Warminster this will require appropriate modification and improvement to the existing storm drainage network.
- 5.33.14 The Environment Agency has highlighted the need for an SFRA Level 2 - this should inform an overarching strategy for the management of flood risk, particularly with respect to surface water drainage in Warminster. This SFRA would highlight any additional flood risk management infrastructure that may be required.
- 5.33.15 Development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use by investing in sustainable transport solutions that offer a real choice of modes. Warminster currently experiences town centre congestion and cross-town traffic. The impact of strategic development on the strategic road network must be taken into consideration with appropriate contributions to demand management solutions, improved sustainable transport choices and new highways infrastructure.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.33.16 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations.
Option 1 has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these

recommendations. The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

- 5.33.17 As the location and scale of development in option 2 is uncertain, this has greater potential to lead to less sustainable development. In particular, this option would make planning holistically for the effective delivery of essential infrastructure more difficult and would therefore be less likely to meet the identified needs of the town. . Any specific effects would depend on the location and type of development and the nature of any mitigation measures proposed which are uncertain and therefore more difficult to plan strategically.
- 5.33.18 It is recommended that specific consideration is given to the identified issues concerning flood risk, transport and landscape concerns regarding the proximity of the urban extension to the AONB before development commences.
- 5.33.19 Surface water runoff is a problem with limited storm drainage capacity in Warminster and master planning for the proposed urban extension will need to include appropriate mitigation for surface water management; this will require appropriate modification and improvement to the existing storm drainage network.

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Warminster

- 5.33.20 The Core Strategy allocates a strategic housing site in this community area at the West Warminster urban extension. Various housing options have been subject to sustainability appraisal previously, including sites which are now called ‘West Warminster urban extension’; these are detailed in Section 4.3 of this report.
- 5.33.21 A summary of those assessment scores is shown below for all options considered:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Strategic Options (refer to section 4.3)																	
1	0	0/-	-	-	0	0/-	-	0	?	++	+	+	+	+/?	+/?	++	++
2	+	-	-/?	-	?	0/-	-	0	-	++	+	+	+	+/?	+/?	++	++
3	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	++	?	+	+	0	-	-	-

- 5.33.22 The sustainability appraisal concluded that ‘Options 1 and 2 perform favourably and are more sustainable than Option 3. As Option 3 consists of a collection of smaller sites, this option would be the most difficult to serve with public transport. Options 1 and 2 are more suitable for providing a coherent sustainable urban extension to Warminster.

5.33.23 The Sustainability Appraisal Report that includes the detailed assessment of these options can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshire2026.htm

5.33.24 In addition to those potential sites outlined above an additional site was proposed for housing in Warminster and this was included in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Core Strategy consultation document in June 2011. A summary of the sustainability appraisal of that site is presented below. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix I.

Potential strategic housing site – Warminster
Land east of the Dene

Likely significant negative effects of the options and potential mitigation measures

Water resources

5.33.25 There is a known issue regarding elevated phosphate levels in the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) that threatens the integrity of this European designated site. Further development within the river's catchment is likely to increase phosphate discharges from Warminster sewage treatment works, increasing levels in the river further above agreed conservation limits. Discussions are continuing with relevant agencies to find a solution to this issue, including the development of a Nutrient Management Plan (see core policy 69).

Climate change

5.33.26 Housing development on the scale proposed is likely to significantly impact on climate change through increased greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions are likely through the construction process, the energy needs of residents and associated travel that will have impacts over the long-term. Effects are particularly significant when considered in combination with other significant development projects in Wiltshire and in neighbouring authorities.

5.33.27 Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency against Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM, with a view to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. Consideration should be given to meeting the energy and heat needs of the development, and surrounding communities, through on-site renewable and low carbon energy and heat generation, including Combined Heat and Power (CHP). Significant investment will be required to reduce the need to travel by providing key infrastructure and services/facilities within the development, allowing a more inclusive community, and provision of sustainable transport links with the rest of the town.

Summary of options

Sustainability objectives		1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment	
Options																			
Preferred option * <i>Wiltshire 2026</i>	2	+	-	-/?	--	?	0/-	--	0	-	++	+	+	+	+/?	+/?	++	++	++
	3	0	-	-	--	0	-	--	0	-	++	?	+	+	0	-	-	-	-
Land east of the Dene		-	-	-/?	--	0/?	-/?	--	-/?	-/?	+	+/?	+	+/?	+/?	-/?	+/?	+	+

*The preferred option contains component parts of Options 2 and 3

Option 2 - Land west of Bath Road and south of Cold Harbour Lane

Option 3 - a series of sites to the south and west of Warminster, including land to the rear of Victoria Road and land at Bugley Barton Farm

Conclusions

- 5.33.28 The sustainability appraisal carried out an assessment of a new alternative strategic option for Warminster, and compared the findings with the findings of the sustainability appraisal of the preferred strategic option included in *Wiltshire 2026*.
- 5.33.29 Land east of the Dene is a greenfield site. It does not have any biodiversity or landscape designations and is entirely within flood zone 1. There is an adjacent conservation area (Bishopstrow) and a landscape character area to the north east which any development would need to be sensitive of in design and location. The site Land east of the Dene is well related to Kingdown School, however other journeys to the north, west and south of Warminster from this site could increase through town traffic. It is considered that this site is appropriate for development in sustainability terms, taking into account the mitigation measures highlighted.
- 5.33.30 This site, however, is not large enough to meet Warminster's housing need and the proposal is for residential development only with no mixed-uses proposed. This reduces the employment and economic benefits that are associated with the council's preferred strategic option to the west of Warminster.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment sites in Warminster

- 5.33.31 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Warminster Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Area C Warminster Business Park	1.39
Land west of Bath Road & south of Cold Harbour	36.22

5.33.32 Proposed sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Area C Warminster Business Park	0/?	-/?	0	0/?	-/?	-	0	0/?	-/?	0	+	+	0	+	-	+	+/?
Land west of Bath Road & south of Cold Harbour	-/?	-	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+	++/?	+	+/?	-/?	++/?	++
MoD land south of railway	-	-	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	0	+	-	+	+/?

Summary of likely significant effects - Area C Warminster Business Park

5.33.33 No significant effects considered likely, either positive or negative. This is a very small site adjacent to existing Business Park. No cumulative impacts considered likely. Some concerns over presence of watercourse and area of flood risk near to railway line and views across this site from the east.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Area C Warminster Business Park

5.33.34 No significant adverse effects.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land west of Bath Road & south of Cold Harbour

5.33.35 The size of this proposed employment site means there are likely to be significant benefits for the local economy through employment opportunities. There will also be benefits in terms of improving income levels of local people and reducing social exclusion.

5.33.36 This is a rural area and impacts of traffic, air pollution, noise and light could affect adjacent ancient woodland and meadows. The cumulative impacts of A36 traffic and new development could be significant. This will depend on design, location and types of employment uses.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land west of Bath Road & south of Cold Harbour

- 5.33.37 Impacts of air pollution, noise and light pollution on adjacent important wildlife habitats should be avoided or reduced. Development should be located adjacent to the B3414 to reduce impacts. Site is large enough for incorporation of an extensive green infrastructure network and protection of existing natural features.
- 5.33.38 Core Strategy policy should focus on developing brownfield sites in other parts of Warminster, particularly redundant MoD sites, although it is recognised that brownfield sites are only likely to be able to meet a fraction of the need for housing and employment land. Concentrating development adjacent to Warminster Business Park would allow better access to existing services/ facilities and public transport services.
- 5.33.39 Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the car and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. Decisions will be needed on provision of new highway infrastructure if forming part of larger mixed-use development.

Summary of likely significant effects - MoD land south of railway

- 5.33.40 The location of this site is the biggest drawback. It is isolated, beyond the urban edge of Warminster and does not have road access. No significant benefits envisaged.
- 5.33.41 Significant adverse effects are likely concerning landscape and transport. There is a Special Landscape Area to the north and together with the Conservation Area to the south-east significant effects are likely depending on the type of uses here and design characteristics. Significant increases in traffic are likely due to the location. Public transport connections are poor and considerable investment would be required in new road infrastructure.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – MoD land south of railway

- 5.33.42 Development should be designed and located to avoid adverse impacts on surrounding landscape and conservation designations. Mitigation is unlikely to avoid all impacts, however, particularly from surrounding higher ground to the north.
- 5.33.43 Strong promotion of (and investment in) public transport and walking/cycling routes linking to the town centre will be required, and investment in new road infrastructure as no current road access.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

- 5.33.44 A combination of Options 1 and 2 are recommended. Development at Option 2 would need to ensure that strong mitigation measures are implemented to avoid/reduce

impacts concerning biodiversity and transport. Option 3 is isolated and would require significant investment in infrastructure to make the site viable.

5.34 Core Policy 32 – Spatial Strategy: Westbury Community Area

5.34.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy incorporates specific policies for each Community Area which sets out how the strategy applies to that area. This policy sets out the strategy for the Westbury Community Area.

What options have been considered for this community area policy?

5.34.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy for the Westbury Community Area as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy for the Westbury Community Area but allow the market to determine the level and location of housing, employment and infrastructure in the community area

5.34.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-/?	++	+	+	+	?	-	++	++
Option 2	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	-	-/?	-	-/?	+	?	-/?	-/?	?	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.34.4 Westbury has been identified as a location for new strategic housing and employment growth but with a reduction in housing growth compared to historic trends, focusing on improving facilities, services and job creation. The level of proposed housing is still considered significant for a town of Westbury's size and there will be significant benefits against sustainability objectives relating to housing, economic development and employment.

5.34.5 The proposed strategic employment allocation at Hawkeridge is a large greenfield site some distance from the town centre. This site and any potential future housing sites are likely to need a considerable amount of greenfield land due to a relative lack of brownfield sites in the community area. However, there are few absolute

environmental constraints to development in and around Westbury and the key constraints to future growth are likely to relate to impacts of traffic and air quality.

- 5.34.6 Westbury currently suffers from traffic congestion on the A350 through the town and an AQMA has been designated due to poor air quality associated with traffic. Future development is likely to increase levels of traffic on local roads and development must seek to reduce these issues through sustainable location and investment in sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.34.7 It is noted that delivery of strategic housing allocation at Station Road (H14 West Wiltshire District Plan) is close to the railway station and that this will provide a new crossing of the railway line, thus alleviating traffic from Oldfield Road and providing a connection to Mane Way. However, improved and integrated public transport and quality pedestrian and cycle linkages with the town centre must be delivered to offset expected increases in vehicle use.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.34.8 Loss of greenfield sites in the community area can be reduced by maximising effective/efficient use of land, building at maximum viable densities in sustainable locations that are close to (or within) the existing urban area. Wherever possible, agricultural land of a lower value should be prioritised where development has to take place on greenfield land.
- 5.34.9 Transport and air quality - development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. The strategic employment site at Hawkeridge is 2km from the town centre and access to this site that avoids increasing traffic through Westbury town centre should be a priority. There are good links to the north to the A350. Investment will be required to improve public transport services and walking/cycling links, particularly linking with the town centre. Further traffic modelling is required, in particular gauging effects on Westbury town centre and A350.
- 5.34.10 Regeneration of Westbury town centre is a key sustainability issue for the town and all development should contribute to improving infrastructure, services and facilities in that area. Allowing air quality to worsen in the town centre will not contribute to this regeneration hence innovative solutions that lead to an overall reduction in through town traffic are needed.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.34.11 Option 1 is considered the most sustainable option because of the greater level of benefits it will bring to the community area, particularly regarding levels of growth, infrastructure provision and preventing development in unsustainable locations. **Option 1 has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.** The policy as proposed highlights specific issues that need to be taken into account as and when development comes forward; it specifies a level of housing and employment growth that is appropriate to the community area, taking

into account current evidence and issues that have been highlighted through consultation, discussions with stakeholders and through the sustainability appraisal.

5.34.12 Option 2 does not encourage a sustainable form of development and may lead to development coming forward in less sustainable locations without adequate mitigation and infrastructure that can reduce potential effects. Effects would very much depend on where development is located, the type of development and mitigation measures proposed to reduce or avoid adverse effects and this could not be controlled through a strategic approach in the Core Strategy.

Appraisal of potential strategic housing allocations in Westbury

5.34.13 The Submission draft of the Core Strategy includes a new strategic site at Station Road and this is introduced in paragraph 5.34.18.

5.34.14 The Core Strategy consultation document of June 2011 did not allocate any strategic housing sites in Westbury. Prior to this, two potential strategic housing sites were identified for Westbury and these were subject to sustainability appraisal. The assessment was presented in the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied *Wiltshire 2026* in October 2009. These sites were:

- Option 1 - Land at Matravers School and land at Redland Lane
- Option 2 - Sites to the north east of the town, including land north of the Mead

5.34.15 A summary of the sustainability appraisal of those two sites is shown below:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
1. Matravers/Redland	?	0	-	-	0	+/?	-	0	?	++	++	+	++	++	+/?	++	++
2. North-east	-	-	-	-	0	-/?	--	0	-/?	++	?	+	+	0	-	-	-

5.34.16 Option 1 was considered to be the most sustainable site to take forward because it would involve the redevelopment of a brownfield site in a central location and the provision of a new secondary school with enhanced capacity and facilities. The sustainability appraisal concluded that Option 1 'presents an opportunity for highly sustainable development and would facilitate the provision of enhanced facilities for the town which are much needed'. Option 1 however was based on the site being available as a result of any future relocation of Matravers School; the council subsequently made the decision not to pursue the option as a strategic site in the Core Strategy after consultation with Westbury Town Council.

5.34.17 The findings of that sustainability appraisal suggest that Option 2 - sites to the north east of the town, including land north of the Mead – remains a potential location for future development. The findings indicated that the location has good public transport connectivity and that it is large enough to accommodate additional infrastructure

needs for the town. The only significant adverse effect was noted for climatic factors which was based on the level of growth envisaged.

5.34.18 The Submission draft of the Core Strategy includes a strategic housing site at Station Road for 300 dwellings. This is a former West Wiltshire district council housing allocation (policy H14 West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration) which was adopted in June 2004. A sustainability appraisal has been carried out for this proposed site – the full assessment is presented in Appendix I and the key findings summarised below:

Summary of likely significant effects – Land at Station Road

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
Land at Station Road	-	-	-	-	-/?	-	-	?	-/?	++	?	+	?	?	+/-	+	+

5.34.19 The Station Road site is likely to lead to significant benefits against the sustainability objective relating to housing because proposals directly address that objective, and likely significant adverse effects against sustainability objectives relating to biodiversity and water resources because of the direct impacts on Westbury Lakes County Wildlife Site.

5.34.20 The site’s location means there is very good access to Westbury railway station, the town centre and employment areas to the north by public transport, walking and cycling. Those locations are all within 1km of the Station Road site. This number of new homes is likely to increase traffic generally but because of the location the effects can be minimised and this should not significantly impact upon the AQMA in the town centre. Highway improvements, including a new railway crossing could help alleviate traffic on Oldfield Road and other roads in the vicinity.

5.34.21 There is potential for 270-280 dwellings on this site which, if incorporating a good mix of housing and affordable housing, will increase the range of modern housing in the town to meet local needs and would help secure the delivery of new infrastructure such as a new railway crossing and improvements to the railway station.

5.34.22 The site is in very close proximity to Westbury Lakes County Wildlife Site which has some sensitive wetland habitats including wet woodland and swamp / fen communities but is also a popular local amenity asset for sailing, fishing and walking. Direct and indirect effects are likely. Development proposals include the direct loss of part of the CWS for a new roundabout junction; this would involve the existing mini-roundabout at Primmers Place and the loss of part of the south east corner of the sailing lake. Because of this likely direct loss of habitat and water body this is considered significant against sustainability objectives relating to biodiversity and

water resources. It is recommended that other options are considered to avoid the direct loss of part of the CWS.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects

- 5.34.23 In order to avoid or reduce impacts on Westbury Lakes CWS, other highway options should be considered that will not lead to the direct loss of this designated wildlife site and important local amenity.
- 5.34.24 Direct loss should be an absolute last resort after all other options have been excluded but if it is unavoidable, appropriate compensatory measures would be required which may include suitable offsite location(s) for wetland creation / enhancement to be identified and necessary long-term management secured through a planning obligation. Detailed surveys of CWS will be required to inform any design proposals; this will include NVC vegetation, protected species and hydrological surveys.
- 5.34.25 Development must provide an appropriate buffer to the CWS as far as possible and avoid fragmentation of the lake and direct/indirect impacts on sensitive habitats including wet woodland and swamp / fen communities; consideration of long-term management of the Westbury Lakes CWS to be secured under an Ecological Management Plan. Existing woodland on site should be conserved and managed to maximise ecological and amenity value.
- 5.34.26 With regards loss of amenity (sailing/fishing), compensation may involve provision or relocation of the sailing clubhouse and provision of other new facilities.

Appraisal of potential strategic employment allocations in Westbury

- 5.34.27 In the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanied the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document (June, 2011) a number of potential strategic employment sites were considered for the Westbury Community Area. These sites are shown in the following table:

Potential strategic employment site	Size (ha)
Land at Mill Lane, Hawkeridge	14.7
Land West of West Wilts Trading Estate	39.09
Station Road Allocation	3.98

- 5.34.28 Proposed sites have been subject to sustainability appraisal and a summary of the sustainability appraisal findings is shown below; this is followed by a discussion of the likely significant effects associated with each site, potential mitigation measures to avoid or reduce likely significant adverse effects and a summary of those sites most favourable in sustainability terms. The full sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix J.

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Land at Mill Lane Hawkeridge	-	--	-/?	-/?	-/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	0	+	+/?	+	+/?	-/? ?	++/ ?	++
Land West of West Wilts Tdg Estate	-	--	0	-/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	0	+	++/ ?	+	+/?	-/? ?	++/ ?	++
Station Road Allocation	-/?	+/?	0	0/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	0	0	0	+	+/?	0	+/?	-	+	+/?

Summary of likely significant effects - Land at Mill Lane Hawkeridge

5.34.29 The size of this proposed employment site means there are likely to be significant benefits for the local economy and employment opportunities. The site is adjacent to West Wilts Trading Estate and therefore could benefit from infrastructure associated with that existing area.

5.34.30 There are no specific environmental constraints to development. The location is remote from Westbury town centre, however, and the site is not adjacent to the urban area. This is a rural area and impacts of traffic, air pollution, noise and light could be significant. The size of this site means that a significant amount of greenfield land will be lost to development. Further information is required regarding agricultural land classification.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land at Mill Lane Hawkeridge

5.34.31 Concentrating development adjacent to the urban area of Westbury would allow better access to existing services/ facilities and public transport services. There should be avoidance of grades I and II agricultural land if possible.

5.34.32 Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the motor vehicle and to increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to share energy/heat generation capabilities with the adjoining employment area.

5.34.33 Decisions will be needed on provision of new highway infrastructure and linking with West Wilts Trading Estate across Hawkeridge road.

Summary of likely significant effects - Land West of West Wilts Trading Estate

- 5.34.34 Large proposed employment site. Significant amount of greenfield land will be lost to development. Further information is required regarding agricultural land classification. The location is remote from Westbury town centre and the site is not adjacent to the urban area. This is a rural area and impacts of traffic, air pollution, noise and light could be significant. The site is divorced from West Wilts Trading Estate and Storridge rd – this could create land assembly and access problems.
- 5.34.35 This site contains a considerable area of flood zones 2 and 3 to the north, east and west which severely restricts amount of developable land. This would prevent development adjacent to West Wilts Trading Estate. There is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) – a medieval settlement - bordering the site to the south. Significant adverse impacts likely – the significance of effects will depend on location and size of development, design quality and future employment uses.
- 5.34.36 Size of proposed employment area means there are likely to be significant benefits for the local economy, employment opportunities, indirect benefits for many other local businesses and social benefits. The site is in proximity to West Wilts Trading Estate, although divorced, and therefore could benefit from infrastructure associated with that existing area.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Land West of West Wilts Trading Estate

- 5.34.37 Concentrating development adjacent to the urban area of Westbury would allow better access to existing services/ facilities and public transport services. This is a large greenfield site which is not well related to Westbury, the strategic highway network or the existing industrial site.
- 5.34.38 Development should avoid flood zones 2 and 3. Adequate buffer zones required to protect watercourses. A Surface Water Management Strategy may be required to demonstrate equivalent to greenfield runoff post development. Appropriate use of SuDS should be considered and consideration given to adaptation to future impacts of climate change.
- 5.34.39 Innovative sustainable transport schemes are essential to reduce impacts of the motor vehicle and increase accessibility to the town centre by sustainable transport modes. Development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is potential to share energy/heat generation capabilities with West Wilts Trading Estate.
- 5.34.40 Any development on this site should protect and enhance the SAM and be sensitive to its setting. Sensitive design and suitable landscaping/buffer required.

Summary of likely significant effects - Station Road Allocation

5.34.41 No significant effects envisaged at this site. The majority of this site is brownfield land and there are no specific environmental constraints to development.

Potential mitigation measures for significant adverse effects – Station Road Allocation

5.34.42 No significant effects envisaged. Development may need to avoid certain areas in the western part of the site due to possible flood risk. Review of flood risk required.

What is/are considered the most sustainable employment site(s) in sustainability terms?

5.34.43 Option 3 is recommended but this site alone is unlikely to meet Westbury's need for employment land. Of the two larger sites, Option 1 has fewer constraints to development and fewer likely significant adverse effects than Option 2 and is therefore preferred.

5.35 Core Policy 33: Spatial Strategy: Wilton Community Area

5.35.1 This policy sets out the strategy for the Wilton Community Area. It has been subject to sustainability appraisal⁴⁸ as part of the development of the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) – no amendments to the policy have been made and it is therefore not appropriate to make any amendments to the sustainability appraisal findings for this policy.

5.35.2 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report noted that this policy performed extremely well on the social objectives relating to housing and social inclusion. It was considered that the policy will help to create development which meets identified needs rather than development led entirely by development profit. In combination with the core policy relating to affordable housing the policies comprise part of a comprehensive policy framework to guide housing development designed to meet projected needs.

5.35.3 The South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed or downloaded from www.wiltshire.gov.uk/southwiltshirecorestrategy.

5.36 Core Policy 34 – Additional employment land

5.36.1 This policy supports the delivery of opportunities for the provision of employment land that may come forward in the principal settlements, market towns and local service centres of Wiltshire, in addition to the employment land which is allocated in the core strategy. The sustainability appraisal of this policy has been carried out in two parts:

- Part 1: New employment land (scale)

⁴⁸ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

- Part 2: New employment land (location)

Core Policy 34 part 1 - New employment land (scale)

5.36.2 The purpose of part 1 of this policy is to:

- identify sufficient new employment land to attract new jobs that is suitable for a range of business types, especially target sectors to help diversify the employment base
- locate, promote and expand clusters or networks of knowledge driven or high technology industries.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.36.3 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Identify specific sites to meet demand anticipated from job projections (55ha)
2	Identify specific new sites to meet demand anticipated from job projections (55ha) with an added element for 'churn' in existing stock (DTZ = +76 ha) to be provided within regeneration sites and mixed use urban extensions
3	Identify specific new sites to meet demand anticipated from job projections (55ha) and allow additional land to be released to accommodate relocation from inappropriate premises on a site by site basis against set criteria

5.36.4 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+	+/?	+	+	+/?	-/?	+/?	+/?
Option 2	-/?	--/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	--	-/?	-/?	--	-/+	+/?	+/-	+/-	+/-	-/?	+/?	++/-
Option 3	-/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+	+/?	+	+	+/?	-/?	+/?	++/-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.36.5 Option 1 – no likely significant effects.

- 5.36.6 Option 2 is considered likely to have significant adverse effects against the sustainability objectives relating to efficient and effective use of land, air quality and environmental pollution and landscapes, and significant positive effects relating to employment:

Efficient and effective use of land

- 5.36.7 Option 2 proposes to allocate a significant additional amount (+76ha) of employment land compared to the other two options, over and above that required to meet job projections, to be provided within regeneration sites and mixed use urban extensions. It does not specify where these areas will be, but due to the relatively small area of brownfield sites within Wiltshire's regeneration areas, and the fact that some of the regeneration areas already have development proposals submitted, it must be assumed that much of this additional employment land will take place on greenfield urban extensions on the edge of the larger market towns. This will not maximise the efficient use of land within town centres, may risk the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land and will likely have a number of other impacts on environmental receptors.

Air quality and environmental pollution

- 5.36.8 The amount of additional employment land proposed, especially if located on greenfield sites away from town centres, is likely to significantly impact on air quality, noise, light pollution and other types of environmental pollution. This will mainly be in the form of disturbance to existing residents and wildlife, noise related to traffic and industry and effects on air quality mainly from traffic. The severity of any effects will very much depend on location and type of industry and it is acknowledged that there are mitigation measures available to reduce such effects, therefore a score of *-/-* has been given.

Landscapes

- 5.36.9 There could be significant landscape impacts, particularly from developing greenfield sites on the edge of market towns. Again this will depend on the location of any such development, type of industry, building design, landscaping etc – such details are not known at this stage and this is the reason for scoring *-/-*.

Employment

- 5.36.10 Options 2 and 3 are both likely to provide significant amounts of additional land for employment, compared with Option 1. Both options will allow local businesses to expand and will enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment areas. However, adverse effects have also been noted which will need to be addressed if benefits are to be enhanced.
- 5.36.11 Option 2 states that additional land will be provided within regeneration sites and mixed use urban extensions. Only a limited number of (mainly larger) market towns have regeneration areas and urban extensions and this means that the smaller towns

will have fewer opportunities to attract inward investment and for businesses to expand. Option 3 will allow provision in all market towns but states that additional land will be released to 'accommodate relocation from inappropriate premises on a site by site basis'. This may benefit existing businesses but what about attracting inward investment over and above the 55ha that meets job projections?

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.36.12 The environmental impacts of these options can be reduced by restricting development of additional greenfield land and strongly promoting the development and remediation of previously developed sites within all of Wiltshire's market towns. This could avoid or reduce many of the adverse effects relating to greenfield development on biodiversity, water, climatic factors, air quality and landscapes that have been discussed in the assessment. Where greenfield development does take place, ideally this should be as part of mixed use development that reduces the need to travel, has strong sustainable transport links with town centres and avoids any sensitive environmental receptors.
- 5.36.13 Focussing development on town centre previously developed sites will also boost regeneration and improve the viability of other town centre business and services. It can take advantage of proximity to better public transport services and allow a choice of sustainable transport modes. However, it is also acknowledged that locating some employment uses in town centre locations can actually increase traffic levels and congestion and may not be appropriate in proximity to residential areas.
- 5.36.14 Many effects regarding air quality, noise, light pollution and odour can be effectively reduced or mitigated through high quality design standards and sensitive location of development that reduce impacts on people and the natural environment. Considering the types of industry that are now established and establishing in Wiltshire, effects on air quality are more likely to arise from transport and appropriate location can significantly reduce the amount of journeys.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.36.15 In terms of significant effects, Option 2 is considered to be more likely to give rise to a greater number of adverse impacts against the environmental objectives. However, this is mainly because it states what additional amount is likely to be provided and it is assumed that much of this will be on greenfield sites in edge of town locations. Option 3 may well give rise to a similar provision of land in similar locations. These details are not known at this stage and actual effects of development will depend very much on location and types of use.
- 5.36.16 There is a degree of uncertainty in the assessment of likely effects because the policy does not allocate specific sites and therefore effects will very much depend on the location, size and future use of sites. It is assumed that the larger the area of employment land allocated the greater the effects against many of the environmental sustainability objectives and transport. Assessment of individual strategic

employment sites has been carried out and these are presented in the respective community area sections of this report.

5.36.17 It is recommended that the Core Strategy policy should be a combination of Options 2 and 3, allowing for additional employment growth that is above anticipated job predictions but that will not restrict this employment growth to regeneration/urban extension sites or relocation from inappropriate premises. Policy should allow all communities to benefit from employment opportunities, allowing existing businesses to expand and attracting new businesses.

5.36.18 It is recommended that if additional employment land is being considered over and above that to meet demand anticipated from job projections, this is not restricted to regeneration and urban extension sites, but will also provide for smaller communities (not just market towns) that also have a desire to increase their employment base, by attracting new businesses and allowing existing businesses to expand. This includes regenerating existing employment sites, and allowing the expansion of these so that businesses can relocate near to their existing customer base.

Core Policy 34 part 2 - New employment land (location)

5.36.19 Part 2 of core policy 34 is being considered to find the most sustainable locations for employment land across Wiltshire.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.36.20 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further evidence demonstrating why these options are being considered is contained within the economy topic paper which accompanies the Core Strategy):

Policy option	Description
1	Release specific new sites in principle towns only for all B class uses ie Chippenham, Trowbridge, (Salisbury)
2	Release specific new sites in principle towns and named market towns with economic potential ie Chippenham, Trowbridge, (Salisbury), Calne, Devizes, Melksham, Warminster, Westbury, (Amesbury)
3	Allow release of land in all named market towns in response to up to date evidence.

5.36.21 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	

not be able to attract new businesses to the area or enable existing businesses to expand, leading to fewer training and apprenticeship opportunities and losing skilled workers to other areas.

- 5.36.27 Option 3 however will have significant benefits across all named market towns because land would be made available to allow business expansion and to attract inward investment.

Transport

- 5.36.28 Option 1 will lead to significantly increased travel from across Wiltshire because fewer employment opportunities will be available in other community areas. People will be forced to travel to Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham, as well as other locations outside Wiltshire for work, and many journeys would be likely to be made by private car.

Economic growth and employment

- 5.36.29 All options will have significant benefits for employment and economic growth. However, Option 1 is only likely to benefit Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham whilst Option 2 will only release specific sites in towns with economic potential. It is not clear how certain towns are judged to have 'economic potential' while others do not. It is also not clear what the 'specific projects' and 'list of criteria' stated in Option 3 are and what this would involve and further information is required to assess more fully.
- 5.36.30 It is acknowledged that Options 1 and 2 possibly provide more certainty to the market over where and what type of new land is available, whereas Option 3 is more responsive and market led. However, Options 1 and 2 need to ensure that all communities in Wiltshire can benefit from economic and employment growth, including rural communities.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.36.31 In order to reduce the amount of greenfield land released for development, there should be a strong emphasis on providing employment sites on brownfield land and within or in close proximity to town centres. It is appreciated that not all future land for employment can be situated in these locations, but the presumption should be that these locations will be developed first.
- 5.36.32 If greenfield sites are required, and this is most likely to be the case through Option 1, employment opportunities should be provided in mixed-use, sustainable locations that have good access to existing local services and facilities and public transport links that will reduce the need to travel. Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be minimised wherever possible, although the overriding economic benefits may sometimes outweigh this preference.

- 5.36.33 To reduce impacts on air quality, landscapes and transport, employment land should be provided that benefits all communities across Wiltshire, not just the principle towns. Focusing development in just a small number of towns will significantly increase air pollution, mainly from increases in traffic, and is likely to impact upon landscapes and the natural environment in general (depending on location).
- 5.36.34 It is considered that the most important way of reducing impacts of these options, and improving the local economy and health and wellbeing, is to allow and provide for employment growth in all of Wiltshire's communities, not just the principle towns or the market towns, but appreciate that there may be opportunities in smaller communities and in rural areas for employment that will have economic, social and environmental benefits.
- 5.36.35 There is currently no information available on what the criteria mentioned in the policy wording for Option 3 would consist of. This may have a significant bearing on what type of employment uses or what type of land is made available in smaller communities. Further information would be needed to establish the effects of Option 3.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.36.36 It is likely that a combination of Options 2 and 3 will be required to meet the need for employment land across Wiltshire, which recognises that employment opportunities should not be restricted to certain market towns but will benefit all communities. These two options were considered unlikely to have any significant adverse effects, in comparison with Option 1 which would lead to many. **Core Strategy policy now supports use classes B1, B2 and B8 in principal settlements, market towns and local service centres, and also sets specific criteria for development outside those settlements, taking account of sustainability appraisal recommendations.**
- 5.36.37 The sustainability appraisal has previously recommended that the policy could make greater reference to the importance of allowing employment opportunities in rural areas which help protect and enhance key local services and facilities as well as maintaining quality of life for rural residents and providing opportunities for farm diversification. The policy has been amended since June 2011 and now gives greater support for the promotion of modern agricultural practices, appropriate diversification of the rural economy, and provision of broadband. The policy also now recognises the need to include an element of flexibility to allow new employment opportunities to come forward outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres where such proposals are considered to be essential to the economic development of Wiltshire.
- 5.36.38 It is considered that the policy is now much stronger in sustainability terms having been amended to give greater support for employment in rural areas whilst ensuring any proposals meet sustainable development objectives. It is also acknowledged that rural employment is promoted in core policy 48 'Supporting rural life'.

5.37 Core Policy 35 - Existing employment sites

5.37.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect key employment areas to support existing businesses
- support, promote and expand clusters or networks of knowledge driven or high technology industries.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.37.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Protect 'strategic' employment sites which are fundamental to the economic role of named towns
2	Protect 'strategic' employment sites which are fundamental to the economic role of named settlements supported by criteria to determine when smaller sites should be protected
3	Protect all employment sites with criteria to assess their value to the local economy

5.37.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Options																	
Option 1	-/?	0/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/- ?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	-/+ ?	-/?	-/?	--	--	--	--/?
Option 2	-/?	0/?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?	0/?	+/?	-/?	++/ ?	++/ ?
Option 3	0	0/?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-/?	+/?	+/?	0	++/ ?	0	++	++

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.37.4 Significant adverse effects are only considered likely through Option 1. These relate to the following:

Education and skills

5.37.5 Option 1 will promote and be most likely to lead to skills retention only in settlements where there are 'strategic' sites and this will have a detrimental long term effect

elsewhere where significant numbers of sites could be lost to other uses. If locally important employment sites are lost, businesses may be forced to move elsewhere with consequent loss of skilled workers in the local area and reduced employment and training opportunities.

Transport

- 5.37.6 Option 1 could lead to loss of many smaller employment sites throughout Wiltshire which would mean people having to travel further to seek work. There would not be the same amount of employment opportunities, particularly in some of the smaller towns, significantly increasing the need to travel for jobs elsewhere in the county or further afield. This would exacerbate current problems of out-commuting to towns along the M4 corridor such as Bristol, Bath and Swindon.

Economic growth and employment

- 5.37.7 Option 1 would not protect smaller individual sites and could lead to greater pressure to release such sites for other uses. It also does not protect rural employment sites. Smaller sites may not be classed as strategic but they often play a very important role in their community, providing employment opportunities, helping to increase self-containment and allowing other local businesses to remain viable.

Significant positive effects

- 5.37.8 Option 3 would protect all employment sites and therefore be most likely out of the three options to give opportunities for developing local skills and allowing local businesses to expand. There would be important indirect effects for other local businesses that rely on those businesses and their employees, allowing them to maintain their viability and profitability.
- 5.37.9 Options 2 and 3 would both be likely to lead to significant benefits in terms of local economies and employment through their additional protection of smaller employment sites. However, Option 2 does not allow for protection of rural sites and this is an area that should be covered by Core Strategy policy.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.37.10 In order to retain existing skills and attract new skilled workers across Wiltshire, policy should allow for protection of smaller sites in all communities, not protect strategic sites only. Smaller sites can often play a vital role in a community, sometimes meeting a niche market and supporting many other local businesses, even though they may not be classed as 'strategic'. Rural areas also need employment opportunities and protection of rural sites should be strongly considered in policy.
- 5.37.11 In terms of transport related impacts, if some smaller employment sites were not protected and were to undergo change of use, people would have to travel further to

find employment. Much of this additional travel is likely to be by private car as bus and rail services are often poor in many areas of Wiltshire, particularly in rural areas. To reduce or prevent these impacts, smaller sites should be protected from change of use. If this is not possible and the focus is on strategic sites, there should be excellent sustainable transport links between those strategic sites and town centres, other settlements and the strategic road network. This should include frequent and reliable bus services and safe and convenient walking and cycling routes that give people a real choice as to how they travel.

- 5.37.12 In terms of effects on employment and economic growth, policies must provide for protection of all employment sites that are of value and play an important economic and social role in a community, including those in rural areas. Losing sites to other uses will lead to loss of jobs, skills and subsequent social impacts on the fabric of communities that cannot easily be rectified.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.37.13 The most favourable options are 2 and 3 which have very similar scores. These two options are not considered likely to lead to significant adverse effects and in fact may have significant benefits in terms of opportunities to retain skills. Option 1 does not allow enough flexibility and will lead to significant impacts that will damage the economic health of local communities. It is acknowledged in the assessment that it will not always be desirable to protect every employment site in every community.
- 5.37.14 It is recommended that the policy **is reworded to recognise** the importance of protecting existing employment sites in rural locations that do not fall within principal settlements, market towns or local service centres because such sites, although often small, can play a vital role in the rural economy. Such sites often provide for niche activities and reduce the need to travel to jobs further afield. Core policy 48 'Supporting rural life' does not cover this issue specifically, only referring to reuse of redundant buildings for employment purposes.
- 5.37.15 **It is therefore recommended that the reference to 'principal settlements, market towns and local service centres' is removed so the policy wording for paragraph 2 of CP35 would be 'Elsewhere, proposals for the redevelopment of land or buildings previously or currently used for activities.....' This would also bring the policy in line with Core Policy 5 of the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy and its supporting Sustainability Appraisal.**

5.38 Core Policy 36 - Economic regeneration

- 5.38.1 The purpose of this policy is to support regeneration opportunities and to maximise the re-use of previously developed land.

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.38.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Identify specific regeneration sites in named market towns highlighting principle future uses
2	Promote regeneration of sites where the proposed uses support the vision for the future role and function of a place
3	Identify specific regeneration sites only in Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury supported by a generic policy in other areas where proposals support the vision for that area

5.38.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	?	+	0/?	0	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	+	+
Option 2	?	++	0/?	0	0	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	++	++
Option 3	?	+	0/?	-	-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.38.4 No significant adverse effects envisaged from any of the three options. Any development, in any location, is likely to have some adverse impacts on objectives relating to air quality and environmental pollution, climatic factors, heritage and landscapes. However, the extent of any impacts will depend on the location of the site, employment uses and design standards. Mitigation measures possible for all potential effects.

5.38.5 Option 2 is the only option where significant positive effects are likely across all communities. This option supports the regeneration of brownfield sites in the principal settlements, market towns and local service centres where the proposed uses help to deliver the overall strategy for that settlement and/or enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Options 1 and 3 are more restrictive and only likely to significantly benefit certain areas.

5.38.6 Option 2 is likely to lead to regeneration of more brownfield sites in a greater number of locations, so reducing the need for greenfield development. This option is also likely to give greater economic and employment benefits as it is less restrictive and does not require sites to be identified in the Core Strategy.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.38.7 No significant adverse effects envisaged from any of the options. However, the focus of regeneration of sites should be on town centre locations that can help improve vitality and viability of local businesses and benefit from proximity to public transport interchanges.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.38.8 Option 2 is the only option considered likely to result in significant benefits for all communities because it does not restrict regeneration to certain towns or sites. **Option 2 has been carried forward in Core Strategy policy in line with these recommendations.**

5.38.9 The policy strongly promotes regeneration of brownfield sites in sustainable locations that will enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and is therefore likely to be positive against many of the sustainability objectives. Potential adverse effects highlighted will mainly relate to site specific issues and the assessment of strategic employment sites in each community area section discusses these issues in greater detail.

5.39 Core Policy 37 – Military establishments

5.39.1 Given the importance of MoD operations and the nature and location of MoD sites in Wiltshire, it is important that changes to existing facilities and the reuse of redundant facilities are addressed in a timely manner that benefits the surrounding community. This policy seeks to:

- provide MoD certainty about the redevelopment of military sites that will stay in MoD use
- encourage the re-use of redundant military sites and establishments in a sustainable manner.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.39.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Provide a descriptive policy to encourage the correct uses at existing/redundant military sites
2	Allow all proposals for the redevelopment/re-use of existing military sites
3	Do not allow any development at military sites unless they conform entirely to existing planning policies

5.39.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	++	0	+	+	+	-	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Option 2	-	+	0	+	?	-	-	-	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	++	++
Option 3	+	-	0	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.39.4 Significant effects are considered likely through options 1 and 2.

Option 1

5.39.5 This option which reflects the Core Strategy policy encourages redevelopment of redundant military sites and buildings but encourages correct uses and ensures that development takes proper account of scale, character and location. It is therefore likely that appropriate development will take place and in locations that are more sustainable and in closer proximity to town centres where public transport services are often better.

5.39.6 Redeveloping sites in appropriate locations will also have significant benefits for Wiltshire's high value landscapes as proper account is taken of local character and surrounding area, and also that the more remote rural sites are not developed inappropriately.

5.39.7 There are no significant adverse effects likely. However, any development on such redundant sites could adversely affect biodiversity assets, particularly if the site has been redundant for a long time.

Option 2

5.39.8 This option will allow all proposals for the redevelopment/re-use of existing military sites and may therefore result in development that is not in keeping with scale, character and location and could lead to inappropriate development at remote rural locations. This could be a particular problem in an area where there is a large number of redundant sites, with cumulative effects on wildlife sites and landscapes.

5.39.9 However, there is potential with this very flexible option of providing a large number of new houses on many different sites and providing much land for employment. This could significantly benefit the local economy, attract skilled workers and inward investment and support existing businesses that can benefit indirectly.

Option 3

5.39.10 This is likely to be a far more restrictive option that would only allow development on a limited number of sites. This approach would restrict development to sites in more sustainable locations, therefore avoiding many of the more significant impacts against environmental objectives such as biodiversity and landscapes, but would also not achieve the same level of regeneration opportunities, including housing and employment growth as Options 2 and 3. Many brownfield sites would be likely to remain redundant with no remediation of potentially contaminated land which could adversely affect watercourses and groundwater.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.39.11 This policy needs to focus on redeveloping those sites that are in the most sustainable locations, are well located to their settlement and will provide the most benefits for local communities. Remote, rural sites will likely encourage unsustainable modes of transport and will have the greatest environmental impacts. Town centre regeneration is a priority in some areas and this policy can help promote this,

5.39.12 All development should protect and enhance biodiversity. MOD sites can have higher biodiversity value than other brownfield sites, as they often include larger areas of landscaping and may be managed non-intensively. Appropriate ecological assessment will be required in all cases. Sensitive locations such as designated wildlife sites, areas where protected or notable species are present and ancient woodland require specific protection and mitigation. Significant development should be avoided where it would impact on a national or local landscape designation. All development should be located and designed to respect and be sensitive to local landscape characteristics.

5.39.13 Strong consideration should be given to the type of use that these sites are redeveloped for. This will depend on the location and particular circumstances in the local economy. In some areas housing would give greater benefits and in others certain types of business/employment use would be preferable. It is also important that the policy allows the cultural and historic significance of Wiltshire's military establishments to be understood to inform the scope and form of any future use.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.39.14 Depending on the location, a combination of Options 1 and 2 may be an appropriate way forward. Option 1 may be a bit too descriptive and not result in the same degree of social and economic benefits as Option 2. Option 2, however, is rather too flexible and would result in significant environmental impacts; a policy that requires adherence to local planning policy, respecting the location and local character, but is also flexible enough to consider other sites that may give substantial social and economic benefits, would be preferable.

5.39.15 Option 3 is too restrictive and would not encourage redevelopment of any sites that do not conform entirely, or those sites that require significant remediation.

5.40 Core Policy 38 - Retail and leisure

5.40.1 This policy aims to ensure that proposals for retail and leisure uses help maintain the vitality and viability of town centres by demonstrating that the proposal will not harm the vitality or viability of any centres.

What options have been considered?

5.40.2 There are a large number of possible policy options with respect to retail, given the number of towns and villages across Wiltshire that need protection or enhancement in order to ensure their continued vitality and viability. However, many of the individual options for each town are similar in their outcome, namely should retail development be delivered in-town or out-of town?

5.40.3 For the purposes of the sustainability appraisal, similar options have been grouped together for assessment purposes as follows:

Assessment matrix A	
Option 1	Any retail / leisure application outside of a Primary or Secondary Area or outside of a village centre should be accompanied by an impact assessment and any proposal involving the creation of more than 200 sq m gross additional retail or leisure floorspace should comply with the sequential approach (the sequential approach should be undertaken in accordance with guidance within PPS4 and / or its supporting document)
Option 2	Do not require an impact assessment or sequential test below the 2,500 sq m level proposed within PPS4

Assessment matrix B	
Option 3	Retain current primary and secondary frontages in order to protect and enhance town centres
Option 4	Assess / amend existing primary / secondary frontages either through the Core Strategy or provide hook for Neighbourhood plans / communities to undertake this process
Option 5	Delete all frontages and corresponding policies
Option 6	Introduce primary / secondary frontages to those towns / villages where these currently do not exist through neighbourhood plans

Assessment Matrix C	
Option 7	<p>Provide retail / leisure development, or continue to support existing proposals in the town centres in line with details within community area sections and briefly described here, in the following settlements:</p> <p>Chippenham – provide good quality cafes and restaurants together with increased retail offer, including a supermarket on the brownfield sites within the town centre.</p> <p>Trowbridge – provide the comparison goods offer needed and leisure uses identified (cinema, bowling etc) in Trowbridge on town centre Brownfield sites that connect well with the town centre.</p> <p>Bradford-on-Avon – continue to support the proposed Kingston Mills mixed use development.</p> <p>Calne – provide the small scale convenience needed in Calne town centre either through extension to existing or an additional smaller supermarket.</p> <p>Devizes – explore town centre sites to accommodate further comparison retail floorspace including the West Central Car Park and the Central Car Park.</p> <p>Malmesbury – should Malmesbury plan to claw back convenience trade and look for additional convenience floorspace if a site can be found in the town centre?</p> <p>Marlborough – should Marlborough look to delivery additional comparison floorspace in the town</p>

	<p>centre?</p> <p>Melksham – additional comparison floorspace identified should be provided in the town centre. A site behind the Avon Place shopping parade should be investigated.</p> <p>Warminster – additional comparison floorspace should be delivered by rationalising the central car park area and / or updating the Three Horseshoes Mall.</p> <p>Westbury – provide additional comparison floorspace in Westbury in the town centre by removing the existing precinct and combining this with the adjacent BT telephone exchange.</p> <p>Wootton Bassett – claw back convenience trade from Calne by providing additional convenience retail floorspace.</p>
Option 8	<p>Provide retail / leisure development identified as needed in an out-of-town location, possibly greenfield sites, at the following settlements:</p> <p>Chippenham (greenfield)</p> <p>Trowbridge (potentially greenfield)</p> <p>Bradford-on-Avon (find another site likely to be in a greenfield / out of town location)</p> <p>Calne (out-of centre / possibly greenfield)</p> <p>Devizes (out-of-centre / possibly greenfield)</p> <p>Malmesbury (should Malmesbury claw back convenience trade if site is in an out-of-town / greenfield location)</p> <p>Marlborough (provide comparison floorspace in an out of town / greenfield location)</p> <p>Melksham (provide comparison floorspace in an out of town / greenfield location)</p> <p>Westbury (provide comparison floorspace in an out of town / greenfield location)</p> <p>Wootton Bassett (continue to allow convenience trade to leak to Calne)</p>

5.40.4 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	++	+
Option 2	0	?	0	0	0	?	?	0	?	0	0	?	0	0	?	-	0
Option 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	++	+
Option 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	++	+
Option 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-
Option 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	++	+
Option 7	?	++	0	?	?	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	++	+
Option 8	-	--	0	?	?	?	?	0	-	0	0	?	0	0	?	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

Option 1

5.40.5 No significant adverse effects envisaged. The option aims to try and protect village and town centres through requiring impact assessment / sequential tests at a lower threshold than that required by national policy. Significant positive effects envisaged in terms of town centre regeneration and maintaining vitality and viability.

Option 2

- 5.40.6 Possible significant adverse effect on town / village centres identified in the 'do nothing' scenario as there could be a series of retail and leisure developments of just under 2,500 sq m which cumulatively could impact greatly on our town and village centres.

Options 3, 4 and 6

- 5.40.7 The options aim to protect and enhance our village and towns centres by ensuring existing primary and secondary retail frontages are maintained, that new frontages can be introduced in settlements where they do not currently exist and to enable neighbourhoods to amend / introduce frontages and corresponding policy through their neighbourhood plans. The option could have a positive effect with respect to health, inclusion, community, transport and a significant positive effect with respect to the economy.

Option 5

- 5.40.8 Option 5 is unlikely to achieve any of the positives identified through options 3, 4 and 6 and is likely to have a significant adverse affect on town centres as removing frontage policies could result in the erosion of town centres away from main town centre uses to other uses such as residential at the ground floor level.

Option 7

- 5.40.9 Where evidence identifies that new retail and / or leisure floorspace is needed, this policy directs such floorspace towards town centres and would result in a significant positive effect on land and soil and the economy, whilst having a positive effect on air quality, transport, community facilities and social inclusion.

Option 8

- 5.40.10 Directs retail and / or leisure floorspace need to more out of town locations, possibly greenfield sites. There is potential to have an adverse effect with respect to land and soil, landscape and economy, with unknown or neutral effects with respect to the other sustainability appraisal objectives.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.40.11 Mitigation measures could be introduced, especially to site allocation policies, to ensure areas such as flood mitigation, waste, water resources, air quality, transport, protection of the historic environment and good design are incorporated within policy to ensure the most sustainable development possible is achieved.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.40.12 Option 1, a combination of 3, 4 and 6 and option 7 are considered to be the most sustainable options to take forward. With respect to options 3, 4 and 6, this does not need to be within policy itself, but provision needs to be made for lower level plans or neighbourhood plans to deliver new or amended primary / secondary frontages.

5.40.13 It is considered that the proposed policy, which requires impact assessments to demonstrate that proposals will not harm the vitality or viability of any nearby centres and to comply with the sequential approach, will help protect Wiltshire's town centres. This will have a range of sustainability benefits including protecting existing services and facilities in town centres, town centre jobs and increasing social inclusion.

5.41 Core Policy 39 – Tourist development

5.41.1 This is a new policy introduced since June 2011 that recognises the importance of the tourism industry in Wiltshire and seeks to promote tourism development where it would not harm the built and natural environment.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.41.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Introduce a policy to encourage and facilitate tourism within Wiltshire
2	Do not include a policy on tourism or tourist development

5.41.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+/?	+/?
Option 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.41.4 The policy is likely to lead to wide ranging benefits against most of the sustainability objectives. However, these are not considered to be significant as a result of

implementing the policy alone because the policy is mainly concerned with locating new development in the right places as opposed to promoting tourism.

- 5.41.5 The policy recognises the importance of the built and natural environment to Wiltshire's tourism industry and promotes development that will result in fewer impacts on these assets. It directs new development to existing settlements – this is likely to increase vitality and viability of businesses within those settlements and lead to fewer environmental impacts because development will be restricted in the open countryside.
- 5.41.6 The assessment has suggested that the policy should support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses; this should include supporting facilities where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres. The policy could be slightly too restrictive in terms of new development in the countryside – the reasons for this are understood but development in rural areas can significantly boost jobs and the local economy and this may need to be addressed.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.41.7 There are no significant adverse effects considered likely from this policy and no specific mitigation measures envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.41.8 Because of the important role tourism has in Wiltshire's economy and the number of people employed it is important that the Core Strategy includes a specific policy, particularly when the high quality natural and built environment have such an influence on this industry. Option 1 is likely to be the most favourable in sustainability terms.
- 5.41.9 This policy is closely related to the separate policy 'Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities' which has been subject to a separate sustainability appraisal. That sustainability appraisal recommended that transport implications of development be specifically mentioned in the policy and this recommendation is also relevant to this tourism policy. However, the promotion of development within or close to existing settlements in the policy will allow transport impacts to be reduced somewhat because of the further opportunities to use public transport.

5.42 Core Policy 40 – Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities

- 5.42.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability

appraisal⁴⁹. No amendments have been made to this policy and therefore it is not appropriate to amend the previous sustainability appraisal findings. The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.42.2 The policy seeks to maintain, enhance and protect existing tourist accommodation facilities and facilitate the provision of new businesses. Therefore the policy performs well against economic objectives. Tourist accommodation can be significant traffic generators and the scale of enterprises in the open countryside and smaller settlements should be given consideration to avoid adverse effect on local highway networks and objectives related to carbon emissions. The policy also supports development adjacent to settlements which means greenfield sites which could have adverse effects on biodiversity and landscape value.

Mitigation/enhancement recommendations

5.42.3 The following mitigation measures/recommendations were made:

- The scale of rural facilities, particularly conference facilities, in areas with poor public transport links, should be considered in either the policy or the supporting text to avoid unacceptable traffic generation and climate change effect through emissions.
- The encouragement of new development adjacent to settlements i.e. greenfield sites in the open countryside should be reconsidered. (Does this contradict the statement that in the open countryside development will be restricted to conversion of specific buildings?).
- The policy should refer to “smallest settlements” as in core policy 1 for the sake of clarity.

5.42.4 This policy has been amended in light of the SA comments; it now refers to smallest settlements and includes the following criterion: “Avoid unacceptable degrees of traffic generation and/or climate change effect through emissions.” This has further improved the policy’s performance in relation to environmental and health objectives.

5.43 Core Policy 41: Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.43.1 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	a) Ensure new development is resilient to likely future rises in temperature, resulting from climate

⁴⁹ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

	<p>change, through encouraging good design (such as the Tonbridge and Malling example). Detailed guidance and supporting information outlined in subsequent Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p> <p>b) Set Wiltshire wide standards for sustainable construction (full Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) standards across all nine categories) in line with national timetable for changing Building Regulations to improve the energy performance of buildings (equivalent to the energy component of the CSH). Detailed guidance and supporting information outlined in subsequent Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p> <p>c) Policy included in the Core Strategy seeking to maximise opportunities for delivering decentralised, low-carbon and renewable energy in new developments. A Sustainable Energy Strategy (SES) would be required for all new developments demonstrating how the requirements of the changes to Building Regulations to deliver zero-carbon** development by 2016 (for residential) and 2019 (for non residential) would be delivered. For large (to be defined) scale development, the SES should demonstrate why the development was not zero carbon (if this was claimed and if to be built prior to 2016 (for residential) or 2019 (for non residential). Detailed guidance and supporting information outlined in subsequent Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p>
2	<p>a) As for 1a but incorporating minimum design standards.</p> <p>b) Develop policy to be included in Core Strategy to address sustainable construction. However, do not set any targets and use an encouraging and guiding approach.</p>
3	<p>a) Fail to incorporate Core Strategy policy to address likely future rises in temperatures resulting from climate change, sustainable construction or decentralised, low-carbon and renewable energy in developments .</p>

5.43.2 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment	
Option 1	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?
Option 2	0	0	?	+/?	+/?	-	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?
Option 3	--/?	0	0	-	--	-	-	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.43.3 Option 1 is proposing the most stringent requirements to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including setting targets for achieving Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM and requiring certain types of adaptation techniques through building design. This will result in a number of benefits for various sustainability objectives but significant benefits against objective 7 as it is the option most likely to result in real reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.

5.43.4 Option 3 would fail to address climate change mitigation and adaptation in Core Strategy policy and this would lead to a number of significant adverse effects.

However, national changes to Building Regulations will still come into force whether or not there is a policy in the Core Strategy, therefore impacts may still be reduced.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.43.5 Significant adverse effects are only likely through Option 3.
- 5.43.6 Biodiversity and geodiversity – if Core Strategy policy is requiring the most stringent measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, impacts on Wiltshire’s biodiversity and geodiversity are likely to come from global sources. Wiltshire should ensure that sufficient areas of land are protected to allow habitat protection and migration of species. Providing corridors between different areas will be an important part of adaptation. Also, if additional water abstraction is required because of warmer drier summers, this must not be at the expense of biodiversity. Additional sources for water would need to be explored e.g. new reservoirs.
- 5.43.7 Not incorporating a policy would mean adequate adaptation measures will not have been prepared to deal with higher intensity rainfall events and this may increase flood risk for existing and future residents. All appropriate adaptation measures should be explored to deal with likely/expected (?) climate change impacts, including risk of flooding.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.43.8 Option 1 is considered the most favourable option against all sustainability objectives and the only one likely to lead to significant benefits. It proposes more stringent requirements than Options 2 or 3 and goes beyond the targets set at national level to come into force over the next few years.

5.44 Core Policy 42: Standalone renewable energy installations

- 5.44.1 This policy seeks to encourage and support, where appropriate, large scale renewable technologies in Wiltshire. It applies to all types of standalone renewable energy, including wind turbines, biomass generators, anaerobic digestion plants, hydropower turbines and ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays.

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.44.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Policy included in Core Strategy which seeks to encourage and support, where appropriate, large scale renewable technologies. Reference made to targets for renewable energy delivery in Wiltshire in line with UK Renewable Energy Strategy.

	Reference also made to evidence base setting out identified opportunities. Detailed guidance and supporting information outlined in subsequent Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
2	Fail to incorporate Core Strategy policy

5.44.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+/-	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/-	+	-/?	+	0	-/?	?	0	+	-/?	+	+
Option 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.44.4 Very few significant effects are considered likely. The only significant adverse effect considered likely relates to Option 2 in terms of landscapes. Much of Wiltshire is located in areas of high landscape value and this is recognised in designations including Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, Cotswolds AONB, North Wessex Downs AONB and a number of locally important landscape areas. Many towns and villages also have conservation areas and highly valued townscapes. Failing to incorporate a policy that requires proposals to demonstrate how impacts on landscape have been addressed

5.44.5 The provision of a significant number of new standalone renewable energy installations, particularly wind turbines, could cause many impacts on these landscapes, including changing the appearance of natural landscapes and habitats (albeit with a high degree of human influence).

5.44.6 Overall, Option 1 is likely to lead to many more positive effects against the sustainability objectives than Option 2. Continuing with ineffective and inconsistent saved policies will not address this important issue and may lead to renewable energy proposals coming forward in inappropriate locations with significant landscape impacts. Both options likely to lead to significant landscape impacts but Option 1 requires proposals to demonstrate their impacts against a set of criteria.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.44.7 Proposals for large scale renewable energy development should ensure that adverse impacts on designated and locally important landscapes are avoided or reduced. The location of such installations will require careful consideration and appropriate location of technologies such as wind turbines will be the most effective way of

reducing impacts and reducing conflict with local residents. The relevant AONB Management Plan should be referred to for any proposals likely to affect an AONB.

- 5.44.8 Where there are likely to be impacts such as noise, shadow flicker and odour that can result from some technologies, again the location of such facilities away from residential areas and important areas for biodiversity will be important considerations.
- 5.44.9 The sustainability appraisal has stated that rather than supporting and encouraging renewable energy proposals as they come forward, a more proactive approach could be taken if the current low levels of renewable energy output in Wiltshire are to be significantly increased. This may involve establishing certain areas where certain installations may be acceptable and working with partner organisations to achieve results.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.44.10 Although Option 1 is likely to result in the only significant adverse effects of the two options, overall this is the most sustainable option because of the wide-ranging benefits it is likely to have against other sustainability objectives. These benefits include climate change mitigation which can have important indirect benefits for biodiversity, water resources, reducing flood risk, landscapes and human health. Generating more renewable energy will also help increase energy security and allow other forms of energy generation that rely on fossil fuels to be replaced.
- 5.44.11 Option 2 relies upon saved policies which are inconsistent across Wiltshire and based on outdated evidence. These are not achieving positive results across Wiltshire and this is not the preferred way to continue.

5.45 Core Policy 43- Providing affordable homes

- 5.45.1 This policy sets out when affordable housing provision will be required and indicates the proportions which will be sought linked to open market housing development. This, together with the new policy approach of enabling development of sustainable communities in the rural areas, aims to provide an increasing proportion of affordable housing to be achieved over the plan period.
- 5.45.2 This policy has been revised since June 2011 and now requires:
- affordable housing provision of 40% (net) will be provided on sites of 5 or more dwellings.
- 5.45.3 An 'Affordable Housing Viability Assessment Draft Report'⁵⁰ dated December 2011 has also been produced and the recommendations of that report have been taken into account in the revised policy and in this assessment.

What options have been considered for this policy?

⁵⁰ Affordable Housing Viability Assessment Draft Report (Adams Integra, December 2011)

5.45.4 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Retain the current policies saved within the extant Wiltshire District Local Plans.
2	Adopt an ambitious policy approach which seeks a considerable step change in the level of provision across the plan period – prioritising the provision of affordable homes.
3	Implement a consistent policy approach across Wiltshire, which seeks to secure a level of provision, which enables the delivery of affordable housing alongside other objectives contained within the strategy.

5.45.5 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
Option 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-/?	-	+/-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-	-
Option 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++/?	+	+	+	0	0	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.45.6 No positive or negative effects have been recorded against any of the environmental objectives. This policy is concerned with the level of provision of affordable housing; the significance of any environmental effects will depend on the location of any development, housing numbers proposed in that location and sustainability of design. Effects concerning location of housing and housing numbers have been assessed through other Core Strategy policies and through the assessment of strategic housing sites.

Option 1

5.45.7 No significant effects are envisaged through Option 1. Retaining current policies saved within extant Local Plans will continue to achieve a certain level of affordable housing, resulting in mainly social and economic benefits, but these policies are out-of-date and they require different levels of provision across the former district council areas – generally between 35%-50%.

5.45.8 Continuing with saved policies will not improve on the current situation and will not achieve the appropriate level of provision in future. Affordability has been highlighted as a key sustainability issue in Wiltshire with average house prices generally above that for the south-west and UK. Existing saved policies do not adequately address this issue and do not result in the level of provision that is needed, particularly in rural areas.

Option 2

5.45.9 This option proposes an ambitious policy approach which seeks a considerable step change in the level of provision across the plan period. It is not known what level of provision would be required and how ambitious this might be – the significance of any effects would depend on the actual level required. However, achieving a considerable step change could have serious viability implications for developers, meaning that housing developments where a higher percentage of affordable provision was required may not be viable. Consequently, the affordable housing and market housing elements of the development would both be lost.

5.45.10 The benefits of providing affordable housing to increase social inclusion and allow more people to live in a decent home are acknowledged. Wiltshire is a predominantly rural area, a desirable place to live and has seen large increases in house prices since 2005. However, adopting an overly ambitious approach could lead to under achievement of housing targets and this could exacerbate the affordability issues.

5.45.11 The sustainability appraisal has also noted that requiring a higher level of provision, reducing the viability of some housing schemes, would be likely to result in less funding for other community services and facilities such as healthcare, recreational open space and community centres. This could adversely affect health and wellbeing with secondary impacts on areas such as social inclusion and cohesion.

5.45.12 The significance and type of effects is very much dependent on the required level of provision and the findings of relevant viability assessments that would need to be carried out.

Option 3

5.45.13 This option proposes a more consistent approach which would take account of the findings of viability assessments and would be more likely to achieve desired housing targets as well as a range of other social and economic objectives. This involves a lower level of provision than Option 2 and would be more likely to improve the viability of housing development, meaning that other types of essential social infrastructure could be achieved, thereby increasing the sustainability of communities.

5.45.14 Option 3, through a more balanced approach that increases housing viability for developers, would also allow appropriate provision of a range of market housing to meet the needs of all, including higher-earning households.

5.45.15 The 'Affordable Housing Viability Assessment Draft Report', dated December 2011, addresses a number of issues, including testing the policy position of the Core Strategy. The report:

- supports an affordable housing proportion of 40% for the strategic sites with affordable rent as the affordable tenure
- recommends that the Council considers the adoption of a single affordable housing target of 40% for all sites of 5 units and above, on the assumption of either affordable rent, or assuming social rent at no more than 60% of the affordable provision.

5.45.16 The recommendation for a single affordable housing target of 40% affordable housing for all sites of 5 units is reflected within the draft core strategy. The main adverse effect possible through this revised policy in sustainability terms is likely to relate to viability and profitability of future housing development. This requirement may adversely affect viability and profitability for developers and reduce the overall numbers of new homes being built in the long-term. However, the policy is still likely to lead to significant benefits against the housing objective because it directly addresses affordable housing provision and contains the sentence *'the provision of affordable housing may vary on a site-by-site basis taking into account evidence of local need, mix of affordable housing proposed and where appropriate, the viability of the development'*.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.45.17 Affordability is a particular issue in the more rural parts of Wiltshire with some local people finding it extremely difficult to remain in their communities. Provision of affordable housing in rural areas should be a key focus of this policy and a proactive approach should be taken to identify sites and schemes, working with local people to meet their needs. This will help to increase self-containment and increase the viability of local services and facilities. However, proposals for schemes in rural settlements should not be at the expense of the natural environment and should be designed to reflect local character and distinctiveness.

5.45.18 The proposed mix of housing on large strategic sites should reflect the proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and achieve a mix of households as well as a mix of tenure and price. For smaller sites, the mix of housing should contribute to the creation of mixed communities having regard to the proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and the existing mix of housing in the locality.

5.45.19 Any issues concerning viability should be effectively mitigated through the statement in the policy that *'the provision of affordable housing may vary on a site-by-site basis taking into account evidence of local need, mix of affordable housing proposed and where appropriate, the viability of the development'*.

5.45.20 It will be important that the final policy adopts an appropriate balance – one that achieves an appropriate level of affordable housing but that does not compromise the achievement of other objectives.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.45.21 Option 3 proposes an approach that would be most likely to achieve the right balance of affordable housing with other sustainability objectives and is the favoured option in sustainability terms.

5.45.22 The revised policy requires 40% affordable housing on all sites of 5 or more dwellings. This is likely to increase the level of affordable housing throughout Wiltshire, with many positive sustainability outcomes, and this has been tested within the viability assessment. Issues regarding viability and profitability have been highlighted and it is considered that the policy can effectively mitigate any impacts through the proposed policy wording.

5.46 Core Policy 44 – Rural exceptions sites

5.46.1 This is a new policy introduced since June 2011. The policy aims to provide affordable housing in rural communities as an exception to normal policies. It allows consideration of a proportion of market housing where it can be demonstrated that a site would be unviable without cross-subsidy.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.46.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Retain the current policies saved within the extant Wiltshire District Local Plans.
2	Adopt a profit led approach through the provision of open market homes on exception sites.
3	Implement a supportive policy which encourages the provision of homes for vulnerable and older people across Wiltshire.

5.46.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	0	0/-	0/-	-	-	-	-	+	+/?	-	0	0	-	-	-
Option 2	-	-	0	0/-	0/-	-	-	-	-	+	+/?	-	+	+	-	-	-
Option 3	-	-	0	0/-	0/-	-	-	-	-	++	+	+	+	+	-	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.46.4 There are no significant adverse effects envisaged through implementation of any of the three different options. The policy does promote housing development in rural areas, albeit 'within, adjoining or closely related to the existing settlement' and this is likely to result in some limited environmental impacts as described in Appendix H. There is also potential for some cumulative effects if a number of small developments are proposed in a small area, especially in terms of transport where rural public transport services are often poor.
- 5.46.5 Option 3, which proposes a consistent approach that will consider a proportion of market housing where it can be demonstrated that the site would be unviable without cross-subsidy, is likely to result in significant long-term benefits in terms of wide ranging housing provision to meet local need. The significance of these benefits will depend on how effectively it does actually meet local need, especially affordable housing need that allows people to stay within their communities. This will also have benefits in terms of social inclusion and benefit the local economy and local businesses.
- 5.46.6 Options 1 and 2 are less likely to meet local affordable housing need, especially when operating in a nil-subsidy environment. This would force some people, such as young families, who cannot afford to live in their rural communities to move to larger towns where they can find more affordable properties. This would affect local businesses such as village shops and pubs and make other services such as village schools less viable

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.46.7 No significant adverse effects are considered likely. However, some potential adverse effects of housing development in rural areas could be reduced or avoided if the policy was to place more focus on infill and brownfield sites within the larger villages which have a better range of services, facilities and public transport. These larger villages are more likely to have existing shops, pubs and schools, thereby increasing their viability.

What is considered the most favourable option in sustainability terms and why?

5.46.8 Option 3 is the most favourable option in sustainability terms as it would be most likely to deliver a range of housing to meet local needs in rural areas. It adopts a flexible approach that recognises that some developments of solely affordable housing may not always be viable – this allows greater assurance for developers and will make a greater number of housing schemes viable.

5.47 Core Policy 45 - Meeting Wiltshire’s housing needs

5.47.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the type of housing that is needed to meet the needs of today’s households is delivered.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.47.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Allow housing type and mix to come forward as the market dictates.
2	Set targets for specified housing types on a Wiltshire wide basis.
3	Mix / type based upon up-to date evidence on an area by area basis.

5.47.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
Option 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
Option 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.47.4 None of the options are expected to have a significant negative effect as the policy options do not involve land or development specifically. Most sustainability objectives are not applicable to this policy option and would expect to have a neutral effect. The only areas where differences can be seen between the policy options are the housing and social inclusion sustainability objectives. In relation to social inclusion, both Options 2 and 3 are likely to have benefits from new housing provision – the significance of effects will depend on level of housing and ability to meet community needs.

5.47.5 For the housing policy area option 3 is felt to have the greatest positive effect as the local evidence should deliver the housing needs required at the local level. Option 2 is felt to be less sustainable as option 3 as delivering housing needs on a Wiltshire basis may not deliver the correct house types for a local area. Option 1 is not felt to be sustainable as the market may deliver the house types best for developer profit rather than local community needs.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the significant adverse effects?

5.47.6 As the policy option involves the delivery of house types with an outcome of a neutral effect with respect to the majority of sustainability objectives mitigation measures are not felt to be appropriate.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.47.7 Option 3 is felt to be the most favourable option in terms of sustainability as it should delivery the house types needed by local communities, rather than delivering house types needed on a more regional (option 2) or profit driven (option 1) basis.

5.48 Core Policy 46 – Meeting the needs of Wiltshire’s vulnerable and older people

5.48.1 This is a new policy introduced since June 2011 that seeks to address the issue of an ageing population, which is a particularly important issue in Wiltshire. It seeks to ensure that new housing development meets Lifetime Homes Standards and that there is adequate provision of specialist accommodation, such as extra care housing.

5.48.2 This policy incorporates what was core policy 30 ‘Lifetime Homes’ in the Core Strategy consultation document June 2011. The Lifetime Homes policy was originally included in the South Wilts Core Strategy and was subject to a separate sustainability appraisal. The sustainability appraisal findings for that policy have been included here where they are still relevant to Wiltshire and to the new policy.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.48.3 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Allow housing type and mix (including homes for older and vulnerable people) to come forward as the market dictates.
2	Set targets and requirements for housing to meet the needs of vulnerable and older people on a Wiltshire wide basis.
3	Implement a supportive policy which encourages the provision of homes for

vulnerable and older people across Wiltshire.

5.48.4 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	+	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	0	0	0
Option 2	-	-	0	-	-	-/0	-/0	-	-	++/?	+	+	+	0	-	0	+
Option 3	-	-	0	-	-	-/0	-/0	-	-	++/?	+	+	+	0	-	0	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.48.5 The policy options being considered encourage the provision of homes for vulnerable and older people across Wiltshire and no significant adverse effects are considered likely through any of the three approaches. Policy options do however promote development and therefore there is potential for some limited impacts on biodiversity, land and soil resources, water resources, flood risk, heritage assets, landscapes and transport. These effects will very much depend on the scale of any new development, sustainability standards of new buildings and location of development.

5.48.6 Wiltshire's ageing population, which is above the national average, is acknowledged as a key sustainability issue in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. It is therefore justifiable to address this issue through a specific policy in the Core Strategy in order to ensure provision of housing and specialist accommodation. Options 2 and 3 both strongly support the provision of this specialist accommodation for older people and therefore likely to achieve significant benefits. Option 1, however, makes no requirement for this type of accommodation, instead leaving it to the market to dictate and may not meet the growing needs of the community.

5.48.7 The assessment has noted some uncertainty over Option 2. If targets were set for this provision it may result in greater benefits than Option 3 but it may also place undue viability constraints on developers which may jeopardise a range of housing provision for the wider community. Without further knowledge of what targets and further requirements are sought this remains uncertain at this stage.

5.48.8 Benefits are particularly likely through Options 2 and 3 relating to health and wellbeing, social inclusion and accessibility to the types of services and facilities that will be needed by older people. Requirement for new development to be located within or close to principal settlements and market towns will also allow accessibility to a range of services and facilities, including public transport. Option 1, however, provides no certainty of this provision although some provision is still likely.

5.48.9 The policy focuses new development in principal settlements and market towns and states that development will be permitted 'outside but adjacent to defined limits of development at the principal settlements and market towns' in exceptional circumstances. The sustainability appraisal questions this focus on the larger settlements because there is a need for such accommodation in smaller settlements and in rural areas. The need for accommodation in smaller settlements may not be 'exceptional' and would allow older people in more rural areas to stay closer to home. Consideration of amended policy wording is recommended.

5.48.10 The policy now encourages the provision of Lifetime Homes Standards rather than requiring provision. The benefits of this new approach are potentially not as great compared to requiring all homes to incorporate Lifetime Homes standards. However, overall sustainability benefits can still be expected to be favourable overall by allowing older people to stay in their homes and in their communities with related housing and health and wellbeing benefits. The previous sustainability appraisal of the original Lifetime Homes policy made the following comments

- Lifetime Homes standards enable elderly people or those with disabilities to remain in their homes...which enable easy adaptation of properties to wheelchair use. Therefore people are able to stay in their communities and are not forced to move to find suitable accommodation. The policy particularly addresses the needs of the high elderly population in the District.
- Although only a small amount of development will be permitted in the smaller settlements, there is a risk that elderly people who can no longer drive may become isolated in more rural communities which do not have extensive public transport to allow easy access to a wider range of facilities. Generally very positive for this objective and will have immediate short term effect as well as long term effect but the comments above should be considered.
- It is recognised that incorporating the required design features does bring about additional costs but this is offset by the saving on the need for more expensive adaptations and the increased marketability of the property. Positive effect although the policy may encourage people to stay in accommodation which is larger than required to meet their needs which may affect the flow of family sized accommodation available.
- Full wheelchair access and the provision of dedicated wheelchair size parking means that people are able to leave their homes to access facilities.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.48.11 No significant adverse effects noted.

5.48.12 In order to maximise the sustainability benefits of this policy, as discussed above, consideration should be given to:

- i) addressing accommodation needs outside of principal settlements and market towns, especially in rural areas
- ii) setting a target, based on evidence, for provision of accommodation that will not place undue viability constraints on developers.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.48.13 Option 1 gives no certainty of provision and should be discounted. Options 2 and 3 have very similar sustainability outcomes and there is no clear preferred option. However, consideration of setting a target for provision may achieve greater sustainability benefits and this will allow greater control of provision to meet needs as evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Wiltshire.

5.48.14 It is recommended that the policy addresses the accommodation needs of people living outside principal settlements and market towns as discussed in this section.

5.49 Core Policy 47 – Meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers

5.49.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Gypsy and Traveller communities have enough pitches in order to meet their housing needs.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.49.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Provide the 49 permanent pitches identified in the Wiltshire & Swindon Gypsy and Traveller needs assessment 2006 for the period 2006-2011 and no new transit provision
2	Provide the 85 permanent pitches identified in the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy for the period 2006-2011 and 27 new transit pitches
3	Roll the assessment of need forward for the period 2011 – 2021 and provide 82 permanent pitches and 25 new transit pitches to reflect need at 2011.

5.49.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-/?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	+	0	+	?	0	?	0	0
Option 2	-	-/?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	+	0	+	?	0	?	0	0
Option 3	-/?	-/?	?	?	?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	++	+	++	?	0	-/?	0	0

5.49.4 A review took place in November 2011 of the 2006 Wiltshire and Swindon Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA). Following this review, a need for 44 additional residential pitches over the five years (2011-2016) in Wiltshire has been identified at November 2011. The period of supply from April 2006 to 2011 was taken into consideration. A projection of anticipated need between 2016-2021 has also been identified with approximately 38 residential pitches required, which is the basis for Option 3, above.

5.49.5 The assessment has noted that the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites has the potential for a range of impacts on the environmental sustainability objectives, including biodiversity assets, land and soil resources, waste, water, flood risk, air quality and environmental pollution, historic environment and landscapes, and that the more sites that are allocated the more likelihood of impacts in some locations, with the possibility of adverse cumulative effects if some sites are located in the same area. However, the policy background text states that ‘the preference in meeting the residual requirement in the future is for small, private sites’ and therefore it is considered that any adverse impacts are likely to be limited and at a local scale.

5.49.6 The Core Strategy does not allocate sites and this has meant that the actual effects are very uncertain and this is highlighted throughout the sustainability appraisal. The likely effects of individual proposed gypsy and traveller sites will be established in a Sustainability Appraisal Report produced alongside a future Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation DPD.

5.49.7 It is considered likely that a policy that meets the pitch requirements of the gypsy and traveller community will be the most sustainable option overall rather than policies that do not propose to meet this need.

What significant effects are envisaged?

Option 1

5.49.8 No significant effects are envisaged as the option tries to address the housing needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community. The option however does not at this stage allocate any sites and therefore many of the effects that may occur at this stage of sustainability appraisal are uncertain. However negative effects could be expected with respect to biodiversity and land and soil. Positive effects can be expected with respect to housing and inclusion as the policy aims to meet the housing needs of a specific community.

Option 2

- 5.49.9 No significant effects are envisaged as the option tries to address the housing needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community however as the option provides for a greater number of pitches the impacts could be greater. The option however does not at this stage allocate any sites as such and therefore many of the effects that may occur at this stage of sustainability appraisal are uncertain. However negative effects could be experienced with respect to biodiversity and land and soil. Positive effects can be experienced with respect to housing and inclusion as the policy aims to meet the housing needs of a specific community.

Option 3

- 5.49.10 No significant adverse effects envisaged. Significant positive effects are envisaged with respect to the housing and social inclusion sustainability objectives as this option provides for the provision of gypsy and traveller pitches into the future rather than just to 2011. The option however does not at this stage allocate any sites as such and therefore many of the effects that may occur at this stage of sustainability appraisal are uncertain.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.49.11 The environmental impact of the options are more likely to be reduced at the site allocation stage by ensuring that any policy addresses potential issues highlighted that at the moment are uncertain. These are with respect to biodiversity, land and soil resources, water, flood risk, air quality and environmental pollution, climatic, heritage, landscape, community and transport. These factors would need to be mitigated, with respect to all options and cannot be identified until sites are proposed. Until sites are put forward it is difficult to determine the likely impacts.
- 5.49.12 The policy will allow many potential effects highlighted in this assessment to be mitigated through the following required criteria listed in the policy:
- i. No significant barriers to development exist in terms of flooding, poor drainage, poor ground stability or proximity to other hazardous land or installation where conventional housing would not be suitable.
 - ii. It is served by a safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access. The proposal should not result in significant hazard to other road users.
 - iii. The site can be properly serviced and is supplied with essential services, such as water, power, sewerage and drainage, and waste disposal. The site must also be large enough to provide adequate vehicle parking, including circulation space, along with residential amenity and play areas.
 - iv. It is located in or near to existing settlements within reasonable distance of a range of local services and community facilities, in particular schools and essential health services. (This will be defined in detail in the methodology outlined in the Site Allocations DPD.)

v. It will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the amenity of neighbouring properties, and is sensitively designed to mitigate any impact on its surroundings.

5.49.13 The likely effects of individual proposed gypsy and traveller sites will be established in a Sustainability Appraisal Report produced alongside a future Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation DPD.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.49.14 In terms of significant effects, Option 3 is considered to be more likely to give rise to a greater number of adverse impacts against the environmental objectives. However, this is because it delivers more gypsy and traveller pitches and looks to provide sites into the future to 2021. As the option provides for a longer time period however it scores positively with respect to housing and social inclusion as its aim meets potential housing need and inclusion to a greater degree than option 1 and 2 which only provided need to 2011.

5.49.15 It is therefore recommended that option 3 should be taken forward as this provides for the needs of a specific community. However when allocating sites, mitigation needs to be considered with respect to biodiversity, land/soil, water, flood risk, air quality, climatic, heritage, landscape, community and transport to ensure any proposals achieve high sustainability standards.

5.50 Core Policy 48 – Supporting rural life

5.50.1 This policy aims to support the rural way of life in a progressive manner that promotes modern agricultural practices, appropriate diversification of the rural economy, provision of local services and the sustainable growth of the tourism sector. The policy is based on the following key objectives:

- Protecting the countryside and maintaining its local distinctiveness
- Supporting the sensitive reuse of built assets to help meet local needs
- Supporting improved access between places and to services
- Supporting the community in taking ownership of local services.

What options were considered for this policy area in June 2011?

5.50.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy as proposed to support rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices, appropriate diversification of the rural economy, provision of local services and the sustainable growth of the tourism sector.

2	Do not include a specific policy on rural life in the Core Strategy but instead rely on other policies that do not specifically address rural issues.
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5.50.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+/?	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	++	++
Option 2	-	-	0	-	0	-	-	-/?	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.50.4 The proposed policy (Option 1) will have a wide range of benefits overall against the majority of sustainability objectives and significant benefits for provision of rural services, facilities and infrastructure, economic growth and employment. The policy supports proposals that seek to retain and expand local businesses in rural areas, farm diversification, broadband provision, improving accessibility to services and facilities, community ownership and new shops. This will help increase social inclusion and accessibility and allow rural residents to get around easier, especially those without a car.

5.50.5 Many of these benefits will be long-term and through support for local facilities such as shops and pubs and improved transport infrastructure, this will attract other businesses and new residents to rural areas. Option 2, which would rely on other Core Strategy policies to support rural development, would not achieve these benefits and would be very likely to lose jobs to larger settlements where most new growth is directed towards. This would result in more local shops, pubs and businesses closing due to lack of custom.

5.50.6 The policy does not actually allocate land for development and therefore it is positive against many of the environmental objectives. Most growth that results from implementation of the Core Strategy will occur in larger settlements and therefore only a relatively small amount of development will be affected by this policy.

5.50.7 The policy supports the re-use of existing buildings, development within or adjacent to villages and development that is respectful to rural character and that will not have a detrimental impact on the countryside. This is likely to be beneficial in terms of biodiversity, landscape and heritage protection and by supporting development within or adjacent to settlements, will reduce the need to travel, give better access to public transport and avoid adverse impacts of development in the open countryside.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.50.8 There are a number of recommendations for improving this policy and maximising the benefits highlighted. The policy makes reference to ‘protection of the countryside and maintenance of its local distinctiveness’, ‘meet sustainable development objectives’ and for development ‘not to be detrimental to the local environment’. It may be more beneficial to highlight the landscape, biodiversity and heritage value of much of Wiltshire’s countryside and require new development not only to mitigate any adverse effects but to lead to enhancements overall.
- 5.50.9 There may be some opportunities for developing brownfield sites in some villages and these areas should be prioritised to increase self-containment and aid in the remediation of land contamination. The policy could also address the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from development; this land will play a vital role in supporting sustainable farming and food production.
- 5.50.10 Public transport accessibility is a key issue in rural areas such as Wiltshire, often preventing or making it harder for older people and those without access to a car from getting to services and facilities. The policy as written refers to improving accessibility between towns and villages and mentions transport but does not specifically mention public transport. Better public transport services are required to allow people to get to larger centres to carry out day-to-day activities such as food shopping and this should be addressed in this policy.
- 5.50.11 Lastly, the policy supports the re-use of existing buildings to allow businesses to expand and one of the key objectives is ‘the sensitive reuse of heritage assets to help meet local needs’. This is an important issue – Wiltshire contains many historic agricultural buildings which are redundant and the centres of many villages are designated as Conservation Areas or have many listed buildings. It is very important that new development, re-use or conversion protects the character of these buildings and their settings and will actually lead to an enhancement.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.50.12 Option 1 is the most favourable in sustainability terms as it will lead to a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits for Wiltshire’s rural areas. Option 2 will not address the specific issues faced by rural communities and could lead to development in unsustainable locations that lead to significant adverse effects on rural character, local economies, employment and environmental assets.

5.51 Core Policy 49 – Protection of services and community facilities

- 5.51.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal. No amendments have been made to policy relating to the **protection** of community facilities and services. However, policy relating to the **provision of new** community facilities and services (core policy 48 of the South Wilts Core Strategy) has not been retained in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Therefore the original assessment has been revisited as not allowing for new services and facilities may affect the assessment. The following amendments have been made:

South Wilts sustainability objective	Original score	Revised score
1. Social inclusion for all	+	-
3. Improve health and well being of population	+	-
5. Improve and protect accessibility to all services and facilities	++	-
21. Maintain and enhance the viability/vitality of existing businesses and town centres	0	-

5.51.2 Wiltshire Core Strategy policy does not provide for new community services and facilities, only the protection of existing facilities. This will lead to adverse effects in the medium to long term as populations grow and pressures on existing services and facilities increase. This will adversely affect social inclusion, health and wellbeing and allowing for the improvement of existing services because they may not be able to cope with additional demand. Viability/vitality of existing businesses and town centres will also be affected if new services and facilities are not provided for.

5.51.3 The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.51.4 Although a predominantly wealthy area, there are still areas of urban and rural deprivation where access to facilities creates social exclusion. This policy sets out a robust framework to protect existing facilities and a clear framework for the provision of new facilities. This policy will have long-term social benefits with more minor positive impacts for transport and climate change through reducing the need to travel.

Mitigation/enhancement recommendations

5.51.5 It is not known why policy relating to provision of new services and facilities has been omitted from the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The original South Wilts sustainability appraisal described this policy as setting out a “clear framework for the provision of new facilities”. Policy should be amended to provide for new services and facilities to cope with future housing and population growth.

5.52 Core Policy 50 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.52.1 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Do nothing. Do not include any new or revised policy on biodiversity. Save or reuse the existing policies where these are available.

2	Spatial approach – Adopt a spatial approach, mapping out ecologically important assets across the county and applying stronger policies to these areas.
3	Improved policy approach – Create new policy and replace existing policy where necessary. Policy to be worded in a flexible manner that allows the strategic objective ‘ <i>Protect and enhance our natural environment</i> ’ to be met without conflicting unavoidably with other strategic objectives or frustrating the planning process.
4	Aspirational policy approach – The strictest policy option to achieve the natural environment objective, putting the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity above all other objectives

5.52.2 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	?	?
Option 2	+/?	0	0	0/+	0/+	+	+	+	+/?	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
Option 3	++/?	0	0	+	+/?	++/?	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Option 4	++	-/?	0	++	+/?	++	+	+	++	-/?	-	-	-	+/- ?	+	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

Option 1

5.52.3 No significant effects envisaged. However, existing saved policies are shown to give only partial protection to biodiversity and do not actively promote enhancement through development or other means. This will have likely negative effects against many of the environmental objectives and will not help achieve the economic and social objectives.

Option 2

5.52.4 No significant effects but positive or neutral effects likely overall. This option relies on up-to-date information and this information being shown on maps. Areas of Wiltshire where up-to-date information is available are likely to receive better protection of biodiversity than other areas; development proposals in those areas without up-to-date information, and that might not be included on a map, would be more difficult to defend.

Option 3

5.52.5 This option is likely to give benefits across the range of sustainability objectives. No significant adverse effects are envisaged but significant benefits relating to:

- protection and enhancement of biodiversity
- improving air quality and minimising other forms of environmental pollution
- protecting and enhancing the character and quality of Wiltshire's landscapes.

5.52.6 There is likely to be improved protection of existing biodiversity assets and more likelihood of habitat creation and enhancement, particularly through new development. This will have indirect benefits for improving the quality of water resources, reducing flood risk, climate change mitigation and adaptation and protecting heritage assets.

5.52.7 There are likely to be significant benefits in terms of air quality and protecting urban and rural landscapes, particularly if linked with an effective, high quality and multifunctional GI network.

5.52.8 This option is most likely to lead to social and economic benefits of all the options considered, but these are not considered significant at this stage. It gives stronger environmental protection but not at the expense of economic growth and therefore housing and employment growth will still take place. However, it is uncertain how the additional restoration and enhancement measures required of developers will affect viability of some development.

Option 4

5.52.9 Option 4 is rigid in its requirement for no damage to county wildlife sites, no loss of BAP habitat or ecological functionality/connectivity and no disturbance to wildlife. This means that this option is strong in environmental terms but conflicts against many of the social and economic objectives. Significant benefits relating to:

- protection and enhancement of biodiversity
- improving air quality and minimising other forms of environmental pollution
- protecting and enhancing the character and quality of Wiltshire's landscapes
- sustainable use and management of water resources.

5.52.10 This option would make it difficult to find available land for housing and employment growth and this would indirectly affect provision of other essential infrastructure and key services/facilities. However, it has been acknowledged that a policy that is strongest in protection of the natural environment may attract more business, new residents and tourists with consequent benefits for the local economy. This would depend on whether enough land could also be made available for economic growth.

5.52.11 Less economic growth and less housing/employment may reduce travel need and therefore reduce impacts of road traffic. These impacts are difficult to predict but overall, this option would restrict economic growth and lead to a steady decline of business development and expansion in Wiltshire; in the long-term, economic decline would not provide suitable conditions or funding for biodiversity protection or enhancement.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.52.12 The only option that is considered likely to lead to significant adverse effects is option 4 and that relates to the objective relating to economic growth. It would also adversely affect provision of housing, jobs, infrastructure and other key services/facilities with indirect effects on social inclusion and cohesion.
- 5.52.13 Option 4 would need to be amended to accept that it will not always be possible to avoid all impacts on biodiversity and wildlife, and that in some locations compensation will be needed for loss or damage. Housing and employment development is always likely to lead to some adverse impacts but many impacts can be effectively mitigated through location, design and use of landscaping and buffer zones.
- 5.52.14 The sustainability appraisal recommends that Core Strategy policy addresses the potential impacts of climate change in terms of loss/changes to habitat and effects on species, but also potential benefits to biodiversity from a changing climate. It should also be acknowledged that protection and enhancement of biodiversity can play an important role in mitigating our effects on climate change and adapting to climate change through for example reducing flood risk and provision of new habitat that will help certain species adversely affected by climate change.
- 5.52.15 In the proposed Core Strategy policy, the necessity to protect and enhance sites of national and international importance should also be stressed – at present the policy text refers to local sites and then specifically to Salisbury Plain SPA and New Forest SPA.
- 5.52.16 This report has highlighted specific issues relating to effects on biodiversity in each community area and the relevant community area sections should be referred to.
- 5.52.17 The policy or supporting text could stress the important role protection of the natural environment has in promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy outdoor recreation. This policy could show clear links with a GI policy that includes provision of recreational open space and encourages sport, walking and cycling that can reduce many health-related problems. It should also be acknowledged that future economic growth, particularly housing development, is likely to provide much of the funding for future habitat creation and enhancement, and the funding for many multi-functional GI services.
- 5.52.18 The HRA Report has noted that potential effects associated with increased recreational pressure are acknowledged in Core Policy 50 and that the preferred approach is to manage the potential for increased recreational pressure through management measures, with Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space only to be provided in exceptional circumstances. A Green Infrastructure Strategy is also under development and the HRA considers that the combination of these measures will

provide sufficient mitigation to ensure that adverse impacts on European sites are avoided by diverting pressure to other locations.

5.52.19 The HRA Report also noted that text in the Core Strategy relating to the Corsham (core policy 11) and Bradford-on-Avon (core policy 7) Community Areas states that all development will be planned and delivered in accordance with Wiltshire Council guidance to maintain the integrity of the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The HRA recommends that the Core Strategy could go further by committing the Council to developing a process for ensuring that developments within 4km of the SAC will not have a significant adverse effect on it and that such a statement could be included in Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity.' Such a statement would enable the HRA to conclude that the Core Strategy will not give rise to significant adverse effects on the SAC.

5.52.20 To take account of the HRA recommendations, additional text has been added to the supporting text to this policy as follows:

'Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy'

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.52.21 Option 3 is considered the most favourable option and is recommended for inclusion in the Core Strategy. Achieving sustainable development is only possible if policies are able to provide environmental, social and economic benefits. This option will not significantly conflict with social and economic objectives in the way option 4 is likely to, and will not inflict an unnecessary burden on developers that may make some developments unviable.

5.52.22 Option 3 provides a strong and proactive approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement that is a significant improvement on existing policies across Wiltshire, but also allows the provision of essential housing, health, community, employment and other social infrastructure that will be essential for maintaining sustainable communities across the county.

5.52.23 The sustainability appraisal recommends that the Core Strategy policy addresses the potential impacts of climate change in terms of loss/changes to habitat and effects on species, but also potential benefits to biodiversity from a changing climate.

5.52.24 It is recommended that the policy makes reference to the important role protection of the natural environment has in promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy outdoor recreation. This policy should show clear links with a GI policy that includes provision of recreational open space and encourages sport, walking and cycling that can reduce many health-related problems.

5.53 Core Policy 51 - Landscape

5.53.1 This policy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance Wiltshire's distinctive landscape character. The term 'landscape' is used to refer to both the built, historic and natural environment in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.53.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Criteria-based policy to be included in the Core Strategy seeking to protect, conserve and enhance landscape character. Include reference to the existing Landscape Character Assessments and to landscape setting of towns and villages. Include specific reference to AONB Management Plans, and also refer to the 'setting' of AONBs. Include specific reference to the need to protect tranquillity. Do not refer to Green Belt, rural buffers, or best and most versatile agricultural land in the policy. Further work needed to establish whether or not there is sufficient justification to maintain Special Landscape Areas (or parts thereof).
2	Include a specific policy in the Core Strategy relating to the Green Belt and seeking to protect specific rural buffers. Also mention the need to protect best and most versatile agricultural land. (This would be in addition to a criteria-based landscape policy, as described in option A above).
3	Do not include a policy on local landscape character in the Core Strategy. Instead rely on saved Local Plan policies relating to landscape protection in general. Do not include specific reference to AONBs or tranquillity. There is no specific reference to tranquillity in the current Local/District Plans, so this option would mean that there would be no reference to tranquillity in Local Planning policy (although the West Wiltshire District Plan does include policy C35 on light pollution).

5.53.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	++/?	-	+/-	0	0	0	+	+/-	-
Option 2	++	++	0	+	+	++	+	+	++	-	+/-	+	0	-	+	+/-	-
Option 3	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	+/-	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

Significant positive effects

- 5.53.4 Options 1 and 2 promote use of a criteria-based approach and offer significantly stronger protection and enhancement of landscape character than Option 3. They are both likely to lead to significant benefits for biodiversity and protection/enhancement of a range of wildlife habitats. They will also lead to greater protection and enhancement of Wiltshire's urban and rural landscapes, much of which is subject to national and local landscape designations.
- 5.53.5 Option 2 would include all the elements of Option 1, but would also include specific protection of best and most versatile agricultural land, rural buffers and green belts. These additional elements may be inconsistent with PPS7, PPS12 and the draft NPPF and therefore this option could be argued to be an unreasonable alternative policy. However, as it stands, Option 2 would lead to significant benefits in terms of protecting greenfield land from development, possibly encouraging additional development of brownfield sites, and reducing impacts of coalescence, noise and light pollution on smaller settlements that are located near to growth areas, through protection of rural buffers.
- 5.53.6 Option 2 is likely to offer much stronger protection of the natural environment and this is reflected in the additional significant benefits highlighted against environmental objectives in the assessment.

Significant negative effects

- 5.53.7 The only option likely to lead to significant adverse effects is Option 2. The additional protection given to landscapes, particularly regarding rural buffers and best and most versatile agricultural land that is not required by national planning policy may significantly reduce land available for housing and employment growth. This option is possibly too restrictive and may restrict housing and employment provision in the key growth areas.
- 5.53.8 PPS7 states that local planning policy should not include "rigid local [landscape] designations that may unduly restrict acceptable, sustainable development and the economic activity that underpins the vitality of rural areas".
- 5.53.9 It is important to protect the separate identity and local character of individual settlements and this requirement is included in the decision-aiding criteria within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. It is also dealt with effectively in core policy 1 'Settlement Strategy' of the Core Strategy. With Option 2, the significance of any effects would depend on to what extent growth was restricted, how this might affect the local economy in the medium to long term and whether appropriate land was available in other locations where coalescence was less of an issue. This is uncertain at this stage.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.53.10 The significant adverse effects noted, where a policy that is too restrictive may prevent housing and employment growth in certain areas, can be reduced by adopting a policy that attempts to find the correct balance between protecting and enhancing landscape character and allowing growth in appropriate locations. Issues of coalescence can be identified within growth areas and specific local measures put in place to prevent or reduce any impacts.
- 5.53.11 It may be possible to protect rural buffers in certain locations where there is a recognised need. This would allow the separate characteristics of certain rural settlements to be maintained and would be unlikely to place significant restrictions on growth generally in Wiltshire. Neighbourhood planning may provide a mechanism to achieve this where it is supported by appropriate landscape / heritage / environmental evidence and a future Landscape Strategy for Wiltshire should also help to inform this work.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.53.12 Option 1 is the favoured option considering the range of sustainability objectives. It would allow an appropriate level of landscape protection and enhancement whilst allowing housing and employment growth to meet needs identified in the Core Strategy. This option is not considered likely to lead to any significant adverse effects.
- 5.53.13 Option 2 would potentially lead to greater environmental benefits but would not allow a sufficient level of housing and economic growth to meet recognised needs. Option 3 is not a realistic way forward because existing policies are inconsistent across the former districts and these would not offer the level of protection to landscapes in order to deal with the levels of growth proposed.
- 5.53.14 As highlighted in the draft NPPF, there are economic and other benefits of protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, especially for the purposes of food production. Because of Wiltshire's rural nature and relative lack of brownfield land available for development, the loss of agricultural land is inevitable to meet Wiltshire's housing and employment needs. However, seeking to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality (except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations) should be a priority for the Core Strategy.
- 5.53.15 It has been shown in the community area sections of this report that many of the strategic employment and housing options have land available of a poorer agricultural quality where development could be focused and this has been highlighted under mitigation measures. Building at higher densities on land of higher agricultural quality – as long as this in itself would not adversely affect landscapes – is another consideration to reduce loss of higher quality land.

5.54 Core Policy 52 – Green Infrastructure

5.54.1 This is a new policy that combines core policy 35 (Green Infrastructure) and core policy 36 (Green Infrastructure development management policy) of the Core Strategy consultation document of June 2011. It requires proposals for development to make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire’s Green Infrastructure network and to ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained.

5.54.2 The policy states that development that would adversely affect the integrity and value of the existing green infrastructure network, prejudice the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy objectives, or provide inadequate green infrastructure mitigation, will not be permitted. Proposals for major development are to be accompanied by an audit of the existing green infrastructure within and around the site and a statement demonstrating how this will be retained and enhanced through the development process.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.54.3 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Include core policy 23 of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy within the Wiltshire Core Strategy without substantial additions or amendment. This option would make no reference to the Wiltshire GI standards, and no requirement for a GI audit for major developments. It would not include specific policy support for green infrastructure policies and initiatives that may come forward.
2	Amend the text of core policy 23 of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, and include the amended policy in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The most significant amendments would be the inclusion of reference to the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure standards, requirement to undertake a GI audit for major development, and a statement that green infrastructure projects and initiatives would be supported (and contributions required where appropriate).

5.54.4 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Option 2	++/?	+	0	++	++	+	+	+	++	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.54.5 No adverse effects are envisaged with either option. A number of significant benefits are associated with Option 2. There are also benefits through Option 1 but to a lesser degree as this option focuses on open space protection; it makes no reference to the Wiltshire GI standards, no requirement for a GI audit for major developments and does not include specific policy support for green infrastructure policies and initiatives that may come forward.
- 5.54.6 The Sustainability Appraisal Report of June 2011 noted that inclusion of a comprehensive GI policy will have significant benefits for wildlife and habitat protection and enhancement, landscapes and a wide range of other benefits including:
- climate change mitigation and adaptation
 - recreation, sport and children's play
 - sustainable transport routes
 - reducing noise and air pollution
 - sustainable drainage, flood storage and urban cooling
 - relaxation and quiet contemplation
 - a wide range of opportunities for engagement and active citizenship
 - protection and enhancement of the water environment.
- 5.54.7 The sustainability appraisal has noted a number of likely significant effects in terms of water resources and flood risk. The GI network will help protect and enhance watercourses and other waterbodies, floodplains and other large areas of open space which are vital to protect water quality and reduce the risk of flooding. GI provision can also allow opportunities for flood alleviation measures and reduce surface water runoff through reducing the loss of permeable surfaces.
- 5.54.8 Another significant benefit is for health and wellbeing because of the wide range of anticipated benefits including allowing opportunities for people to access nature, walk, cycle, horse ride and take part in a range of sport, recreation and leisure pursuits. A GI network can include sustainable transport routes that not only provide safe and accessible routes linking town centres and the countryside, but also increase opportunities for healthy exercise and indirectly take traffic off the roads, thereby improving air quality.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.54.9 No adverse effects were considered likely. It is possible that benefits could be maximised if consideration was also given to requiring not only major developments to complete an audit of existing green infrastructure within and around sites but also certain other smaller developments in some areas. A number of smaller developments in a particular area can have cumulative impacts on biodiversity, water resources, landscapes etc and the size of these developments means they are unlikely to significantly contribute to a wider GI network on their own.
- 5.54.10 Smaller developments may not have a significant impact on their own but together they might. This may be a consideration in areas of particular environmental sensitivity or in regeneration areas where a number of small sites are being considered for development. An example is Corsham where a number of ex-MOD brownfield sites are known to be potential sites for development and there are particular issues with impacts on bats associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon bats SAC and Box mine SSSI located to the south west.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.54.11 Option 2 is the more favourable in sustainability terms. It is more comprehensive, requires the protection, enhancement and incorporation of a wider range of GI assets and gives consideration to a much wider range of issues such as health and wellbeing, climate change and air quality. Option 1 is more restrictive and would not provide a policy link for the development of a new set of standards through the Wiltshire GI strategy.

5.55 Core Policy 53 – Wilts and Berks and Thames and Severn Canals

- 5.55.1 This is a new policy that seeks to respond to community concerns expressed in consultation responses. It covers the protection of the historic alignments of the Wilts & Berks and Thames & Severn canals.

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.55.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Continue to save existing policies relating to canal restoration.
2	Include a new policy on canal restoration in the Core Strategy to replace the existing Core Strategy policies. Policy to cover protection of the historic alignments of the Wilts & Berks and Thames & Severn canals. Protection and enhancement of the Kennet and Avon canal and potential impacts of residential moorings to be covered in supporting text.

5.55.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/?	-/?	0	-	-/?	0	0	-	-/?	0	0	0	0	0	-/?	0	0
Option 2	+/?	-/?	0	+/?	+/?	0	0	+	+/?	+/0	+	0	0	0	+	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.55.4 No significant effects, either positive or negative, have been found through the assessment. The proposed Core Strategy policy will likely have many more benefits than the existing 'saved' policies as it offers a comprehensive vehicle to promote canal restoration whilst recognising the ecological, landscape and water related concerns that are associated with canal restoration.

5.55.5 The assessment has noted that current policies are inconsistent and do not sufficiently recognise the potential environmental impacts of canal restoration work, including impacts on ecology, landscape, and water resources. In many cases, important wildlife habitats have evolved along the old course of a canal and consideration needs to be given to this before restoration takes place. Impacts on ecology and landscape are likely to be cumulative as different sections are restored and completed.

5.55.6 Canal restoration also poses particular concerns for water resources and this was brought up in the last consultation exercise by the Environment Agency. Issues to consider include flood risk, water abstraction and water quality.

5.55.7 Other benefits noted in the assessment, although not likely to be significant, include the educational benefits of restoring important pieces of Wiltshire's heritage, provision of residential dwellings, opportunities for healthy exercise and sustainable transport, employment and tourism/visitor revenue for the local economy.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.55.8 The policy refers to 'adequate consideration' and 'sufficient consideration' of impacts. Further information is needed as to what will be required because the environmental impacts could be significant without a thorough assessment prior to work taking place. The policy should also take the opportunity to ensure that biodiversity is enhanced through the work that takes place, not just protected.

5.55.9 This policy gives substantial opportunities for health related benefits, particularly when canal restoration takes place near to residential development, by encouraging walking, cycling and access to the countryside. These benefits could be further explored in policy.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.55.10 Option 2 is the most favourable in sustainability terms as it offers a more consistent approach that will give greater social, economic and environmental benefits.

5.55.11 It is noted that the policy now takes account of comments received from the Environment Agency and includes reference to proposals demonstrating that potential impacts on flood risk, water resources (abstraction) and water quality have been fully assessed and taken into account.

5.56 Core Policy 54 – Cotswold Water Park

5.56.1 The demand for recreation and leisure development in the area is understood to be rising and development will come forward during the plan period to meet this demand. The Cotswold Water Park (CWP) is a changing landscape and a Vision and Implementation Plan has been developed to guide this change from an area of significant minerals extraction to a major recreation and tourism destination, particularly as minerals resources become exhausted and sites restored; core policy 54 is therefore intended to help manage this change in line with the Vision and Implementation Plan. Proposals for tourist accommodation will be assessed against Core Strategy policy 39 ‘Tourist development’.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.56.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Do nothing – continue to determine leisure and recreation applications in the Cotswold Water Park under existing saved policies
2	A leisure and recreation focussed policy with development contributing towards addressing the specific issues of the Cotswold Water Park including heritage, traffic, sustainability, landscape, communities, biodiversity, accessibility and economic opportunities. Tourist accommodation proposals within the Cotswold Water Park will be determined according to the tourism specific Core Strategy policy ‘Tourist development’.

5.56.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+/?	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	-	+	-	-	0	0	0	0
Option 2	+/?	-	0	-	-	-	-	-/?	-/?	+	++	+/?	++	+	-	++/?	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.56.4 Much of the Cotswold Water Park (CWP) is rural in nature and proposals for sports, recreation and leisure development are likely to have a wide range of impacts on the environment, local economy, local communities and local transport network, as highlighted in the appraisal. It has been noted that many individual developments that could be expected to come forward in the CWP, on their own would not lead to significant effects but the cumulative effects of several smaller developments in one area on landscape features, biodiversity, historic environment, water resources, flood risk, local communities and transport could be significant and these potential cumulative effects will have to be taken into account when proposals are considered.
- 5.56.5 The proposed Core Strategy policy focuses on and supports sports, leisure and recreation based development in order to manage anticipated transformation of the area into an informal recreation and leisure resource for Wiltshire residents and visitors. This is likely to have significant health related benefits, providing many opportunities for healthy exercise such as sport, walking and cycling. There will also be significant long-term benefits for the local economy from tourism and increased visitor numbers – this will help improve the viability of local businesses, attract inward investment to the area and provide jobs.
- 5.56.6 There are likely to be a number of conflicts through implementation of this policy which supports activities that can disturb wildlife and adversely affect landscape character, change the character of a relatively tranquil rural area through noise, light and air pollution and increase traffic volumes on local roads. At the same time, the policy also requires development to strengthen local landscape character, contribute towards enhancement of biodiversity, retain the character of individual settlements including the tranquillity of their settings and protect the Park’s built heritage. However, if this policy is successful in transforming the area to an informal recreation and leisure resource these other requirements may be difficult to achieve.
- 5.56.7 The proposed policy has been compared against existing policies for the CWP, contained within the North Wiltshire Local Plan. Policy NE8 restricts development for the protection of biodiversity, however it is worth noting that this policy simply repeats other policies in respect of biodiversity without adding any further protection in the CWP; core policy 54 goes further in this respect, requiring development to contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity in the CWP.
- 5.56.8 Tourist development has been carefully controlled by the general tourism policy TM1, which has successfully prevented the creation of unwanted new holiday homes away

from existing settlements; while it is not intended that core policy 54 would replace that policy, the in-combination effects with the preferred option for core policy 39 should be considered, as that policy would replace TM1. The proposed core policy 39 would still direct tourism development towards towns and villages however it would also offer some relaxation of restrictions on development in the countryside where it meets a number of criteria. Core policy 39 could therefore result in an increased volume of development to which core policy 54 would be applied.

- 5.56.9 Existing local plan policies are silent on many of the sustainability issues relevant to the transformation of the CWP including heritage, landscape, accessibility, settlement character, tranquillity, building efficiency, transport and drainage; these issues are addressed in the proposed core policy 54. The existing policy framework (NE8 and TM1) may therefore be more restrictive in terms of the nature and volume of development likely to come forward but fails to address wider sustainability issues in the CWP. The proposed policy framework (core policy 39 and core policy 54) may support future development in the CWP, potentially including sites away from towns and villages, but does set sustainable criteria for such development.
- 5.56.10 The lack of consensus in the current policy frameworks of Wiltshire Council and Cotswold District Council is seen as a potential obstacle to the future development of the CWP; core policy 54 would move towards an aspiration for shared principles and policies to suitably control development across the CWP.
- 5.56.11 The proposed policy is strongly linked with proposed core policy 39 'Tourist Development'. Cotswold District has received a disproportionate amount of second homes, holiday homes and serviced accommodation and in areas of open countryside, and in sustainability terms this type of accommodation would be better located within or adjacent to existing settlements. Core policy 39 directs new development to Local Service Centres and villages which should help avoid inappropriate development in the open countryside.
- 5.56.12 One popular location for new development within the CWP is next to lakes and this may have significant cumulative flood risk concerns. Minerals extraction has had an effect on the hydrological regime within the CWP and can directly affect flood risk; indeed this is known to be an issue in the CWP where many residents experienced severe flooding in summer 2007. New development in the CWP will need to be planned carefully with this potentially changing flood risk situation in mind in order to avoid locating development in areas at risk. At the same time increasing flood risk is also an issue in relation to any further hard structure developed around the lakes, particularly in the floodplain; development will therefore also need to be carefully planned to ensure that it does not contribute to flooding problems in this area and core policy 54 includes a requirement for all development to include sustainable drainage systems.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.56.13 Although no likely significant adverse effects have been highlighted, a number of potential adverse effects which cumulatively could be significant have been noted.

The policy therefore sets out a series of criteria in respect of such anticipated effects which all development must meet; in most cases these criteria go beyond mitigating the effects of the individual development to secure positive effects of development in addition to the provision of leisure and recreation facilities.

- 5.56.14 Wherever possible, new development should be directed towards existing settlements where it can increase the viability of local businesses, increase vitality and take advantage of existing services, facilities and infrastructure, including public transport. It is understood that this would not be appropriate for some specific sports and leisure facilities eg water sports, but where possible these should be directed towards existing settlements as long as they are designed to enhance the character of that settlement.
- 5.56.15 The policy includes a criteria requiring all development to demonstrate high levels of sustainability which specifically includes: sustainable building design, resulting in improved energy and water efficiency and reduced CO₂ emissions; accessibility by sustainable transport modes, resulting in reduced air pollution and CO₂ emissions, and impacts; and sustainable drainage systems, resulting in reduced impacts upon flood risk and water quality. These measures will help reduce many of the anticipated effects against environmental objectives of new leisure and recreational facilities.
- 5.56.16 Overall, this is a positive policy that supports recreation and leisure growth within the CWP but there is potentially an inherent conflict between this type of development and requirements to enhance biodiversity, landscape and built heritage which must be managed. Given that this type of development will be integral to the transformation of the CWP in line with the Vision and Implementation Plan, the policy sets the environmental standards which this form of development must meet to avoid unacceptable adverse effects and make a positive contribution to the area, and will not be supported where it does not meet these standards.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.56.17 Whilst Option 1 offers a more restrictive approach likely to reduce impacts of leisure and recreational development in the CWP, Option 2 offers a more sustainable approach that will result in a greater range of benefits across all sustainability objectives. Option 2 offers significant economic and health related benefits for the local area. If the proposed policy could be strengthened further to increase the possibility of real environmental enhancement this would make the policy better in sustainability terms.

5.57 Core Policy 55 – Air quality

- 5.57.1 This is a new policy introduced since the Core Strategy consultation document of June 2011. It seeks to maintain the good air quality in the county and strives to deliver improvements in areas where air quality fails national targets. It requires development proposals to demonstrate that measures can be taken to effectively

mitigate emission levels in order to protect public health, environmental quality and amenity.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.57.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy as proposed
2	Do not include a specific air quality policy in the Core Strategy

5.57.3 These options were appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	?	0
Option 2	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	0	-	-	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.57.4 The assessment has not noted any likely significant effects through implementation of this policy. There are significant air quality issues in several town centres across Wiltshire, with designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in some areas, all of which are traffic related. The assessment has concluded that benefits are likely overall through the inclusion of a specific policy in the Core Strategy compared with not having a policy, but that the policy as it is currently worded could be improved to realise far greater benefits and to tackle areas of poor air quality in Wiltshire's town centres.

5.57.5 The supporting text to the policy recognises that 'improving air quality in these specific locations is difficult due to the increased use and reliance on private motor vehicles' and states that 'this strategy seeks to contribute to addressing this issue through a multifaceted approach which includes locating new development where there is a viable range of transport choices, seeking to boost the self-containment of settlements to reduce commuter flows and through seeking to utilize the benefits from managed development'. However, the policy text does not address mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel, nor does it address development

being located in sustainable locations, such as within or adjacent to existing urban areas, that can take advantage of good public transport services and encourage greater levels of walking and cycling.

- 5.57.6 The policy suggests mitigation measures such as 'landscaping, bunding...possible traffic management or highway improvements...abatement technology...traffic routing', however these measures are unlikely to 'effectively mitigate emission levels in order to protect public health, environmental quality and amenity' which is the requirement for development to be permitted. Additional emission levels generated by new development will not be effectively mitigated through those measures and thus development will not be permitted which will have significant effects on economic growth across Wiltshire. If development is permitted in any areas where air quality is a problem, these issues are likely to be exacerbated.
- 5.57.7 New development is likely to increase traffic levels in and through settlements where it takes place and therefore an air quality policy needs to require measures that deal with traffic growth, reducing the need to travel and resulting in a significant modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. There are significant links between this policy and other Core Strategy policies that promote sustainable transport and that promote development in sustainable locations and these links could be acknowledged further to achieve greater benefits.
- 5.57.8 Promoting development that is mixed-use and in more sustainable locations will have biodiversity and landscape benefits and there are significant benefits likely from reducing traffic levels and improving air quality in terms of economic growth and tourism, social inclusion, protecting heritage assets within town centres and improving health. Poor air quality is a major cause of certain health complaints and allowing greater opportunities for walking and cycling will also improve health.
- 5.57.9 The HRA Report accompanying the Core Strategy has noted that potential impacts associated with air quality are an issue at the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC which falls under the management plan for the Cotswolds AONB and that Core Policy 55 sets out measures that may be required to contribute to the air quality strategy for Wiltshire. It recommends that this policy identifies the role of Low Emission Strategies (Defra 2010) as a way of tackling transport related emissions and also considers the potential for air quality impacts on European sites to be consistent with Core Policy 25 in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy. It also recommends that policy is amended to state that assessment will be required for new industrial processes located within 10km of a European site.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.57.10 No likely significant adverse effects have been noted because the policy is positive in promoting measures to mitigate emission levels. However, the suggested measures are unlikely to effectively mitigate emissions from new development or resolve current problems that are mainly within town centres.
- 5.57.11 The policy could include measures that are suggested in the supporting text in terms of locating new development where there is a viable range of transport choices, seeking to boost the self-containment of settlements to reduce commuter flows and through seeking to utilise the benefits from managed development where particular

problems occur. There should be links to other Core Strategy policies that promote sustainable transport and development in sustainable locations.

5.57.12 As highlighted in the assessment, the policy may have impacts on economic growth in towns such as Devizes, Bradford on Avon, Marlborough and Westbury which have AQMAs designated because it will not permit developments that 'by virtue of their scale, nature or location are likely to exacerbate existing areas of poor air quality'. Housing and employment growth is needed in such settlements and that is why introducing measures that effectively reduce the need to travel and result in changes of transport mode will be especially important.

5.57.13 To take account of the HRA recommendations, supporting text to policy 55 has now been added to mitigate any potential effects on European sites as follows:

'Development which could potentially impact upon Natura 2000 sites through contributions to aerial deposition e.g. industrial process within 10km of a SAC, will require an assessment of the likely impacts in accordance with published guidance. Where mitigation is required this may be delivered through a Local Emissions Strategy'

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.57.14 Option 1 is considered the most favourable option in sustainability terms because it addresses the problem of poor air quality that is affecting several of Wiltshire's towns. Not addressing this issue through policy could lead to exacerbated problems and further AQMAs designated in settlements that do not currently have a known problem.

5.57.15 It is recommended that the policy text takes account of further mitigation measures suggested in this section regarding the location of development to reduce the need to travel and promotion of sustainable modes of travel. It is acknowledged that these issues are dealt with in other Core Strategy policies however there should be clear links to those policies if this policy can succeed in effectively reducing emissions resulting from new development.

5.58 Core Policy 56 – Contaminated land

5.58.1 This is a new policy introduced since the Core Strategy consultation document of June 2011. The policy requires that all development, which either because of the nature or location may be on or adjacent to land or water affected by historic contamination, will overcome this barrier to development by demonstrating the measures to be taken to help mitigate these impacts. Developers will be required to demonstrate that the development site is, or will be, made suitable for the proposed final use and will need to provide one or more of the following documents:

- Detailed site history identifying possibly contaminative uses.
- Site Characterisation: The nature and extent of any contamination and the hazards and risks posed.
- Detailed Remediation scheme: Including methodology and quality assurance.

- Methodology to report unexpected contamination.
- Methodology to ensure verification of remedial works.
- Details of long term monitoring and maintenance proposals (where necessary).

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.58.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects as described in Section 2. Further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/ background papers:

Policy option	Description
1	Adopt the policy as proposed
2	Do not have a specific policy on contaminated land and rely on the negotiation of each application on a case by case basis, following national planning guidance

5.58.3 It is worth noting what current planning guidance says with regard contaminated land:

PPS23 – ‘LDDs should include appropriate policies and proposals for dealing with the potential for contamination and the remediation of land so that it is suitable for the proposed development/use. LDDs have a positive role to play in steering development onto appropriate previously developed land, some of which may be affected by contamination, and to protect greenfield land from avoidable development’.

NPPF – ‘Local policies and decisions should ensure that the site is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions, pollution arising from previous uses and any proposals for land remediation’.

5.58.4 The options listed above have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	?	++	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+
Option 2	?	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	?	?	0	0	0	0	?	?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.58.5 This is a very specific policy which is likely to have significant benefits in terms of objectives relating to soil quality and environmental pollution. Many brownfield sites that this policy will affect are located in or near to town centres and this will help in regeneration efforts in some locations.

- 5.58.6 No adverse effects have been noted as this policy focuses on remediating contaminated land. There are likely to be a wide range of other benefits relating to waste, water resources, landscapes (both rural and urban), health and making land available for housing and economic growth.
- 5.58.7 Some effects will be localised and will only be ascertained through site level assessment. For example, if a site is adjacent to a watercourse there will be specific remediation measures required to avoid pollution of the watercourse. Also for sites within an area of flood risk this may only be able to be developed for certain uses that are compatible with that area.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.58.8 The assessment has highlighted that some brownfield sites can be important habitats (in some cases a UK BAP priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land). Biodiversity and wildlife value may have increased in the years that a site has been derelict and this must be taken into consideration before any remediation is agreed. A site may also have become a part of the natural landscape. The policy could recognise the biodiversity value of certain sites and require an ecological assessment of sites to be undertaken and submitted with any planning application.
- 5.58.9 One area of concern is that the requirements are not so onerous that developers avoid developing brownfield sites. The policy does state that ‘the council’s requirements will be proportionate and reasonable’ and the council is promoting development of brownfield sites through the Core Strategy in order to encourage town centre regeneration and reduce the amount of greenfield land developed.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.58.10 Option 1 is considered likely to lead to significant benefits in terms of remediation of contaminated land which is the purpose of the policy. It requires certain documents to demonstrate that the development site is, or will be, made suitable for the proposed final use but states that requirements will be proportionate and reasonable. Option 2 would still lead to a range of benefits but requirements would need to be negotiated on a site-by-site basis which could delay development or make development unviable in some circumstances.

5.59 Core Policy 57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

- 5.59.1 This policy requires high quality design for all new developments from building extensions through to major developments. The policy sets out a range of issues which all developers will need to take into account when designing each individual scheme.
- 5.59.2 Previous Core Strategy policy 39 ‘Housing density’ (now deleted) has been incorporated within this policy which now states that development must ‘*make efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and the*

local context to deliver an appropriate development which relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the area'. There is therefore no longer an indicative minimum density target of 30 dwellings per hectare for residential development.

- 5.59.3 The previous housing density policy had been subject to sustainability appraisal, which considered three potential options as follows:

Option 1 - residential development should be an indicative minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare. Only exceptionally, in locations where there is a strongly defined low density character, will development densities below 30 dwellings per hectare be acceptable.

Option 2 - as option 1 but with no indicative minimum.

Option 3 - in the following locations the density of development should fall within the ranges specified: In and around the town centre of the market towns: >50dph, Market towns: >30dph, Rural areas: 20-40dph.

- 5.59.4 Proposed policy therefore relates to 'housing density' Option 2 with no indicative minimum. The sustainability appraisal found that this option would likely lead to a significantly higher loss of greenfield land over the plan period and that this could adversely affect regeneration in towns such as Trowbridge and Melksham where an urgent need to regenerate the town centre has been established. However, it also noted that this option, being flexible and non-restrictive, could lead to significant wide-ranging housing provision that caters for all sectors of the community.

- 5.59.5 The sustainability appraisal concluded that Option 3 was the most favourable in sustainability terms because it promotes significantly higher density in and around town centres which will aid regeneration in towns that need it, whilst reducing pressures to build on greenfield land on the edge of towns. The delivery of higher density housing in town centres can reasonably be expected to benefit local economies, increasing footfall, increasing vitality and viability of existing businesses and other services and facilities. Concerns were noted that it was rather too rigid in that it does not allow for any exceptional circumstances, as Option 1 does, and that sustainability benefits could be enhanced if it recognised that there are circumstances where much lower density developments are needed.

What options have been considered for core policy 57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping'?

- 5.59.6 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Retain the current policies saved within the extant Wiltshire District Local Plans
2	Apply a consistent policy across the whole of Wiltshire which seeks high-quality design standards in line with best practice and Government planning guidance

3	Apply a Wiltshire wide design policy which seeks exemplar levels of design standards – prioritising design quality above other onsite considerations
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5.59.7 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0
Option 2	+	-/?	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	-	-	+	+
Option 3	0	?	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.59.8 Significant adverse effects envisaged for Option 3 with regards housing provision and economy. Requirements would be too onerous and result in adverse impacts against other sustainability objectives. It could significantly increase the cost of housing making them unaffordable and housing developments unviable. This would also have significant consequences for the local economy in Wiltshire.
- 5.59.9 Option 1 would have largely neutral effects – this is based on current policies which are inconsistent across Wiltshire and based on out-of-date evidence.
- 5.59.10 Option 2 is likely to have a wider range of benefits across the range of sustainability objectives but without leading to any particular significant benefits. High quality design that is affordable and implementable can have benefits for biodiversity, landscapes, heritage, local economy, employment, water and energy efficiency, health and wellbeing and for provision of modern housing.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.59.11 Policy should refer to water efficiency not just energy efficiency. Water efficiency may come under sustainable construction techniques but it should be made explicit if energy is also mentioned. Design has an important role in influencing both energy and water use.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.59.12 Option 1 is unlikely to realise many additional benefits because the existing district Local Plan policies are based on out-of-date evidence and they are inconsistent across the county. Option 3 would probably not be implementable because the

requirements would be too onerous on housing developers and result in negative impacts against a range of other sustainability objectives.

5.59.13 It is recommended that policy refers to water efficiency not just energy efficiency. Water efficiency may come under sustainable construction techniques but it should be made explicit if energy is mentioned.

5.60 Core Policy 58 - Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

5.60.1 This policy aims to ensure that Wiltshire’s important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected, and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire’s environment and quality of life.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.60.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Retain the current policies saved within the extant Wiltshire District Local Plans.
2	Apply a uniform policy which seeks to consolidate existing good practice, and to provide a consistent policy approach across Wiltshire in accord with PPS5.

5.60.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment	
Option 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/?	+/?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/?
Option 2	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	++/?	++/?	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.60.4 Significant effects can be expected in the areas of Rural and Urban Landscapes and Historic Environment. In both cases Option 2, implementing a new comprehensive policy informed by latest guidance and best practice is likely to have a more positive and significant effect than saving the existing policies of the extant Local Plans. Important positive effects are also likely in the areas housing, health and wellbeing, economy and employment.

5.60.5 The main reason for this is that existing policy is varied and spread over the extant Local Plans. It is therefore not consistent across the county. Existing Local Plans are also based on PPG15 and not PPS5 as their underlying national guidance, and have not benefitted from the latest technical knowledge and experience.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.60.6 Option 1 is inappropriate in the light of the emerging LDF which is set to replace all extant Local Plans. However, some mitigation of the less effective policies (relative to what is possible with Option 2) would be possible by non statutory means. However, the cost implications of this make it an unfeasible choice. Option 2 does not generate any adverse effects.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.60.7 Option 2 is the more favourable option as it scores significantly higher in terms of positive effects on heritage and landscape sustainability objectives and will lead to more consistent benefits over a wider area. As heritage is also a key component of tourism, an important part of the Wiltshire economy, Option 2 is also likely to be beneficial to economic and employment interests

5.60.8 Option 1 is impracticable due to the emerging LDF which will make the previous policies it represents redundant, and would result in significantly less favourable outcomes for heritage interests.

5.61 Core Policy 59 – The Stonehenge, Avebury and associated sites World Heritage Site and its setting

5.61.1 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Stonehenge, Avebury and associated sites World Heritage Site and its setting. See also core policy 6 of the Core Strategy (Stonehenge) and associated South Wilts sustainability appraisal findings in this report and Appendix H.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.61.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Retain the current policies saved within the extant local plans.
2	Apply a consistent policy approach across the designated site, which draws upon existing best practice, and references statements of outstanding universal value for the combined site.

5.61.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Option 2	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	++	++	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.61.4 No significant adverse effects are expected as a result of either of the options; however option 2 is felt to have a greater positive effect than option 1. There are likely to be significant benefits for the historic environment and landscapes from this updated policy, and a number of other benefits for biodiversity, air quality, health and wellbeing and the local economy.

5.61.5 The Stonehenge, Avebury and associated sites World Heritage Site and its setting is an important international tourist attraction and it brings a lot of tourism revenue into Wiltshire. A wide range of sustainability benefits are likely through a policy that strongly supports the protection and enhancement of the OUV of the site.

5.61.6 The existing policies, although satisfactory, are not necessarily up to date and do not reflect the latest management plan for the Stonehenge World Heritage Sites and do not reflect the sites outstanding universal value, which option 2 achieves. Continuing with saved district local plan policies is not likely to achieve any particular benefits.

5.61.7 The key sustainability issues outlined in section 7.4 of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Addendum document highlight that there are currently a number of issues affecting the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site, including proposals for wind turbines, impacts of road traffic and the need to improve visitor facilities. Core policy 59 addresses the need to reduce the impact of traffic and requires development proposals to demonstrate that proposals for climate change mitigation and renewable energy schemes will have no individual, cumulative or consequential adverse affect upon the site and its setting.

5.61.8 Improvement of visitor facilities at Stonehenge is addressed through core policy 6 and in the associated sustainability appraisal which is summarised in this report.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.61.9 No significant adverse effects are identified. Policy needs to ensure protection of the World Heritage sites is provided in line with the latest management plan.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.61.10 Option 2 is felt to be most favourable as this ensures the World Heritage Site's outstanding universal value is preserved.

5.62 Core Policy 60 – Sustainable transport

What is the purpose of this policy?

5.62.1 Policy proposes to use the planning and transport powers to reduce the reliance on the car and support the sustainable movement of people and goods.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.62.2 The following policy options have been considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader - Use the planning and transport powers to reduce the reliance on the car and support the sustainable movement of people and goods.
2	Status quo - Transport plans should be developed for all areas with a view to improving existing transport infrastructure and reducing the need to travel by car.

5.62.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+
Option 2	+/?	0	0/?	?	?	+	+	+	+	0	+/0	+/0	+/0	?	+	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.62.4 Option 1 provides a number of significant positive effects, improvements to air quality, reduction in CO₂ emissions, benefits to the historic environment and landscapes because of reductions in car travel and more appropriate routing of freight. It also significantly encourages sustainable travel and improves overall accessibility to key services and goods.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.62.5 None.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.62.6 Option 1 is considered the most favourable. It offers greater potential to meet the sustainability objectives, in particular there is significant potential to improve the overall quality of people's lives by improving both the natural and built environment. There should be significant benefits to wildlife through reductions in emissions and improvements to air quality as well the historic, urban and rural environments because of overall reductions in car use which can be visually intrusive create unwanted noise pollution and can cause significant community severance.

5.62.7 The policy should help to reduce social exclusion and create societies that are more inclusive by offering greater sustainable access to key services, facilities, and infrastructure.

5.63 Core Policy 61 - Transport and development

What is the purpose of this policy?

5.63.1 Policy aims to ensure that new development is located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.63.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Ensuring that new development is located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport.
2	Status quo – Ensuring that accessible, safe and efficient public transport services are available and that measures are provided to encourage walking and cycling.

5.63.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	+	+	0	0	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+
Option 2	+	0	?	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+/0	+/0	?	+	+/0	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.63.4 Option 1 provides a number of significant positive effects, improvements to air quality and reduction in CO₂ emissions. It also significantly encourages sustainable travel and improves overall accessibility for all transport users in new developments.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.63.5 No significant adverse effects are envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

- 5.63.6 Option 1 is considered the most favourable. It offers greater potential to meet the sustainability objectives in new developments, by ensuring that location and design are strongly considered during the initial assessment stages. In particular, there is significant potential to improve the overall quality of people's lives by improving both the natural and built environment. There should be significant benefits to wildlife through reductions in emissions and improvements to air quality.
- 5.63.7 The policy should help to reduce social exclusion and create societies that are more inclusive by offering greater sustainable access to all transport users to key services, facilities, and infrastructure.

5.64 Core Policy 62 - Development impacts on the transport network

What is the purpose of this policy?

- 5.64.1 Policy aims to ensure developments provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset adverse transport impacts, including developer contribution towards sustainable transport improvements and the submission of a travel plan.

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.64.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Developments should provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset adverse transport impacts, including developer contribution towards sustainable transport improvements and the submission of a travel plan.
2	Status quo – Developments should provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset adverse transport impacts.

5.64.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	0	-	-	-	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Option 2	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.64.4 No significant effects envisaged from either option.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.64.5 No significant adverse effects are envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.64.6 Options 1 and 2 are quite similar and therefore it is difficult to choose a preferred option. However, Option 1 is more favourable because it puts a lot of emphasis on developers contributing towards sustainable transport improvements and travel plans. These measures can help to reduce reliance on the car and encourage travel by sustainable transport alternatives, which can provide environmental benefits.

5.65 Core Policy 63 - Transport strategies

What is the purpose of this policy?

5.65.1 Policy is concerned with developing transport packages in Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge to achieve a major shift to sustainable transport.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.65.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Developing transport packages in Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge to achieve a major shift to sustainable transport.
2	Status quo – Transport plans should be developed for all areas with a view to improving existing transport infrastructure and reducing the need to travel by car. Provision for new or improved interchange facilities between all modes of transport.

5.65.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+	?	0	+/?	+/?	++	++	++	++	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+
Option 2	+/?	+	0	?	?	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+/0	+/0	+	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.65.4 Option 1 provides a number of significant positive effects, improvements to air quality and reduction in CO₂ emissions, as well as benefits to the historic environment, and urban landscapes. It also significantly encourages sustainable travel and improves overall accessibility in the identified towns, of Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.65.5 No significant adverse effects are envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.65.6 Option 1 is considered the most favourable. It offers greater potential to meet the sustainability objectives in Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge, by considering a range of relevant measures and improvements. In particular, there is significant potential to improve the overall quality of people's lives by improving both the natural and built environment. There should be significant benefits to wildlife through reductions in emissions and improvements to air quality. The policy should help to reduce social exclusion and create societies that are more inclusive by

offering greater sustainable access to all transport users to key services, facilities, and infrastructure.

5.66 Core Policy 64 - Demand management

What is the purpose of this policy?

- 5.66.1 This policy is concerned with promoting appropriate demand and traffic management measures (e.g. car parking and bus priority measures).

What options have been considered for this policy?

- 5.66.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Promoting appropriate demand and traffic management measures (e.g. car parking and bus priority measures)
2	Status quo – Promoting demand management measures to reduce reliance on the car and encourage the use of sustainable transport measures.

- 5.66.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-/0	-	0	0	0	+	+	+/?	+/?	-	+	+/0	+/0	0	+	+/?	+
Option 2	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+/0	+/0	0	+	+/0	+/0	0	+	+/?	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

- 5.66.4 No significant effects envisaged from either option.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

- 5.66.5 No significant adverse effects envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.66.6 It is very difficult to choose a more favourable option. Both have extremely similar aims and objectives. Option 1 is slightly more favourable because it formally standardises parking charges across the county which should lead to a greater reduction in car use overall and encourages travel by more sustainable alternatives, which should lead to a number of environmental benefits. However, because of the introduction of minimum parking standards for residential development with this option there may be an increase in land take that can have an adverse impact on biodiversity and land and soil resources. In mitigation reduced residential parking requirements will be considered where there is significant urban design or heritage issues, where parking demand is likely to be low or where any parking overspill can be controlled.

5.67 Core Policy 65 - Movement of goods

What is the purpose of this policy?

5.67.1 Policy is concerned with achieving a sustainable freight distribution system in terms of routing and HGV parking. No amendments have been made to this policy since June 2011 that are considered likely to lead to additional significant effects not already considered in the sustainability appraisal.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.67.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Achieving a sustainable freight distribution system in terms of routing and HGV parking.
2	Status quo – Encouragement for HGVs to use the roads and parking which have the minimum environmental impact.

5.67.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	+/?	0	+/?	-	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/?
Option 2	+/?	0	0	-	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	+/?	+/?	+/?

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.67.4 No significant effects envisaged from either option.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.67.5 No significant adverse effects are envisaged.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.67.6 It is difficult to choose a more favourable option. Both have extremely similar aims and objectives. Due to the nature of freight routing there will always be some areas/communities/individuals/businesses that benefit from HGVs using the advisory network, where others will suffer to some degree from the adverse impact. However, Option 1 is probably slightly more favourable because it advocates the use of both rail and water to transport freight wherever possible thus reducing the adverse affects of freight overall.

5.68 Core Policy 66 - Strategic transport network

What is the purpose of this policy?

5.68.1 Policy is concerned with improving the strategic transport network (Primary Route Network, freight, key bus and rail networks) including the A350. No amendments have been made to this policy since June 2011 that are considered likely to lead to additional significant effects not already considered in the sustainability appraisal.

What options have been considered for this policy?

5.68.2 The following policy options were considered and assessed for their likely significant effects (further information regarding this policy is contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and accompanying topic papers/background papers):

Policy option	Description
1	Broader – Improving the strategic transport network (PRN, freight, key bus and rail networks) including the A350.

2	Status quo – Improving the strategic transport network (PRN, freight, key bus and rail networks).
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5.68.3 These options have been appraised for their likely significant effects against the 17 sustainability objectives as described in section 2. The full assessment is presented in Appendix H. A summary of results is shown in the following table:

Sustainability objectives	1. Biodiversity	2. Land and soil	3. Waste	4. Water	5. Flood risk	6. Air quality	7. Climatic	8. Heritage	9. Landscapes	10. Housing	11. Health	12. Inclusion	13. Community	14. Education	15. Transport	16. Economy	17. Employment
Option 1	-	-	0	+	-	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	+/?	+	+
Option 2	-	-	0	+	-	-/?	-/?	+/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0	+/?	+	+

What significant effects are envisaged?

5.68.4 Option 2 suggests that significant adverse effects will be envisaged for biodiversity, land and soil and flood risk. This is caused primarily because it has many more proposed new road schemes. Most likely impacts will be habitat fragmentation, loss of species and habitat, loss of quality agricultural land and greenfield sites and loss of floodplain.

What mitigation measures would prevent, reduce or offset the likely significant adverse effects of these policy options?

5.68.5 Prior to any new road schemes/improvements being carried out, each new proposal will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment which will determine the full adverse impacts of such schemes. This will include seeking advice from Natural England, the Environment Agency and other advisory bodies.

Favourable option(s) in sustainability terms and recommendations

5.68.6 Both of the options are quite similar in their aims and objectives; however, Option 2 clearly proposes many more new road schemes. These schemes are likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts on, such as loss of species and habitat, some of which will be irreversible. Option 1 is therefore considered the more favourable because it is least damaging to the environment.

5.69 Core Policy 67 - Flood risk

5.69.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal. However, some amendments have been made to the original South Wilts policy and the original South Wilts sustainability appraisal has been reviewed. The policy now reads:

“Development proposed in Flood Zones 2 and 3 as identified within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will need to refer to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment when providing evidence to the local planning authority in order to apply the Sequential Test in line with the requirements of national policy and established best practice.

All new development will include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (Sustainable Urban Drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable”.

5.69.2 In the original assessment, a significant positive effect has already been attributed to the sustainability objective relating to flooding and water efficiency and it is not considered necessary to amend any other assessment scores.

5.69.3 The sustainability appraisal carried out on this policy for the South Wilts Core Strategy is presented in Appendix H; a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.69.4 This very specific policy deals with flood risk comprehensively and performs well against not only the flood risk objective but through the indirect implications for health, safety and the economy. No adverse impacts have been identified.

Mitigation/enhancement recommendations

5.69.5 The second part of this policy refers to ‘measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (Sustainable Urban Drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable’. However, it may be more appropriate to make reference to all forms of sustainable drainage in case there is a lack of infiltration potential or other constraints, such as contamination.

5.70 Core Policy 68 - Water resources

5.70.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁵¹. However, some amendments have been made to the original South Wilts policy and the original South Wilts sustainability appraisal has been reviewed. The policy now reads:

‘Development must not prejudice the delivery of the actions and targets of the relevant River Basin Management Plan, and should contribute towards their delivery where possible. Non-residential development will be required to incorporate water efficiency measures. Developers will be expected to submit details of how water efficiency has been taken into account during the design of proposals.

Development proposals within a Source Protection Zone, Safeguard Zone or Water Protection Zone must assess any risk to groundwater resources and demonstrate

⁵¹ South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

that these would be protected throughout the construction and operational phases of development'.

- 5.70.2 The original sustainability appraisal findings remain valid overall. However, it is not considered likely that implementation of this policy will have significant benefits for the sustainability objective relating to biodiversity; there will be indirect benefits from potential reductions in water abstraction and greater protection of water resources but these benefits may be reduced by planned housing and economic growth. There are also likely to be benefits with regards flood risk but this is directly addressed by core policy 67 whereas this policy addresses water efficiency.
- 5.70.3 It is considered likely that this policy will have significant direct and long-term benefits against the objective to 'maintain and improve river quality'. Promoting water efficiency and delivery of the actions and targets of the relevant River Basin Management Plan will directly benefit river quality throughout Wiltshire.
- 5.70.4 Potential effects on water resources are also discussed in this Sustainability Appraisal Report in relation to other policies including for all of the community area policies, and in relation to proposed strategic housing and employment sites.
- 5.70.5 The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

- 5.70.6 No adverse effects envisaged. Significant positive effects recorded for sustainability objectives 12 and 15. This policy directly requires new residential development to achieve higher water efficiency standards to overcome potential effects of water use on the River Avon SAC. It also directly addresses potential effects of increased water use from new development on the River Avon SAC, particularly regarding biodiversity.
- 5.70.7 One area of uncertainty relates to economic growth. There will be additional costs to developers and (perhaps all/partly passed on to) new residents arising from more costly fittings and installations required to achieve higher water efficiency standards. A study by the Environment Agency (Assessing the cost of compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes, 2007) finds the likely cost of CSH level 3 standards just under £300 more per dwelling, which is considered unlikely to be significant to house builders. Reductions in water usage are also understood to be likely to reduce running costs to water companies and water customers/residents.
- 5.70.8 This policy performs well against environmental sustainability criteria, addressing a specific issue identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessment. There will be additional costs to business (including house builders) in meeting this policy, but the costs of doing so are uncertain. Additional costs to house builders and residents of installations and fittings are not likely to be significant and would be likely to be offset by savings in running costs for new homes.

Mitigation/enhancement recommendations

5.70.9 None.

5.71 Core Policy 69 - Protection of the River Avon SAC

5.71.1 This policy is included in the South Wilts Core Strategy which has been through an Examination in Public (EiP) and has already been subject to sustainability appraisal⁵². However, some amendments have been made to the original South Wilts policy and the original South Wilts sustainability appraisal has been reviewed. The policy now reads:

'In order to avoid and reduce potential environmental effects on the River Avon SAC, development will need to incorporate measures during construction and operation to avoid and prevent pollution and mitigate potential disturbance effects; appropriate schemes of mitigation may include consideration of suitable buffer zones along watercourses, habitat enhancements and river access management measures. All development within 20m of the river banks should submit a Construction Management Plan to the Local Planning Authority to ensure measures proposed during construction are satisfactory.

Where additional sewage discharges to a STW cannot be accommodated without measures to offset phosphate loading, development will be required to undertake proportionate mitigation measures to demonstrate that the proposals would have no likely significant effects upon the SAC'.

5.71.2 In the original assessment, significant positive effects have already been attributed to sustainability objectives relating to improving river quality and biodiversity/geodiversity and it is not considered necessary to amend any other assessment scores. The policy directly responds to the need to overcome potential water quality effects from new development on the River Avon SAC, arising from the HRA.

5.71.3 The previous sustainability appraisal assessment is presented in Appendix H and a summary of the main findings is given below.

South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

5.71.4 In terms of facilitating economic growth, one area of uncertainty relates to additional costs of implementing this policy. There will be additional costs to developers and (perhaps all/partly passed on to) new residents arising from the need to contribute to a Phosphate Management Plan, with financial costs uncertain at this stage.

5.71.5 This policy performs well against environmental sustainability criteria, addressing a specific issue identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessment. There will be additional uncertain costs to house builders in meeting this policy. The policy does not currently allow for alternative means of avoiding impact on the River Avon from

⁵² South Wilts Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2009)

wastewater discharges via sewage treatment works, and the need to allow alternative approaches should be considered.

Update on South Wilts sustainability appraisal summary

- 5.71.6 The supporting text of the current Wiltshire Core Strategy policy now includes an option for developers to provide on or near site solutions where these are agreed by the Environment Agency and utility providers.

Mitigation/enhancement recommendations

- 5.71.7 In relation to nutrient pollution of the River Avon SAC, the sustainability appraisal has previously highlighted the issue of elevated phosphate concentrations in the River Avon. There has been ongoing dialogue between Wiltshire Council, Natural England and Environment Agency. The HRA Report accompanying the Core Strategy Submission document concludes that *'Core Policy 69...sets out the issues and measures to protect the SAC. It can be concluded that, provided development can be accommodated within the existing headroom of the Sewage Treatment Works, or other measures are put in place, Construction Management Plans are prepared and implemented and the Nutrient Management Plan referenced in the supporting text is implemented, there should be no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Avon SAC arising from the Core Strategy'*.
- 5.71.8 One further issue highlighted by Natural England is that of road verge erosion from elevated traffic levels within the River Avon catchment which may be having an effect on sediment levels within the River Avon SAC. It is not clear if there is evidence available as to what extent and in what locations this is an issue, and in recent meetings with regional representatives of Environment Agency and Natural England it was agreed that while impacts from erosion and sedimentation may affect the SAC, any increases as a result of core strategy development would be *de minimis* and could be discounted.

6 Significant effects and overall sustainability of the Core Strategy

6.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires an environmental report to include...

"The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage) and landscape (and the inter-relationship between the issues above)".

- 6.1.1 In Section 5, the likely significant effects of all Core Strategy policies and reasonable alternatives/options to those have been identified, described and evaluated. This has included a discussion of potential mitigation measures for adverse effects, ways of

maximising benefits and a clear recommendation of the favourable option(s) coming out of the sustainability appraisal findings.

6.1.2 In addition to the appraisal of individual policies undertaken in the sustainability appraisal, the SEA Directive requires consideration of the overall effects of the plan, including the secondary, synergistic and cumulative effects of plan policies. This may include incremental effects that can have a small effect individually, but can accrue to have significant environmental effects.

6.1.3 This section summarises how the sustainability appraisal has influenced the Core Strategy, the key significant effects and cumulative effects of the Core Strategy as a whole and what mitigation measures may be put in place to deal with those.

6.2 How has the sustainability appraisal influenced the Core Strategy?

6.2.1 The sustainability appraisal process has been undertaken in conjunction with the Core Strategy during the various stages of development, with the sustainability appraisal team advising on the sustainability implications of various policy options. The sustainability appraisal team has been involved with a series of topic groups to progress policy in different areas.

6.2.2 This report has summarised the findings of the sustainability appraisal that accompanied the 'Wiltshire 2026' document in October 2009 and the Wiltshire Core Strategy consultation document of June 2011. The sustainability appraisal findings were taken into account in the development of those documents and they have helped in the decision-making process to select the strategic objectives, strategic site allocations and preferred policies in the Submission draft.

6.2.3 This report has highlighted the likely significant effects of various policy options; options for both topic-based policies and community area policies, and potential strategic site options for housing and employment. Mitigation measures are suggested for every option where significant effects are envisaged to reduce significant adverse effects and recommendations are made on ways to improve policies.

6.2.4 For each policy area the preferred option in sustainability terms is highlighted with reasons for this choice and where the option taken forward in the Core Strategy differs from the recommendation in the sustainability appraisal, the reasons for this are explained. This information can be found in the relevant policy sections 5.3-5.71.

6.2.5 A list of the key recommendations of the sustainability appraisal, and how these were taken into account in the Core Strategy is presented in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1: Sustainability appraisal recommendations and Core Strategy response

Core Strategy section/policy	Key recommendations/mitigation measures noted in the Sustainability Appraisal Report	How has this been taken into account in the Core Strategy?
Strategic objectives	Strategic objectives specifically relating to water management, flooding and transport have been removed and these are considered to be key sustainability issues that warrant their own objective.	The Core Strategy recognises that these are important issues but the 6 strategic objectives reflect the 6 key challenges stated in the Core Strategy. Issues concerning water management, flooding and transport are now covered by strategic objectives 5 and 6. Strategic objective 2 (addressing climate change) will also indirectly influence travel patterns and positively affect water resources and flooding through climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.
Strategic objective 5	It is considered important that a discussion of the importance of protecting Wiltshire's water resources and avoiding flood risk is included in this objective. This could be mentioned in the supporting text to the objective.	The importance of protecting water resources and minimising flood risk is discussed under objective 6. Supporting text to objective 5 does refer to the multi-functional benefits of the GI network which includes water courses and water bodies.
Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy	In order to best achieve a balance between protecting and enhancing the environment and pursuing housing growth that will lead to significant social and economic benefits, the mid-range housing scenario (option 1) should be pursued, provided there are strong links to Core Strategy policies that will ensure housing growth is sustainable and provided this is justified through the Core Strategy evidence base.	The Core Strategy evidence base justifies a target of 'at least 37,000 homes' and Core Policy 2 now states that development proposals which meet the requirements of the delivery strategy 'and the other core policies' will meet the strategic employment and housing requirements.
Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy	It is recommended that a higher target for previously developed land (PDL) is required by the Core Strategy. Options 1 and 4 – 41% target and separate community area targets respectively, would give greater sustainability benefits.	The Core Strategy has set a target of 'at least 35% development taking place on PDL'. This is justified through recognition of Wiltshire's rural setting and reflects the fact that a significant proportion of development will need to be on greenfield land.
Core Policy 7 – Bradford on Avon Community Area	It is recommended that all appropriate mitigation measures are taken to avoid adverse impacts on bats and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC, and other potential adverse effects, before development commences at the strategic housing site (Kingston Farm) and that due consideration is given to the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).	Core Policy 7 requires development proposals to maintain the integrity of the SAC and to be in accordance with Wiltshire Council's 'Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Planning Protocol'. Appendix C of the HRA Report specifically considers the impacts of CP7 upon the SAC and project level HRA will be required at the Kingston Farm site.
Core Policy 9 – Chippenham	The sustainability appraisal noted potential conflicts between the promotion of the river Avon corridor for leisure and recreation and enhancement of its role as a wildlife corridor. Significantly increased	Policy has been amended to require river corridor enhancement to be done in an environmentally sensitive

Core Strategy section/policy	Key recommendations/mitigation measures noted in the Sustainability Appraisal Report	How has this been taken into account in the Core Strategy?
Central Areas of Opportunity	recreational disturbance could adversely affect wildlife habitats in this area.	manner 'while conserving and enhancing its role as a wildlife corridor'.
Core Policy 10 – Chippenham Community Area	The sustainability appraisal has stated the importance of resolving existing transport issues and future transport issues associated with new development and that it is essential that transport mitigation schemes are able to bring wider benefits to Chippenham.	The supporting text to Chippenham policy states that improvements to public transport connectivity and pedestrian and cycling links are needed including better integration of different modes.
Core Policy 11 – Corsham Community Area	The sustainability appraisal recommended that prior to any development taking place, the potential cumulative effects on bats from separate development sites in different locations is given consideration.	Core Policy 11 requires development to be planned and delivered in accordance with Wiltshire Council's guidance to maintain the integrity of the SAC.
Core Policy 12 – Devizes Community Area	The sustainability appraisal noted the importance of future development not adversely affecting the North Wessex Downs AONB and for development to lead to an overall reduction in impacts on the road network and on air quality. Meeting the requirements of core policies 51, 55 and 60/61/62 (transport) is particularly relevant to reduce transport and air quality impacts.	Core Strategy recognises need for development to address traffic congestion and air quality issues and considers the Devizes Town Transport Strategy a key vehicle for this. It also requires development to conserve the AONB and 'where possible enhance its locally distinctive characteristics'.
Core Policy 28 – Trowbridge Central Areas of Opportunity	The sustainability appraisal recommended that development proposals, in all cases, should take opportunities to enhance the environmental quality of the centre of Trowbridge, especially along the River Biss corridor, and that significant improvements can be made to the biodiversity value of this area.	The Core Strategy recognises in the supporting text to the policy that improvements need to be made to the River Biss to improve the important green corridor.
Core Policy 31 - Warminster Community Area	The sustainability appraisal recommended that specific consideration is given to the identified issues concerning the location of the west Warminster urban extension in proximity to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.	This issue is addressed in the key issues section of the supporting text to the policy, stating 'new development will need to be carefully managed to ensure appropriate mitigation is implemented. The masterplanning process can also ensure that adverse impacts are reduced or avoided.
Core Policy 34 – Additional employment land	The sustainability appraisal recommended that the policy text be amended to support employment provision in smaller settlements and in rural areas. Previously policy focussed on principal settlements and market towns.	Policy has been amended to give support to locations outside principal settlements, market towns and local service centres with specific criteria for developments.
Core Policy 35 – Existing employment sites	Policy focuses on Principal Employment Areas and refers to employment in principal settlements, market towns and local service centres. The sustainability appraisal recommended that the policy recognises and gives protection to sites in rural locations that do not fall within principal settlements, market towns or local service centres because such sites, although often small, can play a vital role in the rural economy.	Reference to 'principal settlements, market towns and local service centres' has been removed from the policy wording so that the policy now covers employment sites in all areas that meet the policy criteria.

Core Strategy section/policy	Key recommendations/mitigation measures noted in the Sustainability Appraisal Report	How has this been taken into account in the Core Strategy?
Core Policy 46 - Meeting the needs of Wiltshire's vulnerable and older people	<p>i) Policy focuses on provision of specialist accommodation in principal settlements. Sustainability appraisal recommended policy amended to address accommodation needs outside of principal settlements and market towns, especially in rural areas.</p> <p>ii) Recommended that consideration is given to setting a target for provision of specialist accommodation as this may achieve greater sustainability benefits and this will allow greater control of provision to meet needs as evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Wiltshire.</p>	<p>i) It is deemed appropriate to direct the provision of specialist and older people accommodation towards the principal settlements and market towns which provide a good level of services and facilities. This approach supports a sustainable pattern of growth by ensuring that specialist accommodation is serviced by adequate infrastructure including sustainable transport linkages.</p> <p>ii) The Wiltshire Older People Accommodation Development Strategy sets indicative proposals that enable the council to deliver a single integrated older people's accommodation system in Wiltshire working in partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors. It is therefore considered appropriate that core policy 46 aids, and facilities, the delivery of the strategy rather than setting prescript targets within the policy itself. It is also likely that specific targets will potentially place undue viability constraints upon developers.</p>
Core Policy 48 – Supporting rural life	<p>The policy supports the re-use of existing buildings to allow businesses to expand. Wiltshire contains many historic agricultural buildings which are redundant and the centres of many villages are designated as Conservation Areas or have listed buildings. It is very important that new development, re-use or conversion protects the character of these buildings and their settings and will actually lead to an enhancement.</p>	<p>Policy wording has been amended to support proposals where 'reuse would lead to the viable long-term safeguarding of a heritage asset'.</p>
Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>The sustainability appraisal highlighted the recommendation in the HRA Report for the Core Strategy to develop a process for ensuring that developments within 4km of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC will not have a significant adverse effect on it and that such a statement could be included in Core Policy 50.</p>	<p>Additional text has been added to the supporting text to this policy as follows: 'Wiltshire Council is developing guidance for development surrounding the Bath and Bradford Bats SAC and associated roost sites. This will include guidance for developers and planners, and a procedure to ensure that any likely significant effects upon the SAC are identified and assessed at the application stage. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in</p>

Core Strategy section/policy	Key recommendations/mitigation measures noted in the Sustainability Appraisal Report	How has this been taken into account in the Core Strategy?
		accordance with the Core Strategy'
Core Policy 53 - Wilts and Berks and Thames and Severn canals	The sustainability appraisal highlighted that canal restoration poses particular concerns for water resources and this was brought up in consultation with the Environment Agency. Recommended that policy strengthened to acknowledge issues of flood risk, water abstraction and water quality and prevent adverse effects.	Policy wording strengthened to 'Proposals for the reinstatement of canal along these historic alignments will need to demonstrate that the cultural, historic and natural environment will be protected and enhanced, with no overall adverse effect, and that potential impacts on ecology, landscape, flood risk, water resources (abstraction) and water quality have been fully assessed and taken into account'.
Core Policy 55 – Air quality	It is recommended that the policy text takes account of further mitigation measures regarding the location of development to reduce the need to travel and promotion of sustainable modes of travel. Mitigation measures listed in policy text unlikely to prevent overall increase in transport related emissions. Stronger links required with CP2 and CP60, 61 and 62.	Air quality is an important issue and the Submission Draft of the Core Strategy contains Core Policy 55 which sets out detailed criteria, written in conjunction with the Councils Environmental Health specialists to afford the protection required. This policy requires developers to demonstrate how their proposals can make a positive contribution to the delivery of the Air Quality Strategy for Wiltshire (i.e. for the first time we have a joined up policy approach across services).
Core Policy 57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping	The sustainability appraisal highlighted that a greater number of sustainability benefits were likely if an indicative minimum density target was set in policy and that removing a density target would likely lead to a significantly higher loss of greenfield land over the plan period; this could adversely affect regeneration in towns such as Trowbridge and Melksham where an urgent need to regenerate the town centre has been established. The sustainability appraisal concluded that Option 3 was the most favourable in sustainability terms because it promotes significantly higher density in and around town centres which will aid regeneration in towns that need it, whilst reducing pressures to build on greenfield land on the edge of towns.	An indicative minimum density target of 30dph is not now included in the Core Strategy. This reflects current national guidance which no longer requires a minimum target. Topic Paper 2 (housing) states that 'Making effective use of land is a priority and the Core Strategy will ensure that the most effective use of land is made. It is therefore considered appropriate to remove the minimum density requirement'.

6.3 Significant effects of the Core Strategy

- 6.3.1 The individual strategic policies in the Core Strategy and strategic housing/ employment allocations outlined in each community area policy have been found to have a range of sustainability implications and these are outlined in the previous section. The issues identified are often of a specific and localised nature which can be addressed through specific mitigation measures.
- 6.3.2 The significant effects of the Core Strategy overall are likely to result from the proposed level of housing and employment growth – 37,000 new homes and around 178ha of employment land. The actual effects cannot be known precisely and will depend on the nature of development in any given location and the range of measures to reduce impacts. However, significant effects, both positive and negative, are likely to relate to the following:

Significant positive effects

- 6.3.3 Housing provision – the proposed new housing provision will help address affordability issues in Wiltshire, meet housing needs in individual community areas and provide new homes for a local workforce to meet the employment needs of local businesses.
- 6.3.4 Local economy – housing provision and employment land provision will give significant economic benefits not just through provision of new homes and jobs but through infrastructure delivery and delivery of new/improved services and facilities.
- 6.3.5 Employment – significant delivery of around 178ha of new employment provision to allow expansion of local businesses and to attract inward investment to Wiltshire.

Significant negative effects

- 6.3.6 The level of growth is likely to lead to significant negative effects in relation to:
- Land and soil resources
 - Water resources
 - Climatic factors
 - Landscape
 - Transport.
- 6.3.7 Cumulative effects that primarily relate to the increased level of residential and employment development proposed, as well as associated infrastructure and can be reduced to some degree through incorporation of adequate water and energy efficiency measures in new and existing buildings to reduce usage, renewable energy provision and promoting development within and adjacent to existing settlements which can substantially reduce landscape impacts, reduce the need to travel and increase availability/viability of public transport services.
- 6.3.8 Loss of greenfield land is perhaps inevitable in a rural county such as Wiltshire with limited brownfield sites available for development and this should be considered against the need for achievement of other sustainability objectives. Loss of greenfield

land can be reduced through promoting development of brownfield sites, which the Core Strategy does, and promoting maximum viable densities. Development should be directed to agricultural land of a lower quality wherever possible.

6.4 Cumulative effects and other effects of the Core Strategy

- 6.4.1 The SEA Regulations require consideration of likely significant effects, to include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. The terms 'secondary', 'cumulative' and 'synergistic' are not mutually exclusive; often the term cumulative effects is taken to include secondary and synergistic effects. Many sustainability problems result from the accumulation of multiple small and often indirect effects, rather than a few large and obvious ones. Examples include loss of tranquillity and habitat fragmentation caused by a number of different developments, landscape changes and climate change.
- 6.4.2 There is often some uncertainty in predicting cumulative effects as the cause of some effects can be difficult to identify. This can arise due to variation in natural systems and their interactions or lack of information on cause-effect relationships. With a higher level plan such as the Core Strategy, the level of uncertainty can be greater because scales are broader and issues generally larger.
- 6.4.3 A wide range of different types of effects of Core Strategy policies, both positive and negative, have been predicted, described and evaluated in Section 5. This has included consideration of cumulative effects where they were thought likely to occur; it is not intended to repeat them here. However, some of the key cumulative effects of the Core Strategy are likely to be:

Biodiversity and habitat fragmentation

- 6.4.4 The Core Strategy contains strong policies to protect and enhance biodiversity, including wide-ranging Green Infrastructure policies, but the level of housing and employment provision proposed is likely to have some adverse effects on wildlife habitats and species. Greenfield development is more likely to cause such impacts but development on brownfield sites, especially ones that have been redundant for long periods, may also be an issue. Brownfield sites can be important habitats (in some cases a UK BAP priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land), and in these situations, reuse should not necessarily be maximised.
- 6.4.5 Development may lead to direct loss of some important habitats but effects are more likely from indirect effects such as recreational pressure and air/noise/light pollution. It is possible that Core Strategy policies promoting countryside access, such as Green Infrastructure policies, may increase pressure on some habitats eg the Cricklade Country Way may increase visitor numbers at North Meadow SAC.

Landscape and rural character

- 6.4.6 Changes to rural character and landscapes/townscapes will result from proposed development in edge-of-town locations. This is most likely from the larger urban extensions proposed in Trowbridge, Chippenham, Warminster and Salisbury but also likely in other settlements, particularly where an AONB may be affected. Impacts may also occur if development takes place at a number of smaller sites or brownfield sites in a particular settlement and careful consideration of final use and design/layout considerations will be required.

Waste

- 6.4.7 Development and population increase will have cumulative effects on amounts of waste, despite increases in recycling rates across Wiltshire. New landfill sites may need to be found.

Transport

- 6.4.8 Housing and employment growth will increase need to travel and increase traffic volumes. The Core Strategy contains policies promoting sustainable transport but increases in road traffic are likely with the level of growth proposed. Cumulative effects of new housing and employment development in recent years along the A350 corridor, together with that proposed for future years, may mean that dualling of the A350 may be needed. There are also cumulative effects of development in settlements such as Devizes as population increase has increased road traffic leading to congestion, particularly at peak times.

Water resources

- 6.4.9 There will be increased pressures on water resources from population growth, in terms of need for water abstraction from watercourses and indirect pollution such as increases in phosphate discharges from sewage treatment works. Likely increased pressures if predicted impacts of climate change result in warmer, drier summers.

Local economy and employment

- 6.4.10 Proposed growth levels could significantly benefit the local economy of Wiltshire in general and that of individual settlements. There will be important secondary effects for local businesses from a larger potential market. Housing and employment growth can increase self-containment, reducing out-commuting and significantly improve services such as public transport if critical thresholds are reached.

Flood risk

- 6.4.11 Much proposed development will be located on greenfield land. Although it is possible for development to avoid areas of flood risk at proposed strategic locations, replacing greenfield land with impermeable surfaces can increase flood risk in that location or elsewhere. As numbers of new developments grow, flood risk increases.

Avoidance of areas of flood risk and dealing effectively with surface water, including consideration of sustainable drainage systems should be a requirement for all new development.

Air quality and environmental pollution

- 6.4.12 Impacts on air quality and increases in noise and light pollution can result from development, as well as loss of tranquillity. Indirect effects of growth include transport related emissions which are the cause of most of the AQMAs in town centre locations in Wiltshire.

Climatic impacts

- 6.4.13 Increases in greenhouse gas emissions that are recognised as being one of the causes of climate change - likely to increase from energy use in the home and from industry and rising traffic volumes. Increased development must be accompanied by effective mitigation to reduce energy use overall, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce the need to travel and increase sustainable travel options.

Heritage assets

- 6.4.14 Wiltshire contains many heritage assets and these can be directly affected by development in proximity or indirectly through recreation, increased visitor numbers, noise, light, air pollution, car use.

Housing

- 6.4.15 Levels of housing provision proposed will increase the range and choice of modern housing stock, including affordable housing. This can also benefit rural communities by giving people the opportunity to live in their own community and increase viability of local services and facilities such as pubs, schools and shops.

Community services and facilities

- 6.4.16 The cumulative impact of new housing growth can place pressure on existing services and facilities such as healthcare services, community support services and education. However, growth can also help fund new services and facilities or new infrastructure than can greatly improve recreational or sporting opportunities. It is important that growth is supported by appropriate infrastructure provision and levels of funding for community services.

Renewable energy

- 6.4.17 Policies relating to renewable energy may result in increased installation of photovoltaic panels, biomass plants, wind turbines etc. There will be landscape and amenity issues with increasing numbers of such installations and in some areas their presence may prove controversial.

Cumulative effects with neighbouring authorities' plans

- 6.4.18 Cumulative effects are also likely to occur in combination with the emerging (or adopted) Core Strategies of neighbouring authorities to Wiltshire. Levels of proposed growth in neighbouring authorities, in general, are less than the levels proposed in the South West RSS but effects are still likely.
- 6.4.19 Cumulative effects are likely to relate mainly to impacts of transport, with issues of increased traffic volumes on roads such as the A350, A36 and M4 in north and west Wiltshire. These issues will result mainly from in/out-commuting for employment purposes and these impacts are most likely in combination with levels of growth proposed in Bath and North East Somerset and Swindon Borough Council. There are established issues of out-commuting from Wiltshire to Bristol, Bath and Bristol and therefore levels of growth proposed by those authorities will particularly impact on Wiltshire.

6.5 Potential mitigation measures for likely significant effects

- 6.5.1 This report has predicted and described a wide range of significant and minor effects that are likely from implementing Core Strategy policies. The assessment has included consideration of mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse effects and ways of maximising the positive effects.
- 6.5.2 Specific mitigation measures are described under each policy heading in Section 5; they are many and varied, and it is not possible to list them all in this section. However, mitigation measures to address what are considered to be the key significant adverse effects of the Core Strategy are listed below:
- 6.5.3 **Biodiversity** – development can potentially lead to direct or indirect loss/damage to biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Consideration should be given to avoiding development where adverse effects are likely on designated sites, protected and/or notable species and ancient woodland. Development of brownfield sites would often lead to less impacts and this is preferred. Where development of greenfield sites is necessary, mature trees and ecologically important hedgerows should be retained wherever possible, appropriate buffer zones should protect any ecologically important areas and biodiversity should be enhanced overall throughout.
- 6.5.4 Further information regarding ways of reducing and avoiding adverse effects on European sites is contained within the HRA Report that accompanies the Core Strategy.
- 6.5.5 **Land and soil resources** – there is a shortage of brownfield sites in Wiltshire to meet housing and employment needs. However, policy should prioritise development on brownfield sites, wherever possible, that have good access to local facilities, public transport links and key infrastructure. Where this is not possible or appropriate, greenfield sites should be prioritised where development can be located adjacent to an existing urban area to take advantage of existing services and facilities. Housing

development should be built at maximum viable densities to minimise greenfield loss and avoid or reduce development on higher quality agricultural land.

- 6.5.6 **Landscapes** – many areas of Wiltshire come under a national or local landscape designation such as an AONB or Special Landscape Area (SLA). Many of the proposed strategic development sites do not fall within these areas but because the majority of them are large greenfield sites on the edge of urban areas, there is potential to significantly change the current rural character. Any development should be sensitive to the rural character of these areas with high quality design considerations and appropriate landscaping. Many of these strategic sites are also large enough to incorporate significant areas of Green Infrastructure which could include substantial biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- 6.5.7 **Water resources** – growth and population increase will increase demand for water and predicted effects of climate change may add to this. There is a need to reduce the effects of water abstraction on Wiltshire’s rivers and those outside the authority area by incorporating strong measures to increase water efficiency and to reduce water use in the home and in industry. Any further growth would need to be assessed for impacts on groundwater and sufficient capacity within the sewerage network and avoid possible pollution to watercourses.
- 6.5.8 **Climatic factors** – all development should meet high levels of energy efficiency and consider meeting the majority, if not all, of the energy and heat demand through renewable or low carbon forms of generation. There is strong potential for mitigation of climate change impacts at many of the proposed strategic sites and potential to provide renewable forms of energy and heat on site, and to link in with adjoining residential/employment areas. Consideration should be given to climate change adaptation through building design and layout and through measures to deal with surface water and flood risk.
- 6.5.9 **Transport** – levels of growth are likely to significantly increase traffic volumes throughout Wiltshire. Strong promotion of (and investment in) public transport and walking/cycling routes will be necessary at any future location for housing and employment growth with safe and convenient routes linking with town centres. There will be a need for new road infrastructure and this should help reduce congestion problems in town centres. Future dualling of the A350 may also be required.

6.6 Overall sustainability of the Core Strategy

- 6.6.1 This Sustainability Appraisal Report has investigated the likely effects of implementing the Core Strategy and it has found that significant effects, both positive and negative, are likely in a number of areas. It has been shown, however, that it is possible to reduce or avoid many of the predicted adverse effects of implementation; the Core Strategy promotes development of brownfield sites and other strategic sites in sustainable locations and contains strong policies in many areas that will enable effective mitigation to take place.

6.6.2 Impacts that will be difficult to mitigate fully and which will require innovative solutions, investment and community involvement, are likely to relate to the following sustainability objectives:

- Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings.
- Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.
- Minimise our impacts on climate change and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects.
- Protect and enhance the character and quality of Wiltshire's rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices.

6.6.3 However, significant benefits can be expected in relation to the following sustainability objectives:

- Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.
- Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth.
- Ensure adequate provision of high-quality employment land and diverse employment opportunities to meet the needs of local businesses and a changing workforce.

6.6.4 These benefits can be considerably enhanced by ensuring that development takes place in consultation with local communities that will be affected the most from new development and ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of local communities.

7 Monitoring of significant effects

The SEA Directive requires that the Environmental Report shall include...

“a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring...”

“Member States shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action”

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The SEA Directive requires the significant environmental effects of plans and programmes to be monitored, in order to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to take appropriate action where necessary.

7.1.2 The monitoring undertaken on the Core Strategy will help to:

- monitor the significant effects of the plan
- track whether the plan has had any unforeseen effects
- ensure that action can be taken to reduce / offset the significant effects of the plan
- provide baseline data for future sustainability appraisals and to provide a picture of how the environment / sustainability criteria of the area are evolving.

7.1.3 The requirements of the SEA Directive focus on monitoring the effects of the plan. This equates to both the plan's significant effects and also unforeseen effects. It may be difficult to implement monitoring mechanisms for unexpected effects, or to attribute such effects to the implementation of the Core Strategy when they occur. However, this provision may be understood as covering effects which differ from those which were predicted, or unforeseen effects which are due to changes of circumstances.

7.1.4 It is good practice for the monitoring of significant sustainability effects to be integrated with other monitoring of the Local Development Framework. For this reason, Wiltshire Council will report significant sustainability effects as part of its existing monitoring regime.

7.2 Proposed significant effects monitoring indicators

7.2.1 Proposed significant sustainability effects indicators are presented separately in Appendix F. These have been drawn from the baseline information and key

sustainability issues published within the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and are identified to monitor potential significant adverse effects highlighted in this report. Indicators have been reviewed to take account of representations received during the latest consultation exercise February-April 2012.

7.2.2 These indicators aim to:

- concentrate on the key sustainability issues identified in the appraisal
- provide information to identify when problems, including unexpected ones arise
- contribute to addressing deficiencies in data availability identified in this appraisal.

7.2.3 Monitoring will allow the Council to identify whether the recommended mitigation measures from the sustainability appraisal have been effective and to develop further mitigation proposals that may be required where unforeseen adverse effects are identified. In some cases monitoring may identify the need for a policy to be amended or deleted, which could trigger a review of the Core Strategy, or for further policy guidance to be developed e.g. in a Supplementary Planning Document.

8 Next steps

- 8.1 The Sustainability Appraisal Report accompanies the Core Strategy and is a key output of the appraisal process, presenting information on the effects of the plan on which formal public consultation is carried out.
- 8.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Report will accompany the Core Strategy when it is submitted to the Secretary of State. The role of the inspector during the examination process will be to consider the soundness of the Core Strategy, using the sustainability appraisal as part of the evidence base.
- 8.3 If any significant changes are made to the Core Strategy as a result of the examination process that may lead to additional significant effects not already covered in the sustainability appraisal, the report may need to be reviewed and updated, with changes documented.

This document was published by the Spatial Plans team, Wiltshire Council, Economy and Regeneration.

For further information please visit the following website:

<http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal>