

# **Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Examination in Public**

## **Position Statement on Matter 3**

**Housing Site Allocations**

**H2.5 Upper Studley, Trowbridge**

**PS/M3/29**

**March 2019**

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## **Matter 3: Housing Site Allocations H2.5 Upper Studley, Trowbridge**

### **Issue 5: Are the proposed sites justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**

#### **Issue 5.1 - Does the plan provide sufficient detail on form, scale, access and quantity of development for each site?**

1. Yes. Policies H2 and allocation H2.5 of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP) Submission Document (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>1</sup> and supporting text, incorporating the Council's Schedule of Proposed Changes (EXAM.01.01)<sup>2</sup>, when read in conjunction with the introductory supporting text in Chapter 5 of the Plan (paragraphs 5.1 to 5.12) provide sufficient detail. The introductory supporting text clarifies that the policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCO.01)<sup>3</sup> will also apply in considering the development of the site. When taken together with the Core Strategy, the Council considers the Plan provides sufficient detail on form, scale, access and quantity of development.
2. The quantity of development to be delivered is established in policy through the Schedule of Proposed Changes (EXAM.01.01) as being approximately 45 dwellings on a site area of approx. 2.27ha which is considered to be appropriate and achievable for the site.
3. Moreover, supporting text (as amended through the Schedule of Proposed Changes (EXAM.01.01) identifies a number of important elements that will need to be delivered to support any subsequent planning application. These include specific details in respect of landscape, habitats and flooding.
4. Access considerations were assessed through the site selection process and it is considered that a safe and suitable access would need to be holistically planned to include a new junction arrangement of the A361 that the Council considers would appropriately serve the site. (CATP.17a, p109)<sup>4</sup>. This will be dealt with through a Transport Assessment in support of a planning application as set out in the WHSAP paragraph 5.1 and 5.11.
5. Therefore, when read as a whole, the Council considers that the level of detail provided in the Plan is sufficient for the purpose of providing the necessary certainty to local communities and developers without being overly prescriptive.

#### **Issue 5.2 - Is the amount of development proposed for each site justified having regard to any constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure?**

6. The Council considers that the amount of development proposed for the site (approximately 45 dwellings) is justified by the evidence base (TOP.02, CATP.17a, SA.01A.a, SA.01.09)<sup>5</sup> and has had full regard to site specific constraints including: drainage, flood risk, ecology, landscape and education.

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<sup>1</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>2</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

<sup>3</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>4</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Community Area Topic Paper - Trowbridge July 2018 (updated September 2018)

<sup>5</sup> [TOP.02](#) WHSAP Topic Paper 2 - Site Selection Process Methodology July 2018 Submission version; [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018; [SA.01A.a](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report - revised September 2018; [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

7. In the light of identified constraints, assessments were undertaken to determine an appropriate scale of development. This was documented in the site selection process. The conclusions are reported in the Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper (CATP.17a)<sup>6</sup> (Appendices D, F and G).
8. The SHLAA (2011 Methodology, SHLAA.22)<sup>7</sup> site capacity was estimated at 52 dwellings for this site (SHELAA 3260, SHLAA Trowbridge Appendix (SHLAA2012.16)<sup>8</sup>, which formed a starting point for assessment using 30 dwellings per hectare and applying a multiplier to reduce the developable area to allow for non-housing uses.
9. Stage 2 of the WHSAP site assessment process then considered whether exclusionary criteria (such as Flood Zones 2/3) should result in a reduction of the SHLAA site capacity. In the case of H2.5, the site capacity was reduced from 52 to 44 dwellings due to the site's partial location within a flood zone 3 (CATP.17a, Table D.3).
10. The amount of development proposed at this site was further reduced due to constraints identified through the more detailed assessment of the Sustainability Appraisal (p155-171, SA.01A.09)<sup>9</sup>, summarised in the Trowbridge CATP17a (Appendix F, p82) and subsequent assessment (Appendix G, p108-110). However, the site quantum was increased to approximately 45 dwellings to maximise efficient use of land and re-assessed accordingly, following the consideration of consultation responses to the Pre-Submission Plan. The results of this additional work led to the Council's Proposed Changes PC70 (EXAM.01.01)<sup>10</sup>. Wiltshire Council considers that the development will be achievable within Flood Zone 1, at a density appropriate for this area of Trowbridge, and allowing for the necessary mitigation in relation to surface water drainage and green infrastructure as set out in the supporting text.
11. Infrastructure requirements are identified in the plan at paragraphs 5.43, 5.44, allocation H2.5 and paragraphs 5.73- 5.75 includes supporting text at paragraph 5.44 (WHSAP.01.01<sup>11</sup> including Proposed Change PC53 (EXAM.01.01)) outlining the considerations that need to be addressed in order for housing development to be accommodated at Trowbridge. These include the need to contribute the expansion of health services and primary school provision. However, there has now been an update in education requirements for the town (February 2019). The Council has recently received the latest birth rate data from the health authority. This evidence shows that the birth rate in Trowbridge and the surrounding villages has significantly declined, which is both unexpected and unprecedented. The Council has revised its pupil forecasts accordingly and this shows that the requirement for a third primary school has all but disappeared in Trowbridge.
12. It is proposed that the Plan text is further amended to reflect this new evidence at Policy H2 and paragraph 5.44. Proposed changes are asset out in Appendix 1. Should circumstances alter in respect of demographics at the town, the Council considers that the existing planning application process will allow for up to date evidence at the time of a planning application to be used to determine appropriate contribution to any necessary infrastructure, in accordance with WCS Core Policy 3<sup>12</sup>. However, based on currently

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<sup>6</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Community Area Topic Paper - Trowbridge July 2018 (updated September 2018)

<sup>7</sup> [SHELAA.22](#) SHLAA Methodology - Sept 2011

<sup>8</sup> [SHLAA2012.16](#) SHLAA 2012 Appendix-3 Trowbridge

<sup>9</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>10</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

<sup>11</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>12</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

available evidence, the Council considers that latent capacity in existing primary schools within the town would not preclude or delay development at this site.

13. Other infrastructure requirements are identified in the plan at paragraphs 5.43 and 5.44 (EXAM.01.01)<sup>13</sup>, which includes the potential need for an increase in capacity of doctor surgeries and dentistry within the town, and possible upgrade to drainage infrastructure (Trowbridge CATP (Appendix G, Table G.2, p86 - 88 and p108-110 (CATP.17a)<sup>14</sup>. Again, the Council consider that such infrastructure requirements will be appropriately assessed and delivered through the subsequent planning application process.
14. With regard to highways infrastructure, in Trowbridge, comprehensive transport studies have been carried out (Trowbridge Transport Strategy: Draft Strategy Refresh 2018 (4 May 2018) (WHSAP.07)<sup>15</sup>. These studies have assessed the strategic impact of the proposed sites and outline a transport strategy for the settlement which aims to mitigate the impact of proposed growth. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety. It identifies nine objectives which are specific to Trowbridge. Schemes have been identified, assessed and categorised to meet these objectives and address the current and forecast transport issues in Trowbridge. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety and shows that the impact of the proposed growth for the town as a whole can be mitigated.
15. In terms of ecological infrastructure, there is a specific need to address likely impacts on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which can be achieved through on-site mitigation as well as contributions to the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS) (BIO.45)<sup>16</sup>. Paragraph 5.44 and 5.76 of the WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>17</sup> states that development at Upper Studley and around the town will be required to contribute to the delivery of the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS) through financial contribution or direct provision of equivalent new green infrastructure to ensure there is no net loss of habitat for protected bat species, along with appropriate measures for managing increased recreational pressure associated with an anticipated increased population at the town.
16. In addition, the Trowbridge CATP (CATP.17a, p109) refers to the need to create a new junction to the A361, to avoid amenity impacts on Spring Meadows. This would be addressed through transport assessment informing development proposals and submitted as part of a planning application, in line with WCS Core Policy 61.
17. Mitigation of constraints and delivery of infrastructure requirements are considered achievable for a site of this size and the amount of development at this site is capable of providing mitigation on site or supporting off-site measures.
18. The Council considers that existing policy will allow for up to date evidence at the time of a planning application to be used to determine appropriate contribution to any necessary infrastructure, in accordance with WCS Core Policy 3 (WCO.01)<sup>18</sup>. However, based on currently available evidence, the Council consider that the amount of development at the site is appropriate and has full regard to constraints and infrastructure requirements.

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<sup>13</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

<sup>14</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Community Area Topic Paper - Trowbridge July 2018 (updated September 2018)

<sup>15</sup> [WHSAP.07](#) Trowbridge Transport Strategy Refresh May 2018 15052018 Cabinet

<sup>16</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

<sup>17</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>18</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

**Issue 5.3 - What is the likely impact of the proposed development on the following factors and do any of these indicate that the site should not be allocated:**

**i. biodiversity, in particular but not restricted to European protected habitats and species**

19. Any impacts of development on biodiversity can be successfully managed and mitigated, and would not preclude development of the site.
20. For sites in Trowbridge, a comprehensive strategy to deal with impacts on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC has been derived following a full appropriate assessment and in consultation with Natural England.
21. A settlement level Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA.01)<sup>19</sup> concluded that the relationship of the Elm Grove site with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC could contribute to effects alone and in-combination with other plans and projects and that a full appropriate assessment would be required (HRA.01). Subsequently the council produced an Addendum under the Habitats Regulations (HRA.02)<sup>20</sup>, and a further Addendum (HRA.02a)<sup>21</sup> to support the council's Schedule of Proposed Changes. All three assessment documents, each of which included an appropriate assessment, concluded that allocation sites at Trowbridge would need to comply with, and contribute to, a bespoke mitigation strategy for bats which addressed impacts arising from habitat loss / degradation as well as impacts which would be caused by recreational pressure.
22. The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS)<sup>22</sup> has been developed specifically to ensure that all impacts arising from allocation sites at Trowbridge will be fully mitigated. The strategy has been developed in consultation with Natural England and with input from local bat ecologists familiar with the area and the requirements of the bat species concerned. The document is currently out for public consultation (21 February – 21 March 2019) and it is intended the document will be adopted as SPD.
23. The TBMS sets out, at a strategic level, mitigation that will be required to be confident that adverse effects to the SAC will be prevented, addressing specifically:
  - Effects of habitat loss within green field sites. Mitigation for impacts alone will be delivered within the development site itself. Mitigation for residual and in-combination effects will be secured by Section 106 contributions towards off-site provision delivered by the Council. This will be based on an amount per dwelling or the equivalent for non-residential development.
  - Effects of recreational pressure arising from all residential development within a set radius from the key bat woodland sites. This cost will be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
24. Paragraphs 5.44 and 5.76 in the WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>23</sup> state that development will be required to contribute to the delivery of the TBMS through financial contribution or direct provision of equivalent new infrastructure over and above the Council's normal

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<sup>19</sup> [HRA.01](#) Habitats Regulations Assessment - Pre-submission draft plan June 2017

<sup>20</sup> [HRA.02](#) Addendum to the Assessment under the Habitat Regulations - Pre-submission draft plan May 2018

<sup>21</sup> [HRA.02.a](#) Addendum to the Assessment under the Habitat Regulations - Factual update September 2018

<sup>22</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

<sup>23</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

requirements (Trowbridge Appendix G, Table G.10, p117) (CATP.17a)<sup>24</sup>. Infrastructure requirements will be confirmed through the planning application process according to up to date evidence at the time.

25. Natural England has responded favourably to the above consultation for the TBMS (BIO.45)<sup>25</sup>.
26. Informed by the HRA, biodiversity considerations were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA.01A.9)<sup>26</sup> (p155), as summarised in Trowbridge CATP ((CATP.17a) at Appendix F, table F.14, p79-80,). The main impact for this site was related to the urbanisation of an area with habitats<sup>27</sup> that are likely to support species such as Greater Horseshoe Bats associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC. The assessment concluded that any subsequent development proposal will need to include protection measures for local habitats, due to the presence of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority habitat and species within the site. It is considered that such matters are within the scope of WCS Core Policy 50<sup>28</sup> and can be adequately addressed through the consideration of the ecological assessment accompanying a planning application.
27. When read as whole, alongside the policies of the WCS, including Core Policy 50 in this case, the Council considers that the provisions set out in the supporting text are capable of ensuring that all necessary infrastructure requirements associated with protecting and enhancing biodiversity will be delivered. For this site, the key impacts are habitat loss and recreational pressure associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC, and all mitigation requirements associated with the development of the Upper Studley site are considered to be achievable through implementation of the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy, which sets out requirements for on site green infrastructure and contributions to mitigate for recreational pressure.

## **ii. green infrastructure and agricultural land**

28. Green infrastructure aspects were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), (p166), and subsequent assessment at Stage 4 (Trowbridge CATP, Appendix G, p86 and p132). The impacts of development of this site in relation to green infrastructure are related to the loss of greenfield land and the extension of urbanisation of Silver and Spring Meadows into water meadows associated with the Lambrook Stream. The land is considered to be of moderate character, nevertheless, effective screening will be required. Mitigation measures also include the need to incorporate green infrastructure into development proposals.
29. The SA (p166) states that development of the site offers potential to contribute towards the delivery of a comprehensive network of green infrastructure and bolster existing habitats through comprehensive planting to screen the site and to protect existing hedgerows and veteran trees. These conclusions are reflected in Paragraphs 5.44 and 5.76 of the Plan (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>29</sup> which set out a comprehensive approach to mitigation of bat habitat loss through retaining and enhancing green infrastructure on site. The supporting text (paragraphs 5.74-5.76) sets out how landscaping and habitat corridors will be retained, protected and where possible enhanced through additional

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<sup>24</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>25</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

<sup>26</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>27</sup> Grassland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees

<sup>28</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>29</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018



planting. There is no evidence to suggest that mitigation measures are not achievable. Development proposals will be considered in the context of requirements set out in WCS Core Policy 52 (WCO.01)<sup>30</sup>.

30. Agricultural land was considered and evaluated in the Sustainability Appraisal (page 157-158 (SA.01A.9))<sup>31</sup> on the basis of available evidence. Development would lead to a net loss of agricultural land, however if this land were to be 'best and most versatile agricultural land' the appraisal concluded that given the scale and location of development, the impact would be minor to negligible in scale. There is no evidence to indicate that the site should not be allocated.

### **iii. landscape quality and character**

31. Landscape aspects were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal, p165-167 (SA.01A.9) and subsequent assessment at Stage 4, (CATP.17a, Appendix G)<sup>32</sup>. Further landscape evidence can be found in the Landscape Character Assessment (PSCON.11A)<sup>33</sup>, pages 44-45. The landscape is described as rolling water meadows, characterised by its relationship to the existing urban edge, with the Lambrok stream and agricultural fields associated with Southwick Country Park. Impacts are associated with urbanising of this greenfield site. There is a need to ensure that the development provides effective screening to protect the setting of Southwick Country Park and Southwick Court. The developable area would need to be reduced to accommodate mitigation measures incorporating the necessary landscaping and green infrastructure, including protection and enhancement of existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and provides open space along the Lambrok Stream corridor.
32. Paragraphs 5.74 – 5.76 (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>34</sup> provide guidance on the landscaping elements that need to be incorporated, which would be supported by the requirements of WCS Core Policy 51 and 52. In conclusion, it is considered that mitigation measures to address landscape quality and character are deliverable and capable of being fully addressed through landscape assessment informing development proposals and submitted as part of any future planning application, in line with WCS Core Policy 51 and there is no reason that the site should not be allocated.

### **iv. heritage assets**

33. Heritage assets were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (pages 12 - 13) and subsequent assessment at Stage 4 (CATP.17a, Appendix G, page 101).
34. The Sustainability Appraisal assesses the site as having medium to high archaeological potential and planning applications should be informed by appropriate assessment. Based on available evidence development of this site would not have significant adverse impacts on heritage assets, however a detailed heritage assessment and archaeological assessment would be required to support any planning application and inform proposals, in accordance with WCS Core Policy 58.

### **v. strategic and local infrastructure including transport**

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<sup>30</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>31</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>32</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>33</sup> [PSCON.11A](#) The Environment Partnership. Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, Stage 4a, Site Landscape Assessment, Part 1. June 2017

<sup>34</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

35. The requirement to consider strategic and local infrastructure requirements is set by WCS Core Policy 3<sup>35</sup>. Core Policy 3 provides a sound and suitable approach to ensuring that the development of the Upper Studley site will provide for essential and place-shaping infrastructure where it is needed, in a timely manner.
36. In Trowbridge, comprehensive transport studies have been carried out (Trowbridge Transport Strategy: Draft Strategy Refresh 2018 (4 May 2018) (WHSAP.07)<sup>36</sup>. These studies have assessed the strategic impact of the proposed sites and outline a transport strategy for the settlement which aims to mitigate the impact of proposed growth. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety. It identifies nine objectives which are specific to Trowbridge. Schemes have been identified, assessed and categorised to meet these objectives and address the current and forecast transport issues in Trowbridge. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety and shows that the impact of the proposed growth for the town as a whole can be mitigated.
37. Strategic and local infrastructure requirements were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (p155-171) (SA.01A.9)<sup>37</sup> and subsequent assessment at Stage 4 (Trowbridge CATP, Appendix G, p86 and p108-110) (CATP.17a)<sup>38</sup> and mitigation measures were identified for any subsequent development proposals. The assessment identified that there would be a likely cumulative impact of all proposed development at Trowbridge on transport, drainage infrastructure, education provision and health services provision. For the Upper Studley site in particular the assessment process identified the need to plan for a new junction to the A361 in order to access the site.
38. There has now been an update (February 2019) in education requirements for the town, which means that a new primary school is no longer required (as discussed above in paragraph 11&12).
39. Development at this site is capable of addressing the remaining strategic and local infrastructure requirements as identified in the assessments: It will provide funding contributions for local school provision (as per the updated position February 2019 as discussed above) (SA pages 168-170) and any necessary improvements to drainage infrastructure (SA pages 158-160 and 163-164); It will contribute to delivery of the comprehensive approach to addressing recreational pressures resulting from ecological constraints at the town through TBMS (paragraph 5.76) (BIO.45)<sup>39</sup>; and as discussed above (paragraphs 16-18 and 28) the site is able to deliver on-site mitigation of the impact on bat habitat loss. The necessary junction realignment at the site's access from the A361 will be addressed through transport assessment informing development proposals and submitted as part of a planning application, in line with WCS Core Policy 61 (WCO.01)<sup>40</sup>.
40. The Council considers that the planning application process will allow for relevant assessments informing development proposals and submitted with a planning application to be used to determine appropriate contribution to any necessary infrastructure, in accordance with WCS Core Policy 3,.

<sup>35</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>36</sup> [WHSAP.07](#) Trowbridge Transport Strategy Refresh May 2018 15052018 Cabinet

<sup>37</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>38</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>39</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

<sup>40</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

**vi. the efficient operation of the transport network, highway safety**

41. The efficient operation of the transport network and highway safety were considerations in Stage 4 of the site selection process, and any concerns have been presented in the Trowbridge CATP (CATP.17a, Appendix G, pages 108 – 111)<sup>41</sup>.
42. In Trowbridge, comprehensive transport studies have been carried out (Trowbridge Transport Strategy: Draft Strategy Refresh 2018 (4 May 2018) (WHSAP.07)<sup>42</sup>. These studies have assessed the strategic impact of the proposed sites and outline a transport strategy for the settlement which aims to mitigate the impact of proposed growth. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety. It identifies nine objectives which are specific to Trowbridge. Schemes have been identified, assessed and categorised to meet these objectives and address the current and forecast transport issues in Trowbridge. The transport study considered both highway operation and highway safety and shows that the impact of the proposed growth for the town as a whole can be mitigated.

**vii. air and water quality, noise pollution, odours, land stability, groundwater and flood risk**

43. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA01.09)<sup>43</sup> (pages 157-164) has identified wider considerations and constraints in relation to groundwater, air quality, noise and lighting, sustainable drainage and soakaways. All these issues are considered to be capable of being positively addressed through the development of planning applications.
44. With specific regard to air quality, the Sustainability Appraisal (page 160-162) concludes that local air quality is likely to be affected through increases in vehicular emissions. The Sustainability Appraisal mentions the need to consider the impact of increased vehicular emissions on wildlife / habitats at Southwick Country Park. The Council considers that mitigation measures in line with national and local plan policy, including WCS Core Policy 55 and the Air Quality Strategy, are achievable on this site.
45. In light of the requirements of the NPPF in relation to land stability, there are no known issues of concern in relation to this site.
46. Noise and odours have been considered (Sustainability Appraisal, pages 160-162) and the effects identified can be mitigated in accordance with local plan policy and regulations. A noise assessment may be required for this site due to the adjacent road, however there is no evidence to indicate that development would not be possible.
47. Specific constraints were identified for this site, due to the proximity of Lambrok Stream and the associated Flood Zones 2 and 3 on the southern part of the site. Proposals would need to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to manage surface water drainage. This is likely to include tree and hedgerow planting along the southern margins of the site to slow the flow of water into the stream, and will reduce the developable area of the site. Recognising the national and local planning policy imperative for the need to positively address flood risk, drainage and ground water protection, paragraph 5.73 (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>44</sup> (as amended by PC71 (EXAM.01.01)<sup>45</sup>) of the WHSAP requires that any development proposal be supported by a Flood Risk

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<sup>41</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>42</sup> [WHSAP.07](#) Trowbridge Transport Strategy Refresh May 2018 15052018 Cabinet

<sup>43</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>44</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>45</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

Assessment (incorporating an assessment of the predicted effects of climate change), along with a comprehensive Drainage Strategy to ensure that development will result in improved drainage conditions. Further discussion is provided in response to 5.12.

#### **viii. open space, recreational facilities and public rights of way**

48. The provision, protection and enhancement of open space, recreational facilities and public rights of way have been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (page 150)(SA.01A.9)<sup>46</sup>.
49. There are no specific considerations in relation to public rights of way and development of the site offers the opportunity to deliver green infrastructure through provision of open space, connections to and retention of existing footpath networks and green corridors. This is supported by the existing green infrastructure requirements set out in WCS Core Policy 52 (WCO.01)<sup>47</sup>.

#### **Issue 5.4 - In relation to the above, does the plan contain effective safeguards or mitigation measures necessary to achieve an acceptable form of development?**

50. Chapter 5 of the Plan, including Policy H2, allocation H2.5 and their supporting text (along with Proposed Change PC71) are considered to provide contextual detail that will guide future developers and decision makers and thereby inform mitigation measures required to support development. Reference is made to the need to develop proposals in accordance with existing policies set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy also, such that there are already effective safeguards to ensuring acceptable forms of development are to be delivered.

#### **Issue 5.5 - What infrastructure is critical to the delivery of each site? Where contributions are specified, are they necessary and justified by the evidence base? Is the plan sufficiently clear on how and when infrastructure provision will be required?**

51. WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01 and EXAM.01.01) paragraphs 5.1 – 5.12 introduce a range of generic requirements that may be required for each site. Paragraph 5.1 states that *'development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where necessary, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from proposals in accordance with [WCS] Core Policy 3 (Infrastructure requirements)'*.
52. Requirements for infrastructure contributions will be subject to review through the consideration of future planning applications submitted on the site. It is considered that contributions specified for this site are necessary and justified by the evidence base and the plan is clear on how and when infrastructure will be provided.
53. WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01<sup>48</sup> and EXAM.01.01<sup>49</sup>) paragraph 5.44 set out the various strategic and local infrastructure requirements for this site, all of which are considered to be achievable and justified by the evidence base.
54. There is no item of critical infrastructure needed in order to support development on the site.

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<sup>46</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>47</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>48</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>49</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

55. In terms of site specific related infrastructure, development at this site will result in the need to provide mitigation to address impacts in relation to ecology (in line with the emerging TBMS) (BIO.45)<sup>50</sup>, as set out in paragraph 5.44 and paragraphs 5.75-5.76 of the WHSAP (July 2018) (WHSAP.01.01). Paragraph 5.44 clearly states that contributions will be sought from development the sites proposed at Trowbridge to secure funding contributions towards local school capacity, increased capacity at local doctor's surgeries and dentistry at the town, and any necessary drainage infrastructure upgrades. These requirements are founded on evidence gathered through the plan making process and are therefore considered to be justified and necessary.
56. The Council considers that existing the planning application process will allow for up to date evidence at the time of a planning application to be used to determine appropriate contribution to any necessary infrastructure, in accordance with WCS Core Policy 3 (WCO.01)<sup>51</sup>.

**Issue 5.6 - Is the site in an accessible location with good access to everyday facilities by a range of means of transport? Does the plan provide an adequate basis to address any areas of deficiency?**

57. The accessibility of the proposed allocation assessed through Stage 2 (under 'land developable', Table D.3) and Stage 4 of the site assessment process (CATP/17a, Appendices D and G)<sup>52</sup>. Assessment of each site considered the following factors: accessibility to local bus services, rail stations and service centres; likely impacts on the local road network; site access arrangements and impacts.
58. The site assessment (Sustainability Appraisal page 157, 160 and 170) (SA.01A.9)<sup>53</sup> explains the site is located at the south west edge of Trowbridge and is considered to be a relatively sustainable location, however it is acknowledged that residents would use private car to access facilities and further afield. There is a bus stop approx. 375m from the site. There is a range of local / essential services within approx. 1000m from the site and accessible by walking and cycling. A larger range of services is available at Trowbridge town centre and would be accessible by bus, cycling and walking.
59. While residents are likely to use private vehicles, there are opportunities through the planning application process (e.g. the Transport Assessment and Design and Access Statement) to ensure that development of the site incorporates infrastructure to improve cycling opportunities (such as garages, sheds and secure bike stands) in accordance with WCS Core Policy 60 (WCO.01)<sup>54</sup>.

**Issue 5.7 - In cases where allocations do not have specific policies, is the reliance on supporting text likely to be an effective means of delivering the Council's requirements for each site? What is the justification for some sites having specific policies and some not?**

60. The submission version of the WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01) explains at paragraph 5.12 that allocations are proposed at some settlements that involve a mix of uses or site specific complexities and where it is more appropriate for development to be guided by a master plan approach, as opposed to detailed matters being addressed through policy criteria. There are five sites, of which this site is one, that have been identified as requiring a master plan.

<sup>50</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

<sup>51</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

<sup>52</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>53</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>54</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy

61. The remaining sites are allocated by Policies H2 and H3. Due to their less complex nature, these sites were not considered to require a master planned approach, and thus do not have a specific policy. The supporting text to the allocated sites provides future developers and decision makers with important contextual information regarding matters that will need to be addressed through the planning application process. Indeed, as set out Chapter 5 of the WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01), the Council anticipates that development proposals relating to all allocations will be guided by relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCO.01).
62. In conclusion, the Council considers that the specific requirements for each allocation within the WHSAP can effectively be delivered as drafted through a combination of policies and supporting text that will all be read in conjunction with the WCS.

**Issue 5.8 - Is the development proposed for each site deliverable in the timescales envisaged?**

63. Yes. The Council considers the proposed allocation can be delivered within five years. Wiltshire Council's latest assessment SHLAA (SHLAA2012.16)<sup>55</sup> indicates that the land is 'deliverable', i.e. that the land is available now with a realistic prospect of being viably developed for housing within five years. The more detailed assessment carried out through the WHSAP site selection process has considered a full range of constraints and it has concluded that development is likely to be deliverable within a 5-year timescale. This position is understood to be supported by a developer.

**Issue 5.10 - For sites in Trowbridge, will the plan be effective in ensuring adequate protection for bat habitats? What is the status of the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy referred to in the HRA and paragraph 5.44 of the WHSAP? How will this be implemented?**

64. For sites in Trowbridge, a comprehensive strategy to deal with impacts on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC has been derived following a full appropriate assessment and in consultation with Natural England.
65. A settlement level Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA.01)<sup>56</sup> concluded that the relationship of the Elm Grove site with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC could contribute to effects alone and in-combination with other plans and projects and that a full appropriate assessment would be required (HRA.01). Subsequently the council produced an Addendum under the Habitats Regulations (HRA.02)<sup>57</sup>, and a further Addendum (HRA.02a)<sup>58</sup> to support the council's Schedule of Proposed Changes. All three assessment documents, each of which included an appropriate assessment, concluded that allocation sites at Trowbridge would need to comply with, and contribute to, a bespoke mitigation strategy for bats which addressed impacts arising from habitat loss / degradation as well as impacts which would be caused by recreational pressure.
66. The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS) (BIO.45)<sup>59</sup> has been developed specifically to ensure that all impacts arising from allocation sites at Trowbridge will be fully mitigated. The strategy has been developed in consultation with Natural England

<sup>55</sup> [SHLAA2012.16](#) SHLAA 2012 Appendix-3 Trowbridge

<sup>56</sup> [HRA.01](#) Habitats Regulations Assessment - Pre-submission draft plan June 2017

<sup>57</sup> [HRA.02](#) Addendum to the Assessment under the Habitat Regulations - Pre-submission draft plan May 2018

<sup>58</sup> [HRA.02.a](#) Addendum to the Assessment under the Habitat Regulations - Factual update September 2018

<sup>59</sup> [BIO.45](#) Draft Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy

and with input from local bat ecologists familiar with the area and the requirements of the bat species concerned. The document is currently out for public consultation (21 February – 21 March 2019) and it is intended the document will be adopted as SPD.

67. The TBMS sets out, at a strategic level, mitigation that will be required to be confident that adverse effects to the SAC will be prevented, addressing specifically:
- Effects of habitat loss within green field sites. Mitigation for impacts alone will be delivered within the development site itself. Mitigation for residual and in-combination effects will be secured by Section 106 contributions towards off-site provision delivered by the Council. This will be based on an amount per dwelling or the equivalent for non-residential development.
  - Effects of recreational pressure arising from all residential development within a set radius from the key bat woodland sites. This cost will be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
68. Paragraphs 5.44 and 5.76 in the WHSAP (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>60</sup> state that development will be required to contribute to the delivery of the TBMS through financial contribution or direct provision of equivalent new infrastructure over and above the Council's normal requirements (Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper, Appendix G, Table G.10, p117) (CATP.17a)<sup>61</sup>. Infrastructure requirements will be confirmed through the planning application process according to up to date evidence at the time.
69. Natural England has responded favourably<sup>62</sup> to the above consultation for the TBMS.
70. Biodiversity considerations were also assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA.01A.9)<sup>62</sup> (p155), as summarised in Trowbridge CATP ((CATP.17a) at Appendix F, table F.14, p79-80). The assessment concluded that any subsequent development proposal will need to include protection measures for local habitats, due to the presence of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority habitat and species within the site, which aligns with the recommendations of the TBMS.

**Issue 5.12 - The supporting text for sites H2.4, H2.5, H2.6, H2.9 and H3.3 refers to parts of the sites being within Flood Zones 2 and/or Flood Zones 2 and 3? Is this approach consistent with national policy? Will the plan be effective in addressing drainage issues on these sites?**

71. Yes. The WHSAP has been prepared in line with the NPPF, WCS, the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)<sup>63</sup> and all relevant information in respect of the management of flood risk from all sources.
72. Site options were initially screened through a high-level assessment process. As set out in Topic Paper 2 (July 2018) (TOP.02)<sup>64</sup>, the site selection process considered the suitability of site options. A systematic assessment was applied that tested each SHLAA site against a range of exclusionary criteria, as set out in Table 4.1. One such criterion was: "Is the site fully or partly with flood risk zones 2 or 3?". SHLAA sites were either rejected outright, or saw their developable capacity reduced in the light of exclusionary constraints. This process was informed by the SFRA and mapped data in respect of

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<sup>60</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>61</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>62</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018

<sup>63</sup> [15.FR](#) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment documents.

<sup>64</sup> [TOP.02](#) WHSAP Topic Paper 2 - Site Selection Process Methodology July 2018 Submission version

flood risk from all sources. The Council is therefore satisfied that it has applied the sequential test as illustrated in Diagram 2 of the PPG.

73. Part of the allocated site H2.5 is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (approx 0.5ha of the 2.27ha site). The site capacity was consequently reduced from 52 dwellings to 44 dwellings during Stage 2 of the site selection process, as documented on page 57 of the Trowbridge CATP (CATP.17a)<sup>65</sup>. It should be noted that the site area was not reduced, just the capacity, in order that land unsuited to housing development could be useful within a scheme to deliver benefits such as open space or to mitigate adverse effects (as set out in the site selection methodology (TOP.02, paragraph 4.10).
74. The supporting text of the plan (as amended by PC71, EXAM.01.01<sup>66</sup>) recognises that part of the site is in Flood Zone 2 and 3, and the amendment provides for additional reassurance that flood risk will be assessed, the developable footprint sequentially planned to ensure that no built form takes place in critical flood zones and the necessary mitigation measures incorporated into the proposals (which may take place on the high risk flood areas).
75. As set out in the Trowbridge CATP (CAPT.17a), the site selection process concluded that due to the proximity of the Lambrok Stream and the associated Flood Zones 2 and 3 at the southern margins of the site, proposals would need to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to manage surface water drainage. This may include tree and hedgerow planting along the southern margins of the site to slow the flow of water into the stream, and will reduce the developable area of the site. The proposed changed to paragraph 5.73 (PC71) WHSAP paragraph 5.73, contains the statement that 'as parts of the site lie within Flood Zone 2 and 3, development proposals will need to be sequentially planned and supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (incorporating an assessment of the predicted effects of climate change). In addition, development proposals will need to be supported by a comprehensive drainage strategy designed to help inform site layout and provide attenuation measures, including Natural Flood Management – i.e. tree and hedgerow planting along the southern margins of the site to slow the flow of surface water into the Lambrok Stream' – this is considered to allow sufficient reassurance that development can take place on this site without increasing flood risk.

**Issue 5.15 - For Sites H2.4, H2.5 and H2.6, has sufficient attention been paid to the and cumulative effect of development on landscape character, biodiversity and heritage assets and Southwick Country Park?**

76. Yes, sufficient attention has been given to the cumulative effect of development for these sites. For sites H2.4, H2.5 and H2.6 there are heritage sensitivities (as detailed in the HIA), biodiversity considerations linked to the Bath and Bradford Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and landscape impacts on both the impact on the existing built up edge of Trowbridge and the wider countryside setting of Southwick Country Park to the south west of Trowbridge.
77. The impact on these assets has been fully assessed through the site selection process (as set out in the Council's response to issue 5.3 for each site). The Sustainability Appraisal also assessed the cumulative and synergistic effects related to the Plan in Chapter 8 of the Sustainability Appraisal Report (revised September 2018) (SA.01A.9)<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> [CATP.17a](#) Trowbridge Community Area Topic Paper - September 2018

<sup>66</sup> [EXAM.01.01](#) Schedule of Proposed Changes (Sept 2018) (Part 1 of 46) Main Report

<sup>67</sup> [SA.01A.9](#) Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1 - A.9 Trowbridge May 2018



Paragraphs 8.3.48-8.3.63 assess the impact of policy H2 which sets out all the allocations proposed in Trowbridge. Paragraph 8.3.48 states that some moderate adverse effects were common across a number of the allocations and that these 'cross-cutting' themes included biodiversity (protected bat species) landscape and the historic environment.

78. Cross cutting themes for Trowbridge have been recognised in paragraph 5.44 of the Plan (WHSAP.01.01)<sup>68</sup> and landscape character, biodiversity and heritage assets are recognised as key considerations for all three allocations.
79. Mitigation has been evidenced and required in the supporting text of the draft Plan to ensure that any harm to these assets is minimised and the form of development that will come from meeting these requirements will result in: retention of a 'green' river corridor across the sites, preservation of the rural setting to Southwick Country Park, better access between Trowbridge and the wider countryside, preservation of the setting of Southwick Court.
80. The following are examples of how the cumulative effects for development on landscape character, biodiversity and heritage assets and Southwick Country Park have been taken into account:
  - The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy is an area wide strategy to address impacts on bat species associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation.
  - The setting of Southwick Country Park and access to the wider countryside crosses all three sites and has been considered despite the country park being beyond the site boundaries.
  - The setting of Southwick Court in its agrarian landscape has also been considered within its wider context including the mosaic of water meadows that extends through H2.6 and H2.4.
81. The very nature of these issues mean that consideration has been given to wider impact beyond the proposed site allocations themselves.
82. Landscape character, biodiversity and heritage assets are also able to be addressed in an interlinked manner on the sites, for example, the provision of open space in H2.6 to the west of the site will protect the setting of Southwick Court and Southwick Country Park as well as providing open space for recreational use and ensuring that habitat is maintained for the bats.
83. It is considered that these considerations can be addressed through the process of detailed design and layout, informed by further detailed assessments to support any subsequent planning application, in line with WCS (WCO.01)<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> [WHSAP.01.01](#) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan - Submission Document July 2018

<sup>69</sup> [WCO.01](#) Wiltshire Core Strategy