

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 9 October 2013

Site Allocations and Development Management Plan – Preferred Option

Report of the Policy Lead Officers

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mark Edwards)

1. Executive Summary

This Report recommends the publication of the Council's Preferred Options Site Allocations and Development Management Plan. The Plan represents an important planning policy document which identifies future areas of growth within the Borough and detailed Development Management policies to guide decision-making.

Subject to approval, the document will be subject to at least six weeks public consultation including a series of public exhibitions in communities likely to be most affected by development. A revised Statement of Community Involvement will also be consulted upon.

The Preferred Options stage has been reached following extensive early consultation with the public and key stakeholders. It is informed by a detailed assessment of the sustainability of different policy options (the Sustainability Appraisal).

The Plan proposes the identification of strategic urban extensions at Comeytrowe/Trull and Staplegrove as well as a series of smaller allocations at Taunton including Ford Farm, Norton Fitzwarren.

No further development is proposed for Wellington through the Plan. Preferred sites are identified at the Major Rural Centres, where in the case of Wiveliscombe a significant proportion of the development is committed.

In the Minor Rural Centres, Officers have taken into account a number of important factors including character and size of settlements before arriving at the scale of development to be accommodated at each centre. Appropriate sites have been identified in each centre reflecting the findings of the SA.

The Plan also includes a number of proposed new and replacement Development Management policies to complement those established through the adopted Core Strategy.

Some small scale changes to settlement boundaries are also proposed where they are considered to be logical and appropriate.

2. Background

- 2.1 This Report recommends the publication of the Council's Preferred Options Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) for public consultation. The Plan is included at Appendix 1 to this Report. The SADMP represents an important Planning Policy Document; it will guide the future location of development across the Borough and establish policies used to inform decision-making through the Development Management process.
- 2.2 The SADMP represents the third Development Plan Document being progressed to adoption and follows the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (TTCAAP), adopted in 2008 and the Borough's Core Strategy adopted in 2012. The Plan is complementary to the existing DPDs prepared by the Council and will help to ensure that the Borough benefits from full and comprehensive planning policy coverage.
- 2.3 Planning Regulations guide Officers in the procedure to follow in preparing DPDs. This procedure requires that the Council undertakes consultation prior to the publication of its Draft Plan, which itself is subject to a more formalised representation period prior to its examination by an independent planning inspector and adoption.
- 2.4 Officers undertook an initial 'Issues and Options' consultation on the SADMP in early 2013. This took the form of a series of public exhibitions across the Borough and gave an opportunity for communities, developers, landowners and other key stakeholders to comment on a range of sites and policy options.
- 2.5 Officers have now had the opportunity to consider the responses made through the Issues and Options consultation. A report of the consultation was published in Spring 2013. Having reflected on the substantive issues raised through the consultation, Officers have now drafted the recommended Preferred Options SADMP. Subject to the agreement of Scrutiny and Executive, the Plan will be published for public consultation towards the end of October. This stage of the Plan is referred to as the Regulation 18 stage under the Local Plans Regulations.

3. Preferred Options Site Allocations and Development Management Plan

- 3.1 The attached SADMP Preferred Options document sets out Officers preferred sites for allocation and policy directions to be followed through detailed development management policies. The Plan has been through the LDF Steering Group prior to its presentation at Scrutiny and Executive.

How the Preferred Options are Identified

- 3.2 Officers have carefully considered the representations made through the Issues and Options consultation and where necessary, sought additional information and clarification from key stakeholders like the Environment Agency and County Council.
- 3.3 The options put forward in respect of both sites and policies have been subject to detailed consideration through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA is an integral part of plan-making and allows us to consider the likely sustainability implications of choosing a particular policy direction as well as possible mitigation measures.
- 3.4 The Sustainability Appraisal is appended to this Report at Appendix 2. It shows how the options considered perform against a number of sustainability objectives. These objectives address environmental, economic and social implications associated with different options.
- 3.5 Officers have not appended the detailed appendices that underpin the SA to this Report. This is because these appendices contain a significant amount of detailed information that would otherwise substantially increase the length of this Report and its supporting documents. The full SA and supporting appendices will be published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options SADMP.
- 3.6 The identified Preferred Options reflect the findings of the SA but also the deliverability of particular options since National Planning Policy Framework places significant weight on the deliverability of plans.

Preferred Options for Taunton:

- 3.7.1 Central to the Preferred Options for Taunton is the proposed allocation of two strategic site allocations at Comeytrowe/Trull and Staplegrove. Both of these sites were identified as 'Broad Locations' within the adopted Core Strategy and anticipated to be allocated in the SADMP.
- 3.7.2 The Council has recently commissioned consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff to undertake further technical work to inform the proposed allocations at both Broad Locations. Several potential options have been identified and considered for Comeytrowe/Trull and Staplegrove. This work has helped to inform the proposed 'red-line' boundaries identified for both allocations.
- 3.7.3 Officers would propose the allocation of both sites on the basis outlined within the SADMP. In both cases, there is a clear and apparent need for comprehensive masterplanning to inform future planning proposals. In the event that applications are promoted in either Broad Location ahead of the Plan's adoption, the Council will need to be satisfied that appropriate masterplanning has been undertaken, consistent with the

requirements of Core Strategy policies SS6 and SS7.

- 3.7.4 The Core Strategy also identified the need for a new strategic employment site at the Town. The SADMP proposes a second strategic employment site at Junction 25/Ruishton. This site would serve the qualitative need for future employment growth to enable Taunton to fulfil its full economic potential.
- 3.7.5 In addition to the Broad Locations, the Council needs to identify a range of smaller sites to help ensure that the new homes target of at least 13,000 new homes within the Town over the Plan period can be met. This is particularly critical given the acknowledged high degree of reliance that the Plan would otherwise have upon the strategic sites at: Monkton Heathfield (c. 4,500 homes), Nerrols (c. 900 homes), Staplegrove (c. 1,000 homes) and Comeytrowe/Trull (c. 2,000 homes). Moreover, Officers are aware that some of the sites identified by the TTCAAP may not now yield the number of residential units envisaged by that Plan.
- 3.7.6 Ford Farm has previously been identified by Officers as a sustainable site for allocation. Whilst the site currently lies within Flood Plain, its identification for development would see the completion of a flood scheme, channel work improvements and ground-raising. These works will complement the wider Norton Fitzwarren flood risk management strategy (The Dam and channel widening works through the former Cider Factory) and ensure that new properties at Ford Farm are protected to a 1 in 100 year plus climate change standard of protection. It would also secure the completion of the Norton Bypass which would reduce traffic through the heart of the Village. Officers would therefore strongly recommend the inclusion of this site within the Preferred Options Plan.
- 3.7.7 Officers would recommend that land at Longrun Farm and St Augustines School is safeguarded in the Plan for potential future education uses at this stage. Both of these sites perform very well against the sustainability objectives identified in the SA, however, in view of on-going uncertainty around secondary school provision in the Town, Officers feel it would be premature to release these sites for housing without prior assurance that the sites could not be used for education uses. In the event that it can be demonstrated that land at Longrun is not suitable for education uses and/or St Augustines is surplus to requirements then both sites would be suitable for accommodating housing or mixed-use schemes.
- 3.7.8 Land at Bishops Hull is proposed for c. 70 dwellings. The site's development would be dependent on addressing improvements to surface water drainage at Chute Water. Officers are also proposing the allocation of a small site at Pyrland Hall Farm for up to 60 units. This site would need to be sensitively designed to respect the setting of the Listed Farm complex and also provide appropriate mitigation for

Lesser Horseshoe Bats and landscaping.

- 3.7.9 Detailed work addressing the proposed Urban Extension at Comeytrove/Trull has also identified the potential for a development at Higher Comeytrove Farm. This site can only logically come forward after an initial northern phase of an Urban Extension at the A38 has been delivered and would have potential for up to 150 dwellings.
- 3.7.10 A small site at Kingston Road is also proposed for inclusion. This site lies within the existing settlement limits and is compliant with development plan policies. It is anticipated that this site could yield 10 dwellings.

Preferred Options for Wellington:

- 3.8.1 In view of the number of plots already consented and delivered within the Town, Officers do not consider it appropriate to make any further allocations through the SADMP. Even without making any allowance for future 'windfall' unplanned development, the housing trajectory indicates a projection of more than 2,800 new homes over the Plan period set against the Core Strategy target of at least 2,500.

Preferred Options for the Major Rural Centres:

- 3.9.1 The Core Strategy identifies Wiveliscombe and Bishops Lydeard as 'Major Rural Centres' to accommodate up to 200 new homes through allocations.
- 3.9.2 In Wiveliscombe planning permission or resolutions to grant planning have been made on land in and around Style Road / Burges Lane. These sites will deliver around 120 of the 200 homes envisaged by the Core Strategy. Officers most favoured site without planning permission is land at Croft Way. This site was identified in an earlier 2010 consultation as the Council's preferred site. It would represent a logical rounding of the Town and adjoins the recently constructed Doctor's Surgery.
- 3.9.3 Sites at the southern end of Bishops Lydeard were strongly favoured through the Issues and Options consultation. These sites would not exacerbate congestion and parking problems through the heart of the Village and it is principally on this basis that Officers would recommend these sites for allocation through the SADMP.

Preferred Options for the Minor Rural Centres:

- 3.10.1 Five Minor Rural Centres were identified in the Core Strategy; at Creech St. Michael, Cotford St. Luke, Milverton, North Curry and Churchinford. These villages were anticipated to accommodate allocations of at least 250 new homes between them.

3.10.2 We have carefully considered the character, setting, size and capacity of key infrastructure prior to recommending the following apportionment of new homes across the Minor Rural Centres:

- Creech St. Michael c. 110
- Cotford St. Luke c. 60
- Milverton c. 20
- North Curry c. 40
- Churchinford c. 20

3.10.3 Officers considered that the three sites which now benefit from planning permission in Creech in and around Hyde Lane represent the most appropriate options to accommodate development. No further sites will be identified here.

3.10.4 In Cotford, Officers preference is to see land to the east of the settlement, a combination of Sites 2 and 3 as the Preferred Option. This would help limit the extent of encroachment into the surrounding countryside on the eastern parts of both sites. A vehicular though route linking both sites with the southern and northern ends of Dene Road would be required. The Highway Authority have concerns that the southern end of Dene Road (north of Dene Barton) may not be suitable for vehicular access without improvement. The Council will require evidence from the site owner through this current consultation that such a route is achievable to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority and is financially deliverable without detriment to other planning requirements for the allocation. If this cannot be demonstrated the Council will progress an allocation on site 2 only as this can be readily achieved from Dene Road (north).

3.10.5 Officers consider that a small development of up to 20 dwellings at Butts Way, Milverton should be identified through the SADMP. Whilst this site is less accessible than some of the options identified, its likely impact on landscape, nature conservation and historic character is lesser.

3.10.6 The preferred sites for North Curry are Overlands and land off Knapp Lane. Overlands performs well against the SA criteria although it will be important to ensure that any new development provides appropriate footpath links to the Heart of the Village and protects the sensitive setting of the Grade 2* Listed Farm Complex. The site is considered likely to accommodate up to 20 units.

3.9.7 Knapp Lane can accommodate the remaining 20 homes for North Curry. The site is well contained in the landscape, is reasonably accessible to the Village's services and facilities and can be acceptably accessed in the opinion of the Highways Authority.

3.9.8 Officers do not feel it appropriate to recommend land at White Street for inclusion despite the support of the Parish Council. This site has

previously been dismissed at Appeal and was recently refused planning consent on the grounds of impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings.

- 3.9.9 Ford Farm was the only site identified for potential allocation through the SADMP and Issues and Options consultation. It is proposed to accommodate up to 20 units and will need to be carefully designed to minimise impact on the AONB.

Development Management Policies:

- 3.9 In the case of more detailed DM policies, Officers have considered carefully the need for additional policies taking into account the Framework, our existing Local Plan policy coverage and the Government's desire to avoid un-necessary policy duplication.
- 3.10 The Preferred Options have structured a limited number of proposed new and carried forward Local Plan policies against the eight strategic objectives framed by the adopted Core Strategy namely:

- Climate Change
- The Economy
- Town and Other Centres
- Housing
- Inclusive Communities
- Accessibility
- Infrastructure
- Environment

- 3.11 Officers have also considered it appropriate to propose a series of design policies to help guide and inform planning proposals.

Proposed Changes to Settlement Boundaries:

- 3.12 The SADMP process also presents an opportunity to consider the appropriateness of existing settlement boundaries. These boundaries were established through the Local Plan, adopted in 2004. Consequently we have consulted on the need to make logical changes to the existing boundaries of the Borough's urban areas.
- 3.13 Through the Issues and Options consultation a significant number of potential amendments were put forward. Officers have now had the opportunity to consider each of the responses and would recommend a small number of changes as set out in the Plan.

Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Provision:

- 3.14 The Council has recently commissioned an update to the 2010 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. Whilst the findings of this Report will be reported to Members separately to the SADMP, given

that the commission will identify long-term requirements beyond 2028, this will undoubtedly increase the strategic targets for gypsy and traveller provision.

- 3.15 The adopted Core Strategy stated that provision for gypsy and traveller sites would be made through the SADMP. Unfortunately, to-date no sites have been promoted for such uses despite numerous 'calls for sites' and requests for land to be put forward.
- 3.16 The failure to identify potential sites in part can probably be traced back to landowner expectations. Many landowners and site promoters will understandably want to maximise the return from any site and consequently not wish to promote land for gypsy and travellers where 'hope value' exists.
- 3.17 Since we have now reached a relatively advanced stage, identifying preferred options for allocation it seems appropriate to re-consult one more time with a view to identifying sites. Officers propose to contact those who have previously promoted land for allocation with a view to identifying sites which could be considered for gypsy and traveller pitches.
- 3.18 In the event that some landowners are prepared to promote land for pitches, the Council would need to consider these sites against its criteria-based Core Strategy policy. Further public consultation would then need to be undertaken on these sites.
- 3.19 Whilst this exercise may not necessarily yield any further sites for consideration (and ultimately sites that *could* be allocated through the SADMP), Officers consider this exercise as quite important in taking steps to ensure the soundness of the SADMP. Failure to take proactive steps to identify land for gypsies and travellers would not only represent a significant risk to the Development Plan but also increase the potential of planning permissions being granted at appeal on sites the Council may wish to resist.

4. The Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Taunton Deane Borough Council will involve the community and stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of local planning policy and the consideration of planning applications.
- 4.2 The Council's last SCI was produced in 2007 and is consequently now out-of-date. To this end Officers have now reviewed the SCI. The 2013 draft SCI is appended to this Report and is included at Appendix 3.

4.3 The 2013 review simplifies the 2007 SCI document. It takes account of changes to planning policy nationally and the way in which the Council is structured and organised. The aim is to create a clear and concise document which sets out:

- When and how people can get involved with the preparation of local planning policy and comment on planning applications;
- How the Council will notify people of the opportunity to engage with the planning policy and development management process.

4.4 Officers propose that the Council should consult on this new draft SCI at the same time as the SADMP and draft Affordable Housing SPD. The statutory national stakeholders, local stakeholders and interested parties will have the opportunity to comment on the draft document. In addition this is a key opportunity to gauge the views of disabled and minority groups in the Deane to ensure our strategy for consultation helps them to engage in the preparation of local planning policy and comment on planning applications.

5. What Happens Next?

5.1 Subject to the agreement of the Scrutiny and Executive Committees, Officers intend to publish the Preferred Options for consultation towards the end of October. The consultation will run for a period of not less than six weeks and will comprise a series of public consultation events to be undertaken in a range of locations likely to be affected by the growth planned by the SADMP.

5.2 Beyond the Preferred Options, Officers will consider the further comments made in respect of the Plan and undertake further evidence gathering required to support the document.

5.3 A separate report has been prepared outlining the Project Plan for preparation of the SADMP. This is referred to as the Local Development Scheme and anticipates that the Draft Plan will be published in Summer 2014. The SADMP is likely to be adopted in Spring 2015 following independent examination in early 2015.

6. Finance Comments

6.1 The SADMP will help to deliver the growth agenda established in the adopted Core Strategy, helping to attract inward investment into the Borough. The Government's New Homes Bonus scheme rewards new housing completions by matching Council Tax on additions to housing stock over a six year period. Subject to the Council's adoption of Community Infrastructure Levy, the development sites identified in the

SADMP will help to secure a significant level of planning contributions over the Plan period.

7. Legal Comments

- 7.1 Upon adoption, the SADMP will form part of the Statutory Development Plan for the Borough. As such it will be the starting point for the determination of many future planning applications.

8. Links to Corporate Aims

- 8.1 The SADMP will help to deliver both the Corporate Vision and three aims of the Corporate Business Plan:

Vision: Taunton Deane is known nationally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment

Aim 1: Quality sustainable growth and development

Aim 2: A vibrant economic environment

Aim 3: A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment

- 8.2 The Plan identifies sustainable development in the most appropriate locations. It also enables the economy to grow through the recognition of new employment opportunities and the jobs provided by the construction industry. The policies set by the Plan will help to ensure a vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment.

9. Environmental Implications

- 9.1 The SADMP contains policies addressing and responding to climate change, the environment, reducing the need to travel and the sustainable use of resources and design. A separate Sustainability Appraisal has been used to help inform the formulation and refinement of the Preferred Options.

10. Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 Policies on Inclusive Communities and Design will help to ensure community safety considerations are taken into account in decision-making on planning applications. These complement adopted Core Strategy policy CP5: Inclusive Communities.

11. Equalities Impact

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken on the Core Strategy. As the Preferred Options are further refined into the Draft Plan, a further EqIA will be undertaken.

12. Risk Management

12.1 The SADMP is a high priority in the Growth and Development Service Plan. Officers have undertaken Risk Assessment through both service-planning and to inform the Council's Local Development Scheme.

13. Partnership Implications

13.1 Whilst the SADMP is prepared by Officers on behalf of the Council, its policies, proposals and allocations can only be delivered in partnership with key stakeholders, the development industry and our communities.

14. Recommendations

14.1 The Executive is recommended to:-

- a) Note the contents of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan Preferred Options;
- b) Agree that the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan be published for consultation as soon as is practicable (subject to any necessary minor amendments to be agreed with the Portfolio Holder);
- c) Agree that independently of the Preferred Options consultation, officers be authorised to write to the promoters of appropriate sites not proposed to be included for allocation in the Plan to ascertain if these sites could be considered for gypsy and traveller pitch provision; and
- d) Approve publication of the Council's revised Statement of Community Involvement for consultation alongside the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.

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Sustainability Appraisal of regulation 18 consultation

Volume 1

The principles of sustainable development are at the heart of the planning system. The sustainability appraisal (SA) process is intended to ensure that through plan-making, Local Planning Authorities have considered social, environmental and economic concerns when producing Local Development Frameworks.

Under Section 39(2) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* (as amended by the *Planning Act 2008* and *Localism Act 2011*)¹, the carrying out of SA is mandatory on any new or revised Development Plan Documents (DPDs). In addition to the SA requirement, Local Planning Authorities are also required by law to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of *European Directive 2001/42/EC*. This Directive “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment or ‘SEA Directive’” is outlined in detail in the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004* (the SEA regulations). Planning Policy Framework under Plan Making indicates 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. Appendix 1 outlines where this draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (and indeed, subsequent Sustainability Appraisal Reports) fulfils the SEA Directive’s requirements.

The Taunton Deane Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan and subsequent SA will be prepared in accordance with the legal and planning framework making use of the Government’s guidance: *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents* ODPM, 2005 but also takes into account the 2008 legislative changes. The Development Plan Document (DPD) component of this guidance has been replaced by sustainability appraisal guidance for DPDs in the CLG Plan Making Manual launched in September 2009. This is authored by Communities and Local Government and hosted by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

The document provides a useful and easy to follow structure to ensure that SA is well-integrated within plan-making and is divided into five key stages summarised below:

Stage A: Setting the context, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope (**a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was produced in January 2013, this was subject to public consultation along with the SADMPP. The SA Scoping was also subject to statutory consultation with Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage. The document can be reviewed through our website at:**

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects (**this Report represents Stage B**)

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

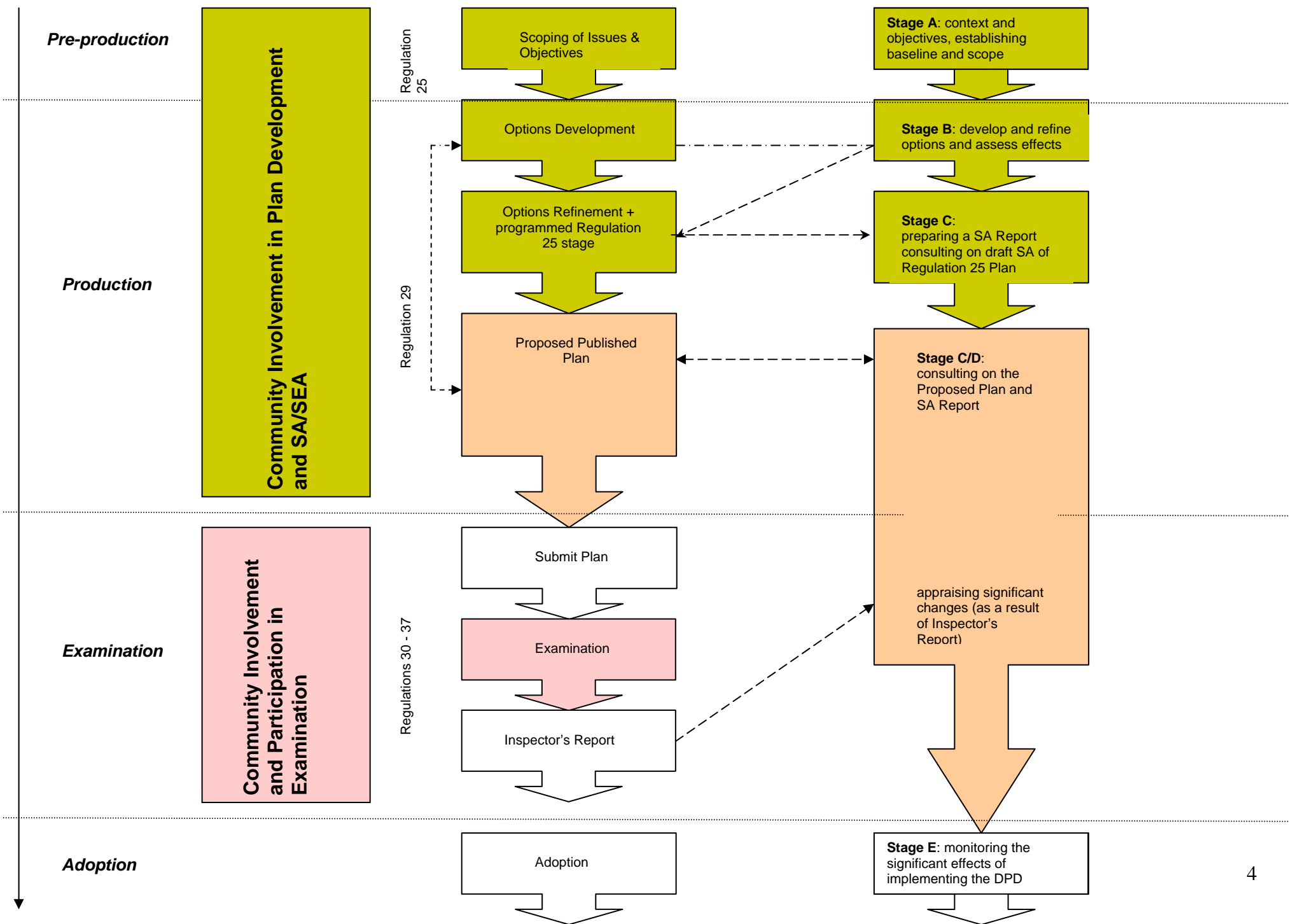
Stage D: Consulting on the Development Plan Document and Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Development Plan Document

The diagram on the following page gives an indication as to how the Sustainability Appraisal process will be integrated into plan-making. We will test the Core Strategy through SA and it will evolve in response to the SA’s results. The SA process will inform key decisions on plan-making

¹ Further changes to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Any of the amendments to the Act, however, do not relate or change the requirement of Local Authorities in producing an SA.

in a timely way, consistent with the milestones set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme.



Stages A-E of the Sustainability Appraisal process are sub-divided into a number of tasks which should be completed in order to satisfy the SA and SEA requirements. These stages and the tasks associated with them are defined in more detail below:

Stage	Task	Purpose
<p>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope (we are here)</p>	<p>A1: Identifying other relevant plans, policies, programmes, and sustainability objectives.</p>	<p>To document how the plan is affected by outside factors and suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed.</p>
	<p>A2: Collecting baseline information.</p>	<p>To provide an evidence base for sustainability issues, effects and monitoring.</p>
	<p>A3: Identifying sustainability issues.</p>	<p>To focus the SA and streamline subsequent stages, includes baseline information analysis, setting of the SA framework, prediction of effects and monitoring.</p>
	<p>A4: Developing the SA framework.</p>	<p>To develop a means by which sustainability of a plan can be appraised.</p>
	<p>A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA.</p>	<p>To consult with statutory bodies to ensure SA covers key sustainability issues.</p>
	<p>B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework.</p>	<p>To ensure that DPD objectives accord with sustainability principles and identify any conflicts between DPD objectives. This will help refine DPD objectives as well as developing options</p>
	<p>B2: Developing the DPD options.</p>	<p>To identify a range of development options which can be assessed against the SA framework.</p>
	<p>B3: Predicting the effects of the DPD.</p>	<p>To predict the social, environmental and economic effects of the options being considered in the DPD</p>

Stage	Task	Purpose
<p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p>	<p>B4: Evaluating the effects of the DPD.</p>	<p>process. Potential effects should be quantified where possible.</p> <p>To evaluate the significance of the likely effects of the DPD.</p>
	<p>B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects.</p>	<p>To identify measures to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effects of implementing the DPD.</p>
	<p>B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPD.</p>	<p>To identify a means by which to monitor actual significant effects of implementation of DPD against those predicted by the SA.</p>
<p>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p>	<p>C1: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report.</p>	<p>This Report on the draft DPD is a key output in the SA process. It should clearly show how SEA directive requirements have been met.</p>
	<p>D1: Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and the Sustainability Appraisal Report.</p>	<p>To provide the public with the opportunity to comment on not only the draft plan but also the SA and its findings.</p>
	<p>D2(i): Appraising significant changes.</p>	<p>To ensure any changes that are made between the draft DPD and it being submitted must be appraised in terms of their sustainability impact.</p>
<p>Stage D: Consulting on the preferred options of the DPD and the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p>	<p>D2(ii) Appraising significant changes resulting from representations.</p>	<p>To ensure that any changes made to the DPD following binding recommendations of an Inspector are appraised in terms of their sustainability impact.</p>
	<p>D3: Making decisions and providing information.</p>	<p>To ensure that an adopted DPD has taken into account the findings of the SA process in full.</p>

Stage	Task	Purpose
Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD.	E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring.	To ensure that the monitoring information gathered is appropriate, up-to-date and reliable.
	E2: Responding to adverse effects.	To ensure that when a plan results in adverse effects the Local Planning Authority can take action.

The remainder of this Scoping Report has been sub-divided with a separate section for each of the discrete tasks associated with Stage A of the sustainability appraisal.

A4: Developing the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

Identifying Objectives

By completing tasks A1 – A3 we have developed a key understanding of the main sustainability issues for Taunton Deane. From this understanding we have drafted the following sustainability objectives to reflect the main issues. The sustainability objectives are structured to reflect the 8 strategic objectives and core policies in the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy 2011-2028. An additional objective on design has been included to reflect the Council's priorities for sustainable design and construction.

Climate Change:

- Objective:**
- 1a) *'To consider, mitigate and adapt to the possible effects of climate change'*.
 - 1b) *'To promote the usage of renewable sources of energy'*.
 - 1c) *'To reduce the flood risk and the threat to people and property'*.

- Justification:**
- 1) The implications and threat posed by climate change has been well documented. In recent years there has been a policy shift towards promotion of renewable sources of energy. Flood risk is a critical climatic factor in its own right, and this is reflected in the significant number of existing properties and urban areas within areas of greatest risk as well as likely future development pressures on such areas.

Economic development:

- Objective:**
- 2) *'To foster an entrepreneurial economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer'*.
- Justification:**
- 2) Average earnings and productivity levels are low and should be addressed.

Town and Other Centres:

- Objective:**
- 3) *'To strengthen and safeguard the vitality and viability of our town centres'*.
- Justification:**
- 3) The importance of protecting the vitality and viability of town centres is reflected in national planning policy framework. The adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy sets out the hierarchy of centres within the Borough to support development appropriate to their role and function. Proposals for main town centre uses will be assessed sequentially in order to support the vitality and viability of centres and promote easy access to services.

Housing

- Objective:** 4 a) *'To provide and maintain a sufficient supply of good quality, mixed housing, including an appropriate level of affordable housing to meet local needs and strategic housing requirements'.*
- 4 b) *'To ensure sustainably balanced places are created and maintained providing access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities'.*
- Justification:** Affordability of housing is a major problem and needs to be addressed through supply of appropriate housing in line with the affordable housing targets as set out in the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy.

Inclusive Communities

- Objective** 5 a) *'To reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well-being for all residents of the Borough.'*
- 5 b) *'To ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all.'*
- Justification:** We need to consider the implications of our plans on the quality of life, health and well being of all our residents. This has increasingly been reflected in the shift towards spatial planning.

Accessibility:

- Objective** 6) *'To minimise the need to travel (particularly by car), and facilitate more sustainable forms of transport'.*
- Justification** 6) Development needs to mitigate against climate change and address social exclusion of those residents without car ownership. There is a clear link between sustainable transport modes (cycling and walking) and public health.

Infrastructure:

- Objective** 7) *'To ensure that development provides or contributes to the physical, green and social infrastructure that is necessary for the development to proceed and to mitigate the impact of existing communities and the environment'.*
- Justification:** 7) The needs of our residents are diverse and we need to ensure we cater for all of them. This means providing access to education, shops and services, recreational provision, flood alleviation and transport schemes - all of which will be shaped by future housing provision.

Environment

Objective

- 8 a) *'To protect, conserve and enhance the Plan Area's natural habitats, species and biodiversity'.*
- 8b) *'To preserve and enhance the character and quality of the Borough's landscape'.*
- 8c) *'To preserve and enhance the Borough's built environment, heritage and archaeology'.*

Justification

- 8) There are several protected species in Taunton Deane as well as wildlife sites of international, national and local importance. Much of the Borough's natural environment is valued and should be protected for current and future generations. Much of our built and natural heritage is valued. The recognised through national and local designations and contributes to the high quality environment.

Design

Objective

- 9) *'To encourage sustainable design and practise'.*

Justification

- 9) The perceived character of Taunton Deane is substantially influenced by the design and layout of buildings and streetscapes. The National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Core Strategy emphasise that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Testing the compatibility of SA objectives

Our SA objectives have been chosen to reflect the remit of the LDF as a spatial plan. They cannot hope to adequately cover all of the sustainability issues identified from baseline information as these will in part need to be addressed through the plans, policies and programmes produced by others within the Council, or indeed outside bodies and our key partners. To ensure that each of the objectives are genuinely needed and that none duplicate or overlap each other a simple framework has been set up.

The framework tests the internal compatibility of objectives against one another and reveals any incompatibilities or tensions between the individual objectives.

	1a	1b	1c	2	3	4a	4b	5a	5b	6	7	8a	8b	8c	8c
1a															
1b	✓														
1c	✓	✓													
2	•	•	•												
3	•	•	•	✓											
4a	•	•	•	•	?										
4b	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓									
5a	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓								
5b	✓	•	•	✓	?	•	✓	✓							
6	?	•	•	•	✓	?	✓	✓	✓						
7	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
8a	?	✗	✓	•	✓	✗	•	✓	✓	?	✓				
8b	?	✗	✓	•	✓	✗	•	✓	?	•	✓	✓			
8c	•	•	•	•	✓	?	•	✓	?	•	•	•	•		
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	?	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key:

- ✓ compatible
- ✗ incompatible
- no link
- ? uncertain / tenuous link

Note: SA objectives shown on x and y axis.

Naturally this exercise has identified some incompatibility between sustainability objectives. This is usually between the environmental and more economically driven objectives. For the purposes of SEA this does highlight some of the significant impacts of development on the environment, however, for the purposes of Sustainability Appraisal, it is important consider social and economic factors as well as environmental ones.

It is considered that the achievement of economic objectives is just as critical to achieving sustainable development as the conservation and protection of environmental assets and as such the economic objectives will remain in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. There will however be important decisions which need to be taken by the LDF, informed by the findings of Sustainability Appraisal when in identifying economic priorities, particularly in respect of the more rural and sensitive parts of the Plan Area.

The detailed Sustainability Framework for the assessment of plans, policies and programmes and sites

Having identified our Sustainability Objectives and the scoring mechanism, the next step is to consider the detailed approach we propose to take to assess policies and plans against them. We have decided to adopt a two-stage approach to detailed appraisal. Where we are considering the plan as a whole or policy directions and ultimately policies themselves we will use targeted questions under each objective and a draft matrix to undertake a detailed appraisal as shown on the following page. In the following section, assessment criteria are grouped under the LDF SA objective headings.

We have decided to simplify the SA assessment framework from the previous SA scoping report that was prepared in 2009. In order to do this, we have reduced the number of SA objectives all together. Also, in order to streamline and simplify the appraisal process and to avoid repetitive statements under each SA objective, the distinction between urban/rural areas of the Borough has been removed from the appraisal. This was considered appropriate as some of the sustainability objectives exert a rather limited or indirect relationship with urban/rural. The Sustainability Appraisal for the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan, however, will consider the impact of each policy on rural and urban areas of Taunton Deane and the relevant sustainability implications resulting from this will be summarised under each policy section.

Where we are considering site allocations we will adopt a criteria-based assessment. We have developed such assessments that will be applied to all sites as well as more specific assessments related to housing and employment allocations.

The advantage of setting out a more rigorous approach is that we can be more transparent, allowing statutory consultees, key stakeholders, developers, landowners and members of the public the opportunity to see a very detailed framework against which we will assess proposals.

Matrix for detailed appraisal of policies and plans

In order to assess the sustainability of a plan, proposal or policy we need to establish an appropriate scoring mechanism against which we can measure performance. By applying a scoring weighting to the assessment it will be possible to provide a snapshot of the relative sustainability of a plan, proposal or policy and indeed compare them against one another.

It is proposed that for each objective we will judge impact against the following criteria:

(+5)	The proposal is likely to have a significant positive impact in contributing towards the achievement of the objective.
(+3)	The proposal is likely to have a positive impact in contributing towards the achievement of the objective.
(+1)	The proposal is likely to have some positive and some negative impact in terms of contributing towards the achievement of the objective, overall its impact is neutral.
0	The proposal is likely to have no impact positive or negative in contributing towards the achievement of the objective.
(-1)	The proposal could have a negative impact towards the achievement of the objective.
(-3)	The proposal is likely to have a negative impact in contributing towards the achievement of the objective.
(-5)	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact in contributing towards the achievement of the objective.

Sustainability Objective	Baseline info and indicators	Geographic Scale		Timescale		Cumulative impact	Commentary
		Borough	Outside Borough	Up to	Beyond		
SA Objective 1: Climate Change							
1. a) <i>“To consider the possible effects of climate change.”</i>							
1. b) <i>“ To promote the usage of renewable sources of energy. ”</i>							
1. c) <i>“To reduce the flood risk and the threat to people and property“.</i>							
SA Objective 2: Town and Other Centres							
2.. <i>“To strengthen and safeguard the vitality and viability of our town centres.”</i>							
SA Objective: 3 Economy							
3. <i>“To foster an entrepreneurial local economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer.”</i>							
SA Objective 4: Housing							
4 a). <i>“To provide and maintain a sufficient supply of good quality mixed housing including an appropriate level of affordable housing to meet the needs of all section of the community and strategic housing requirements ‘.</i>							
4. b) <i>“To ensure sustainably balanced places are created or maintained providing access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities.”</i>							

Sustainability Objective	Baseline info and indicators	Geographic Scale		Timescale		Cumulative impact	Commentary
		Borough	Outside Borough	Up to	Beyond		
5. SA Objective Inclusive Communities							
<i>5.a) ' To reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough.'</i>							
<i>5. b) "To ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all."</i>							
6. SA Objective: Accessibility							
<i>6. "To minimise the need to travel (particularly by car), and facilitate more sustainable forms of transport ".</i>							
7. SA Objective: Infrastructure							
<i>7. "To ensure that development provides or contributes to the physical, green and social infrastructure that is necessary for the development to proceed and to mitigate the impact on existing communities and the environment ".</i>							
8. SA Objective: Environment							
<i>8 .a) "To protect and conserve and enhance the Borough's natural habitats and biodiversity ".</i>							
<i>8b). "To preserve and enhance the character and quality of the Borough's landscape".</i>							
<i>8c). "To preserve and enhance the Borough's built environment, heritage and archeology. "</i>							

Sustainability Objective	Baseline info and indicators	Geographic Scale		Timescale		Cumulative impact	Commentary
		Borough	Outside Borough	Up to	Beyond		
9. SA Objective: Design							
9. "To encourage sustainable design and practice."							

Matrix for detailed appraisal of sites

In order to assess the sustainability of site allocations we need to establish an appropriate assessment mechanism against which we can measure performance. The SA framework for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan has been developed in a way that fully integrates it into the evaluation of sites. It will help determine whether sites should be allocated and, if so, for what use. The SA will be part of the process of assessing the sites in order of preference for allocation. The general SA framework for the whole LDF has been used as the starting point for devising the assessment criteria for sites.

The site assessment has been carried out in two stages. The first stage will assess the sites against a higher criteria that will identify features which should have more weight in decision making than others by identifying where the 'show stoppers' exists. The higher assessment criteria will be used to determinate those sites which should not be carried forward to the next stage of the site assessment and explain the reasons for their rejection. The criteria will be different depending on whether the site is being proposed for residential or employment use ('housing criteria' and 'employment criteria'). Sites that are being proposed for mixed use development need to be assessed against all two sets of criteria (i.e. housing and employment criteria).

Higher Assessment Framework

A number of sites have been put forward for consideration as part of the Site Allocations DPD. The higher assessment framework will be used to assess all potential housing sites in Taunton and Wellington identified by the SHLAA against the criteria outline below which will ultimately result in a list of discounted sites.

Higher Criteria

1. The site falls inside the Taunton Town Centre Area.
Justification: The Site Allocations DPD will not allocate sites in Taunton Town Centre. Town centre sites that have been submitted to TDBC will be assessed and considered as part of the review of the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan.
2. The site falls inside the existing settlement boundary.
Justification: There were some sites that have been promoted for development that fall within Taunton's existing settlement boundary. Many of these sites consist of proposals for urban intensification and regeneration or are located on existing urban open space. It is considered that any development proposals that may come forward for these sites will be considered against the policies in the Development Management DPD and unless there are clear reasons to justify development related allocations within the Taunton urban area boundary (e.g. fragmented site ownership that may limit delivery of a comprehensive development scheme) TDBC are inclined not to set specific allocation boundaries within the settlement boundary.
3. The site is smaller than 0.15ha or 5 dwellings.
Justification: Sites smaller than 0.15ha or 5 dwellings have been discounted to ensure the process of assessing sites is more manageable. Any future proposals for such sites will be considered against the policies in the Development Management DPD and do not require specific

allocation.

4. The site already has a planning permission.

Justification: There are a number of sites in TDBC that already have planning permission for development. They are not included in this Issues and Options consultation exercise because the Council has already reached a decision on them through the process of deciding to grant planning permission. However such sites will contribute to the eventual list of sites in the submission version of the DPD unless there is a significant change in circumstances since the granting of permission which may render the site unsuitable or unless the site has been completed.

5. Compliance with Strategic Policy

Justification: The Core Strategy sets the overall spatial strategy for Taunton Deane Borough. The Site Allocations Document must be consistent with the Core Strategy and will identify the sites to deliver the Core Strategy growth requirements. Sites have been assessed against the Spatial Policies of the Core Strategy and those which do not adjoin existing settlement limits will not generally be considered.

6. Proximity to Hazardous Pipelines and Gas Compressor Stations.

Justification: Sites within close proximity to hazardous pipelines and gas compressor stations have been discounted for health and safety reasons.

7. Proximity to and impact on International and National Wildlife Sites.

Justification: Sites that are within International and National Wildlife Sites have been discounted as such allocations would not comply with the Core Strategy policy CP8.

8. Proximity to the Source Protection Zone 1 which would have to be served by a non-mains drainage system (in the absence of any mains connections).

Justification: Sites that are within Source Protection Zone 1 which would have to be served by a non-mains drainage system (in the absence of any mains connections) have been discounted because of the potential adverse impacts on nearby drinking water supplies. In cases where there are no local mains connections available, then this could very possibly render a development unviable (both physically and financially).

9. The site is wholly within Flood Zone 3b and incapable of being mitigated.

Justification: The first consideration for sites at flood risk must always be avoidance by applying the Sequential Test. Sites that are wholly within Flood Zone 3b (and there is no robust evidence to successfully challenge this SFRA designation) have therefore been discounted from consideration in the SADMPP.

10. The site cannot provide safe access onto the highway network for all modes of travel

Justification: Sites that are not capable of providing safe access onto the highway network have been discounted. For example, if the approach roads are too narrow or otherwise unsuitable or the required visibility splays cannot be achieved it will not be possible to provide safe access to the site.

11. Proximity to congested junctions where no mitigation is possible

Justification: Sites likely to have adverse traffic impacts on congested junctions where no mitigation is possible have been discounted from consideration in the SADMPP.

12. Compliance with Habitats Regulations 2010

Justification: Sites that are unlikely to be acceptable in terms of the Habitats Regulations 2010 have been discounted from consideration in the SADMPP.

Higher Assessment Framework – Gypsy and Traveller Sites only**1. Caravans and Mobile Homes for permanent all year round residential use located within Flood Zone 3a or 3B)**

Justification: In accordance with the guidance of the TGNPPF,) Caravans and Mobile Homes for permanent/all year round residential use are not be permitted in Flood Zone 3a or 3b.

The assessment criteria outlined above will result in a final list of sites for the Issues and Options consultation. The inclusion of sites in the Issues and Options consultation does not represent a decision by the council. All sites that have been submitted through the SHLAA process and have progressed through the higher assessment criteria are included to allow the public to comment at this early stage of the process. All comments received will be considered before more detailed assessments are carried out to inform the preferred options consultation.

Generic Assessment Framework

Those sites that have been carried forward to the next SA assessment stage will be assessed against a range of generic criteria on a scale from strong to low impact, which as shown in the table below, correspond to whether or not development on a site is likely to conflict with a sustainability development objective. It is therefore possible to provide a snapshot of the relative sustainability of a site and indeed compare them against one another. We have not applied a scoring weighting to the assessment. Although the main difficulty with including unweighted scoring to sites is that it does not accurately identify issues which should have more weight in decision making than others or at least be weighted more strongly against it. With this in mind, the framework applied to assess the sites does allow a more comprehensive assessment in terms of giving environmental, social and economic considerations an equal weighting.

The Council considers that the methodology applied to the site assessment is sufficiently robust to ensure the identification of the most sustainable and appropriate sites.

The SA Site Selection Criteria was subject to public consultation along with the SADMPP between January and March 2013. As a result of some of the consultation responses to the SADMPP Issues and Options Consultation it was considered that the site selection criteria could benefit from being more detailed. The site assessment criteria have therefore been amended to give more detailed

consideration of sustainability issues. The overall sustainability of any site is now based on four guidelines of 'strong', 'medium', 'medium low' and 'low.'

Also, we have amended the accessibility criteria to take in consideration recommendations from the Sustainable Settlements: A Guide for Planners, Designers and Developers Document that was published in 1995. This document identifies a gradation of desirable distances from housing to services and facilities. The distance to services and facilities is based on (the shortest walking route as shown on the Google route planner). Please note that the walking routes may not include footpaths). The distances to services and facilities may differ depending on where the access to that site will be, however, as a general guide and to provide consistency in the way the assessment has been carried out, all distances have been measured from the centre of the site.

Table: Guidelines for assessment criteria

Development may strongly conflict with objective	Strong impact
Development may conflict with objective	Medium impact
Development may partly conflict with objective or is likely to partly support the objective	Low/Medium impact
Development is unlikely to conflict with objective or/and is likely to support objective	Low or no impact/positive impact

All of the sites are assessed against detailed environmental and housing criteria. After each site has been assessed against the appropriate criteria, a summary table needs to be filled out. The purpose of the initial site assessment is to give a snapshot of the likely sustainability of the site and to allow the sites to be compared against one another. The more sustainable sites for a location are those which have low impact against the criteria. The summary table highlights where development has a strong impact with an objective in which case there may be an opportunity to build mitigation into, for example, planning obligations or design and construction principles. A blank summary sheet is enclosed after the detailed criteria.

Environmental Criteria

Landscape designations

Score	OBJECTIVE: To protect, enhance and improve local distinctiveness and landscape and townscape quality
1	Site is within an area of national landscape importance
2	Site is within 2km of an area of national landscape importance (AONBs)
3	Site is within an area of local landscape importance
4	Site is not within an area of landscape importance

Landscape impact

Score	OBJECTIVE: To protect, enhance and improve local distinctiveness and landscape and townscape quality
1	Major landscape issue but capable of mitigation
2	Moderate landscape impact capable of mitigation
3	Not used
4	No or insignificant landscape impact

Nature Conservation Areas

Score	OBJECTIVE: To protect, enhance and improve biodiversity, flora and fauna and geological interest
1	<p>The site is within the influence of an area of international or national conservation interest (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar, National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and some Local Wildlife Sites), or/and</p> <p>The site is a habitat listed under S.41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, i.e. of conservation importance in England; and /or</p> <p>The site affects the Favourable Conservation Status of a European protected species (listed on Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations 2010)</p>
2	<p>The site is within an area of local conservation interest (some Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Local Geological Site)</p> <p>The site affects the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed on the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP)</p>
3	The site is partly or borders an area of local conservation interest (some Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Local Geological Site)
4	The site is does not affect any of the above

Sites of Historic Importance

Score	OBJECTIVE: To conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural environment
1	Site is on or adjoining a Historic Park or Garden
2	Site is within a Conservation Area or affects the setting of a Listed Building
3	The site borders a Conservation Area
4	Site is not on or adjoining Historic Park or Garden. Also, it is not within or bordering a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Listed Building

Sites of Archaeological Importance

Score	OBJECTIVE: To conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural environment
1	Site is on or adjoining a scheduled ancient monument
2	Site is within an Area of High Archaeological Potential or County Archaeological site
3	Site borders an area of High Archaeological Potential or County Archaeological site

4	Site is not within or adjoining an area of High Archaeological Potential or County Archaeological site
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Ground and surface water quality

Score	OBJECTIVE: To protect and improve ground and surface water quality
1	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative effect on ground or/and surface water quality
2	The proposal is likely to have a negative effect on ground and surface water quality
3	The proposal is likely to have limited effect on either ground or/and surface water quality
4	Site is not likely to have a negative effect on ground or/and surface water quality

Air quality

Score	OBJECTIVE: To reduce air pollution
1	Site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
2	Site is adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
3	Commuter traffic from the site would need to pass through an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
4	Site is not within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and commuter traffic would not need to pass through an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

Existing un-neighbourly uses (e.g. sewage treatment works, scrap metal merchant, power lines) or adjacent noise or light pollution

Score	OBJECTIVE: To protect health and well-being
1	Site is affected by some un-neighbourly uses
2	Site is affected by noise or/and light pollution
3	Site is affected by minor noise or/and light pollution issue
4	Site is not affected by un-neighbourly uses or noise or light pollution issue

Land contamination

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	The site is affected by a significant contamination or pollution issue
2	The site is affected by contamination or pollution issue
3	The site is affected by minor contamination or pollution issue
4	The site is not affected by a contamination or pollution issue

Land of high agricultural value

Score	OBJECTIVE: To maintain and improve soil quality
1	Site is mainly Grade 1 agricultural land
2	Site is mainly Grade 2 agricultural land
3	Site is mainly Grade 3 agricultural land
4	Site is not best or more versatile agricultural land

Floodplains

Score	OBJECTIVE: To ensure that development is not at risk of flooding
1	Site is wholly within Flood Zone 3
2	Site is partially within Flood Zone 3
3	Site is wholly or partially within Flood Zone 2
4	Site is within Flood Zone 1 or no risk of flooding

Flood risk and mitigation

Score	OBJECTIVE: To ensure that development is not at risk of flooding and will not increase flooding elsewhere
1	Site is wholly or partially within floodplain Zone 3 and incapable of mitigation
2	Site is wholly or partially within floodplain Zone 2 and incapable of mitigation
3	Site is wholly or partially within floodplain Zone 2 or 3 but can be mitigated
4	Site is not affecting floodplain area

Impacts on the Green Wedge

Score	OBJECTIVE: To maintain the separate identity of settlements
1	Site is wholly within the green wedge
2	Most of the site is within the green wedge
3	Only a small portion of the site is within a green wedge
4	Site is not within the green wedge

Housing Criteria

Proximity to employment opportunities

Score	OBJECTIVE: To provide a range of high quality employment opportunities
1	Site is at least 2km from employment opportunities
2	Site is at least 1km from employment opportunities.
3	Site is more than 800m from employment opportunities but employment opportunities could be provided within 800m of the site
4	The site is within 800 m employment opportunities

Proximity to GP surgery

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Site is over 2km of a GP surgery
2	Site is more than 1km but less than 2km of a GP surgery.
3	Site is within 800m - 1,000 m or less of a GP surgery
4	Site is within 800m of a GP surgery

Capacity of Primary School

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Settlement has no capacity to provide for additional primary school places in any schools within or near the settlement.
2	Settlement has very limited capacity to provide for additional primary school places in any schools within or near the settlement.
3	Settlement has limited capacity to provide for additional primary school places in any schools within or near the settlement
4	Settlement has got the capacity to provide for additional school places in primary schools within or near the settlement.

Proximity to primary school

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Site is over 800m of a Primary School
2	Site is within 600m but less than 800m of a Primary School
3	Site is more than 400m but within 600m of a Primary School
4	Site is within 400m of a Primary School

Capacity of Secondary School

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Settlement has no capacity to provide for additional secondary school places in any schools within or near the settlement.
2	Settlement has very limited capacity to provide for additional secondary school places in any schools within or near the settlement.
3	Settlement has limited capacity to provide for additional secondary school places in any schools within or near the settlement
4	Settlement has got the capacity to provide for additional school places in secondary schools within or near the settlement.

Proximity to Secondary School

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Site is over 2,000m of a Secondary School
2	Site is more than 1,500m but less than 2,000m of a Secondary School
3	Site is more than 1,000 but less than 1,500m of a Secondary School
4	Site is within 1,000m of a Secondary School

Proximity to convenience shop

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Site is over 800m of a convenience shop
2	Site is more than 600 but less than 800m of a convenience shop
3	Site is more than 400m but less than 600m of a convenience shop
4	Site is within 400m of a convenience shop

Access to formal recreation facilities

Score	OBJECTIVE: To improve access to and retention of parks, open space and formal leisure and recreation facilities
1	Site is more than 2,00m from a public open space.
2	Site is more than 1,000m from a public open space.
3	Site more than 800m but less than 1,000m from a public open space.
4	Site is within 800m from a public open space.

Opportunities for walking

Score	OBJECTIVE: To reduce the need for vehicular trips
1	There are very limited range and quality of walking networks including the Rights of Way network between housing, services and employment.
2	There are limited range and quality of walking networks including the Rights of Way network between housing, services and employment.
3	There are some good quality walking networks including the Rights of Way network between housing, services and employment.
4	There are range of good quality walking networks including the Rights of Way network between housing, services or employment.

Opportunities for cycling

Score	OBJECTIVE: To reduce the need for vehicular trips
1	There are very limited range of good quality cycling networks between housing, services and employment.
2	There are limited range of good quality cycling networks between housing, services and employment.
3	There are some good quality cycling networks between housing, services and employment.
4	There are range of good quality cycling networks between housing, services and employment.

Capacity of public transport to accommodate further growth

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Settlement has a bus stop with a daily return service (less than twice hourly) and not including Saturday service.
2	Settlement has a bus stop with a daily return service (at least twice hourly) including Saturday service.
3	Settlement has a bus with a regular bus services (more than twice hourly) including Saturday services but not Sunday service.
4	Settlement has a train station and bus stop with regular services (more than twice hourly, including Saturday and Sunday services).

Proximity to bus stop

Score	OBJECTIVE: To locate development close to essential services
1	Site is more than 400m of a bus stop
2	Site is more than 300m but less than 400m of a bus stop
3	Site is more than 200m but less than 300m of a bus stop
4	Site is within 200m of a bus stop

**Taunton Deane Site Allocations
and Development Management
Plan Preferred Options –
Sustainability Appraisal**

October 2013

1.0 Introduction

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report (this report represents stage C)

- 1.1 Each of the potential site allocations identified in the SADMP Issues and Options Consultation and any additional sites put forward through the consultation have now been subjected to a full 'Sustainability Appraisal' (SA). The first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal involved assessing all potential site allocations against the Higher Assessment Framework which has resulted in a list of excluded sites. This list is included at Appendix 1. The sites remaining have been assessed against a number of detailed criteria. This has allowed us to critically appraise the merits of potential site allocations. The SA is an objective assessment that helps to inform the identification of the Preferred Options but the SA will not necessarily dictate what the Preferred Options will be.
- 1.2 This Report summarises the results of the SA assessment of sites against the site selection criteria. In-light-of the sheer number of sites considered, the full SA comparison sheet (which is in excel format) and the more detailed site summary assessments are contained in Appendix 2.
- 1.3 The Council has already met the housing targets for Wellington and is not proposing to allocate any sites in Wellington as part of the SADMP. We have not, therefore, included a summary of Wellington sites within the SA.
- 1.4 A draft Sustainability Appraisal for those sites that fall within the urban extensions area of search (Staplegrave and Comeytrove/Trull) has been carried out separately by consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff. The findings of this assessment is set out in this document. A separate draft SA report has been prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff and presents and assesses broad development options and directions of growth at Comeytrove/Trull and Staplegrave urban extension areas building upon information within the technical evidence base underpinning the Council's Core Strategy and earlier urban extensions studies. Four broad development options are presented for each area, and these have been assessed against the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal objectives and a preferred option is presented for each area. This presents the preferred direction of growth for the urban extensions. The actual extent of each area needs to be refined and informed through a combination of visual assessments and more detailed masterplanning.
- 1.5 The Sustainability Appraisal needs to compare alternative options and assess these against the baseline environmental, economic and social objectives. In order evaluate the sustainability effects of each of the development management policies and to facilitate meaningful comparison, we have identified a series of alternative development management policies which we have assessed against the SA objectives along with the preferred policy options. This assessment helps to outline the reasons the rejected options were not taken forward and the reasons for selecting the preferred option in the light of the alternatives. The full SA assessment of each of the development management policies can be found in the Appendix 3.

2.0 What happens next?

Beyond this consultation on the SA (SADMP Preferred Options), we will refine and add more detail to proposals prior to release of the Published Plan. At the point at which the Published Plan is released, we will be in the position to undertake a more detailed assessment of the sustainability implications of the SADMP.

2. Assessment of potential development management options

2.1 Climate Change:

The early Issues and Options consultation undertaken by the Council as part of the SADMP's preparation included an option for the inclusion of an additional policy on renewable energy. This option has been fully tested against the Sustainability Appraisal however it does not perform differently to a 'do nothing' option where the Council would merely rely on its adopted policies as set out within the adopted Core Strategy.

In view of the lack of any tangible benefit identified with the inclusion of a policy, the Council is not minded to include a policy to address renewable energy.

2.2 Economy:

Associated facilities within employment areas

Option 1: Include a policy addressing associated facilities within employment areas

Option 2: Business as usual: Retain employment areas for industrial/storage uses only, and rely on the existing development plan policy and the Framework to inform planning applications.

Option 1 would score strongly against a number of the SA objectives. By providing facilities within employment areas will help reduce the need to travel thus potentially making positive contribution against climate change and accessibility objectives it may also assist in reducing social inequality. The alternative option scores poorly against these objectives as this option would not enable people to link their place of work with some other activities without the need to travel. The alternative option would ensure that employment areas are retained solely for industrial/storage type use which is likely to help to retain their primary function and role. Option 1 could conceivably have a detrimental impact on employment areas if uses within them became fragmented as a consequence of the policy.

Opportunities for mitigation: The policy will need to specify detailed criteria regarding the size of estates and the range and size of services that would be acceptable in order to ensure that they do not become destinations on the own and without the risk of significant increase in 'out-of-centre proposals which can result in unsustainable travel patterns and impact on town centre vitality and viability.

Preferred Option: Option 1 is the strongest performing option and subject to the inclusion of appropriate safeguards as identified above should be included within the SADMP.

Class C2 uses in employment areas

Option 1: Include a policy addressing class C2 uses in employment areas

Option 2: Business as usual: no latitude would be made for Class C2 uses within employment areas, and the Council would need to rely on the existing development plan policy and the Framework to inform planning applications.

Option 1 scores strongly against the objective “To foster an entrepreneurial local economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer. The preferred option also scores well against the housing objective and the objective to reduce inequalities and promote the health and well being of all residents since it would make specific recognition for a section of the population with specific housing needs. The alternative option scores poorly against these objectives due to the fact that much of the projected jobs growth is anticipated to be in non-B class uses, failure to provide some flexibility may threaten the delivery of certain sites and the jobs target set by the Core Strategy.

The alternative option scores better against climate change and accessibility objectives. This is because this option would not impose any pressure on 'out of centre' proposals, and increase unsustainable travel patterns. Residential amenity could also be compromised under Option 1.

Opportunities for mitigation: The policy will specify detailed criteria which would need to be met by any application for Class C2 Residential Institutional use within defined employment areas, including providing good accessibility by public transport modes and any amenity considerations of nearby residents which is likely to reduce any negative impacts against these objectives.

Preferred Option: Option 1 is the strongest performing option and subject to the inclusion of appropriate safeguards as identified above should be included within the SADMP.

New employment allocation at Silk Mills, Taunton

Option 1: include new employment allocation at Silk Mills

No alternative options were identified since no other readily available sites were identified for employment within the Taunton Urban Area.

Option 1 scores well against economic and housing objectives. This land is needed to assist the future economic growth of Taunton. Since much of the projected jobs growth is anticipated to be in Class B uses, failure to provide adequate provision of employment land in accessible locations may threaten the delivery of certain sites and the jobs target set by the Core Strategy. The option would assist in providing employment land in an accessible location which is likely to reduce the need to travel. Were the site not allocated, there is a potential for insufficient employment land to be identified. Any failure to provide sufficient supply of employment land would likely lead to an increase of out-commuting and increase the use of a private car and therefore have a detrimental effect on self-containment.

The Silk Mills employment allocation is within close proximity (walking distance) from the Taunton town centre and retaining this Class B allocation within the Plan is likely to complement rather than compete with the vitality and viability of the Taunton town centre.

Opportunities for mitigation: Since the site lies beyond existing settlement limits and up until now, the designated Green Wedge, any proposal will need to incorporate appropriate planting to mitigate the landscape and visual impact of developing this site.

Preferred Option: Including the site will provide an immediately deliverable opportunity to release new employment land in the Taunton Urban Area. Subject to the appropriate mitigation, the site should be included within the SADMP Preferred Options.

New Strategic Employment Site

Option 1: Land at Junction 25

Option 2: Do nothing

Option 3: Monkton Heathfield

Option 4: Comeytrowe

A number of potential options were identified under this allocation, these included a 'do nothing' option. The SA recognised that the East of Junction 25 option will perform most strongly against economic objectives with good access to the strategic highway network. It would however potentially involve development of land in flood Zone 3 and there are limited opportunities to access the site on foot or by cycle.

The 'do nothing' option would do little to ensure adequate provision of employment land. Consequently it scores poorly against economic objectives, furthermore it may increase the need to travel since without planned employment opportunities coming forward residents may need to travel to other districts for work.

Options at Comeytrowe and Monkton would provide for accessible, balanced developments. However, neither option benefits from as good access to the strategic highway network. In the case of Comeytrowe, any development would likely have a strong negative impact against landscape considerations as it would need to occupy a prominent location, most likely beyond the Ridge off the A38.

Opportunities for mitigation: Noise and air quality impacts could be mitigated through sensitive siting of development and appropriate design. It is essential that any proposal is appropriately landscaped to provide a quality environment for business and as a gateway into the town. Flood Risk mitigation would need to be provided as part of the proposal. Highway capacity and traffic impacts are recognised as a major issue to overcome and the Borough Council and developers will work with the Highways Agency and the County Highways Authority to address this matter prior to the granting of any planning permission.

Preferred Option: There is very little between the potential options 1, 3 and 4 in terms of the results of the Sustainability Appraisal. However, it would appear that only Option 1 provides an available and thus potentially deliverable option for further consideration.

2.4 *Housing:*

The initial SADMP Issues and Options consultation identified a need to define specific policies to cover both exceptions sites and self-build proposals. Although the Council's decision on excluding such policies from the SADMP has not been made on purely sustainability grounds; the following information summarises the results of the initial SA assessment:

The results of the SA assessment shows that criteria based policies on self-build and exception sites score poorly against many of the SA objectives such as protecting the environmental quality of the Borough, to consider the possible effects of climate change and ensuring good accessibility to services and facilities for all residents of the Borough. This is because such approaches would encourage development in potentially unsustainable locations and therefore increase the need to travel by a private car. Such approaches would, however, score well against objectives on housing and inclusive communities as both policies would help to meet the affordable housing need of some rural communities.

The Core Strategy policies CP4 and DM1, Framework and other planning guidance provide detailed guidance that will allow self-build and exception type proposals to be assessed equally on a case by case basis. Furthermore, the exemption of self-build proposals from CIL in the future may well create assist in the delivery of such schemes. The Council is mindful of not including policies within the SADMP which are not necessary, and which could potentially encourage development in locations that are not otherwise considered sustainable.

Agricultural Worker Dwellings

Option 1: include policy addressing Rural Workers Dwellings

Option 2 - Business as usual: Do not have a policy Rural Worker Dwellings and rely on existing development plan policy and the Framework to inform planning applications.

Option 1 would score well against the following SA objectives: "to foster an entrepreneurial local economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer and 'to reduce inequalities and 'to meet housing needs of all sections of the community'. The alternative option scores poorly against these objectives due to the fact that such an approach is likely to see most applications for rural worker dwellings refused or at least not see them come forward in locations where they may be most needed which would potentially fail to support the rural economy.

The preferred option is likely to have a slight negative impact on the objectives to provide access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities, to consider the possible effects of climate change and 'to protect the environmental quality of the Borough'. The preferred option is likely to increase the need to travel to a degree whilst the alternative option would help

to protect the countryside from intrusive development. The preferred option could, however, reduce daily commuting for some rural residents, enabling them to link their place of work with their housing needs.

Opportunities for mitigation: By adopting the former PPS7 Annex, the policy will ensure that rural workers dwellings only come forward when a clear case can be made to allow the proposal.

Preferred Option: Whilst the 'business as usual' approach may overall have less negative impacts than including a policy, the benefits of providing a policy which ensure necessary rural workers dwellings can be delivered in the right locations is considered to outweigh this.

2.5 *Inclusive Communities*

Land for Educational Purposes

Option 1: include a policy reserving land for educational purposes

Option 2 – do nothing: Do not safeguard land for educational purposes.

Option 1 would reserve land for education purposes, this option scores strongly against a number of SA objectives, including: to consider the possible challenges of climate change, to reduce inequalities, promote accessibility to services and facilities, and to ensure that development provides appropriate infrastructure that is necessary for the development to process. The option would also also potentially support the delivery of key development sites and therefore, scores positively against housing and employment objectives.

The alternative option scores rather poorly against most of the SA objectives and receives a negative score overall. This option is likely to increase the need to travel and therefore CO2 emissions as such an approach may result in sites otherwise ideal for future school provision/expansion being lost to other uses, and provision would then need to be met on other sites/ in potentially less sustainable locations which may not be accessible to all residents.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to safeguard land for educational uses scores significantly more favourably than the do nothing option.

Protection of recreational open space

Option 1: include policy to protect recreational open space

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores strongly against a number of SA objectives:

‘to reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough.’ “to ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all and ‘to consider the possible challenges of climate change, “

It also scores very well across a range of objectives: Flood Risk (Objective 1c), Accessibility (Objective 6), Infrastructure (Objective 7), Biodiversity (Objective 8a), Landscape (Objective 8b), and Design (Objective 9)

Option 1 ensures that recreational open space is secured this will help to promote access to cultural, leisure and recreational provision and help to reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough. Green space supports local biodiversity and helps to mitigate against climate change. Locating green space in accessible locations is also likely to reduce the need to travel.

Option 2 would clearly have the inverse impacts. In particular it could result in the loss of valuable open space, this may increase the need to travel or worse result in health and recreational disbenefits with insufficient land set aside for such uses.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to safeguard land for recreational uses scores significantly more favourably than the do nothing option.

Provision of recreational open space

Option 1: include a policy to provide recreational open space

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores strongly with regard to: ‘to reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough.’ ‘to ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all and ‘to consider the possible challenges of climate change, ‘

This option also scores very well across a range of objectives: Flood Risk (Objective 1c), Accessibility (Objective 6), Infrastructure (Objective 7), Biodiversity (Objective 8a), Landscape (Objective 8b), and Design (Objective 9) (Access to services and facilities (4b).

The option ensures recreation open space and sports facilities are secured on sustainable locations which will help to promote access to appropriate mix of services and facilities and in particular ensure that cultural, leisure and recreational provision is accessible for all. This option will also have a positive impact on reducing inequalities, the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough. Green space supports local biodiversity and locating green space in accessible locations is likely to reduce the need to travel.

The option receives a negative score against (objective 3) Employment and a (Objective 4a) Housing. The preferred option would ensure that as part of a masterplanning of larger sites, consideration is given to the potential need to meet recreational open space requirements on site and any implications for the design of the site. This would ensure that recreational land would not be lost for other uses unless appropriate mitigation is provided which could reduce the net developable area for housing or employment.

The alternative, do nothing option would not lead to a comprehensive approach to design and planning. This may, as with the previous policy increase the need to travel and/or result in insufficient land being identified to meet open space requirements.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to secure the provision of land for (or contributions towards) recreational uses scores significantly more favourably than the do nothing option.

Horse riding establishments

Option 1: include a policy to guide decision-making on applications for horse riding establishments

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores strongly with regards to ‘reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough.’, to ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all, to foster an entrepreneurial local economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer and “to encourage sustainable design and practice.”

The option also scores very well across a range of objectives: Climate Change (Objective 1a), Accessibility Objective 6), Biodiversity (Objective 8a), Landscape (Objective 8b), and Historic Environment (Objective 8c).

The option does not receive any negative scores against any of the objectives.

The preferred option ensures that leisure and cultural provision is accessible to rural settlements which will help to support the rural economy, and reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being. The preferred option will include criteria on relationships to settlements, existing groups of buildings, bridleway network and access arrangement which is likely to protect both natural and man made environment as well as ensure that design and accessibility considerations are not compromised by any proposal.

The alternative, do nothing option would not provide a specific development management policy to guide decisions on proposals for horse riding facilities. The biggest disadvantage of the alternative option would be that it would potentially lead to applications for such uses refused, as they would need to be judged against other development plan policies. This may threaten the economy in rural areas as well as lead to recreational opportunities not being provided.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to guide proposals scores well against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

Urban Open Space

Option 1: include a policy to protect Urban Open Space

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores strongly with regard to the following objectives: ‘to reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough.’ ‘to ensure cultural, leisure and recreational provision is readily accessible for all, and to consider the possible challenges of climate change

The option also scores very well across a range of objectives: Flood Risk (Objective 1c), Accessibility (Objective 6) Infrastructure (Objective 7), Biodiversity (Objective 8a), Landscape (Objective 8b), and Design (Objective 9)

Option 1 ensures urban open space is secured on sustainable locations which will ensure that cultural, leisure and recreational provision is accessible for all. This option will also have a positive impact on reducing inequalities, the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough. Green space supports local biodiversity and locating green space in accessible locations is likely to reduce the need to travel as well as have a positive impact on design and landscape objectives.

The option receives a negative score against (objective 3) Employment and a (Objective 4a) Housing. The preferred option would ensure that green space would not be lost for other uses unless appropriate mitigation is provided which could reduce the net developable area for housing or/and employment.

The do nothing option could lead to important areas of open space being lost. Since these open areas are within settlement limits, this option would thus score well against housing and economic objectives. It would however fail to protect these open areas and this would have a strong negative impact against landscape and health and recreation objectives.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to protect these areas scores well against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Therefore despite there being some benefits in the do nothing option, the inclusion of a policy is considered justified.

Protection of community facilities

Option 1: include a policy protecting community facilities

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores strongly with regard to the following objectives:

“To minimise the need to travel (particularly by car), ‘to consider the possible challenges of climate change’ ‘to provide access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities’, to reduce inequalities and ‘to ensure that development provides or contributes to the physical, green and social infrastructure that is necessary for the development to proceed.

The option would ensure that community facilities are secured on sustainable locations which would enhance access to services and facilities whilst reducing the need to travel. This option would also support the delivery of key development sites, and have a positive impact on housing and employment objectives.

Although appropriate community uses would need to comply with the Core Strategy and Government principles of 'town centre first' approach, by protecting community facilities such as food shops within the centres of sustainable settlements could have a negative impact town centres vitality and viability.

The alternative option would not offer protection to community facilities. This may mean that important services and facilities are lost. In rural areas in particular this is likely to increase the need to travel, it also would have a strong negative impact against social objectives.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to protect these areas scores well against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

Provision of fully accessible toilet and changing room facilities within the public realm

Option 1: include a policy to ensure the provision of accessible facilities

Option 2: do nothing

Option 1 scores well against the following objectives 'to reduce inequalities and promote the quality of life, health and well being for all residents of the Borough, 'to ensure sustainably balanced places are created or maintained providing access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities, and to minimise the need to travel.

The alternative option would fail to promote equal access to facilities within the public realm which is likely to make some areas inaccessible for a portion of the population or/and increase the need to travel in order to use alternative facilities.

Opportunities for mitigation: None identified.

Preferred Option: Providing a policy to protect these areas scores well against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

DM5: Golf

The option to include this policy within the SADMP scores neutral against all of the SA objectives due to the fact that the items that this policy covers are already adequately covered by the Core Strategy Policies CP8 – Environment, DM1 – sustainable development, CP1 – Climate Change and the Development Management Process. The Council is mindful of including policies within the SADMP which are not necessary.

Health Care and Specialist Accommodation

The consultation responses to the SADMP Issues and Options consultation expressed that the SADMP should set out generic criteria to guide the location of health care and specialist accommodation. This option scores neutral against all of the SA objectives due to the fact that in main this matter is already covered by the Core Strategy Policies SP1, SP2, SP3, CP3, DM1 and DM2. The Council is mindful of including policies within the SADMP which are not necessary.

Comments were also received about healthcare being a specialist economic development and needing policy support. The council has assessed this option as part of the Economy section of the SA which would permit Residential Institutions within defined employment areas. Please see Economy section.

3. Assessment of potential site allocations

This chapter sets out a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal of each site considered. Tables are included for each settlement where the SADMP will include future site allocations.

It should be noted that sites at Wellington have not been considered in detail through the SA process. This is because the Council's latest housing trajectory indicates that sufficient sites have already been identified to meet the Core Strategy requirements. Were further sites identified through the SADMP, this would likely be at odds with the spatial strategy and distribution set out under Core Strategy policy SP1 (appraised under the Core Strategy SA).

Settlement (and sites assessed): Staplegrove

12. Land at Pinkhurst of Gypsy Lane/Corkscrew Lane
 13. Land adjoining Gypsy Lane

14. Taunton School playing fields
 ADD3 Land to the rear of Kingston Road
 ADD19 Land at St Augustine's School

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

None of the sites would impact upon international or national conservation sites or protected species. Site ADD3 is likely to affect the favourable Conservation Status of a species listed in the Somerset BAP.

None of the sites are within close proximity to national landscape designations or would affect local designations. All of the sites with the exception of site ADD19 would have a strong landscape impact. The site ADD19 would have a medium landscape impact.

All of the sites perform well against objectives on historic and archaeological importance, air quality, impact on existing un-neighbourly uses and water quality.

Most of the sites perform well against the objective to maintain and improve soil quality. Sites 14, ADD3 and ADD19 are not best or most versatile agricultural land. Sites 12 and 13 are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land.

All of the sites with the exception of site ADD3 perform well against flood risk objectives. The site ADD3 lies partially within Flood Zone 3.

Sites 12 and 13 lie wholly within the Green Wedge and development here would therefore have a strong negative impact against this objective. The site 14 lies partially within the Green Wedge and has a low/medium impact against this objective.

Opportunities for mitigation:

Despite of the high landscape impact, it is considered that there may be some scope for some development on site ADD19 subject to the form and layout of the buildings.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

All of the sites with the exception of site ADD3 score well against access to employment objectives. All of the other sites are within 800m from employment opportunities.

All of the sites with the exception of sites ADD19 and ADD3 score poorly against access to a convenience shop. The site ADD19 scores particularly well against this objective as the site is within 400m from a convenience shop. Site 12 has a strong impact against proximity to a GP surgery whereas the other sites have a medium impact against this objective.

All sites with the exception of sites ADD3 and ADD19 score poorly against proximity to a Primary School. Site ADD19 has a low/medium and site ADD19 has a medium impact against this objective. All sites would have a strong negative impact on the capacity of the nearest primary school but all sites score positively against secondary school capacity.

Sites 13 and 14 score poorly against access to a Secondary School. Sites 12, ADD3 and ADD19 have a medium impact against this objective.

Site 13 performs poorly against access to a bus stop whereas all the other sites perform relatively well against this objective.

All sites score positively against access to recreational areas as all sites are within 800m from a public open space. Similarly, all sites score relatively well against opportunities for cycling.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

The site ADD3 has been identified as the Council's preferred option. The site is within the existing settlement limit, and is there is therefore a general assumption that development on this site is acceptable in principle. The site scores well against some of the accessibility criteria such as access to a bus stop and a convenience shop. The site scores fairly well against some of the environmental criteria. The Green Wedge assessment has recommended that sites 12, 13 and 14 should be retained in the Green Wedge. Site ADD19 scores the best in terms of sustainability assessment but given the established educational use of this site and the identified shortage of school places, it is considered appropriate to reserve this site for educational purposes.

Settlement (and sites assessed): Comeytrowe/Trull	
31 Land at Broadlands, Comeytrowe/Trull	<p>ADD1 The former abattoir site: falls within the Comeytrowe urban extension Area of Search</p> <p>ADD2 Land south of Queens College (playing fields), Comeytrowe, Trull</p>
Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:	
<p>Sites ADD1 and 31 have a potential to impact upon international or national conservation sites or protected species. Site ADD2 has a low impact on nature conservation although it is possible that an isolated colony of dormice exist in the hedgerows but this would need to be confirmed by survey. If present the site may not be developable due to the isolation and amount of habitat required to support a population.</p> <p>None of the sites are within close proximity to national landscape designations or would affect local designations. All of the sites in Comeytrowe/Trull have a strong landscape impact.</p> <p>All of the sites perform relatively well against historic and archaeological importance although the south western corner of the site ADD2 borders a Conservation Area.</p> <p>All of the sites perform well against air quality, water quality, un-neighbourly uses and impact on green wedges. All of the sites with the exception of site ADD2 are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land and therefore perform well against the objective to maintain soil quality. The site ADD2 is mainly Grade 2 agricultural land.</p> <p>All of the sites with the exception of site ADD1 perform well against flood risk objectives. The site ADD1 lies partially within Flood Zone 3.</p> <p>Opportunities for mitigation: There is a scope for developing the site ADD1 but lying within the proposed green wedge any development has to be sensitively landscaped.</p>	
Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:	
<p>The site 31 performs poorly against access to employment opportunities. All of the other sites have a medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>All of the sites perform poorly against access to Primary and Secondary schools. All of the sites with the exception of site ADD2 perform poorly against proximity to a convenience shop. The site ADD2 has a medium/low impact against this objective. The sites ADD1 and 31 perform poorly against proximity to a GP surgery. The site ADD2 performs well against this objective.</p> <p>All of the sites score negatively against primary and secondary school capacity.</p> <p>All of the sites with the exception of site ADD1 are within 800m from a public open space. The sites ADD1 and ADD2 perform relatively well in terms of opportunities for cycling. There are existing cycling trails in the centre of Taunton and there are proposed cycling links from the sites to some employment and services. The urban extension in Comeytrowe may provide additional cycling links.</p> <p>The site 31 has a medium impact on the capacity of public transport to accommodate further growth. All of the other sites have a low/medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>The sites ADD2 and 31 are within 300m from a bus stop and therefore perform relatively well against this objective whereas the site ADD1 has a strong negative impact against this objective.</p>	
Suggested Preferred Option(s):	
<p>The site ADD1 is the Council's preferred option. This site has been identified as the Preferred Option area for the Comeytrowe urban extension. Further information explaining the sustainability considerations is outlined in the Strategic Urban Extensions report.</p> <p>The site 31 scores particularly poorly against the accessibility criteria. Out of the three sites, the site ADD2 scores the best in terms of accessibility to services and facilities criteria. However, the site is currently designated as Urban Open Space and is very prominent in the landscape.</p>	

Settlement (and sites assessed): North Taunton	
17). Land east and west of Mills Farm 18) North west of Cross Keys 19) South of Courtlands Farm, Norton Fitzwarren	20). West of Rectory Road, Norton Fitzwarren 21) Land south of B3277, Norton Fitzwarren
Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:	
<p>None of the potential site allocations in North Taunton are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation.</p> <p>Sites 17 and 20 have a potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats. The site 21 is likely to affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP). Sites 18 and 19 have a low impact on nature conservation although some common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat activity have been recorded on these sites but no major roost identified.</p> <p>All of the sites except the site 21 have a strong landscape impact. The site 21 has a medium landscape impact. All of the sites perform well against objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural heritage. The sites 17, 18, 19 and 20 have a medium impact on sites of archaeological importance.</p> <p>All of the sites perform well against air quality, water quality and impact on green wedges. All of the sites perform relatively well against the objective to maintain soil quality. The sites 17 and 21 are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land whereas the sites 18 and 19 contain mainly poor quality agricultural land.</p> <p>All of the sites except the site 21 perform well on the impact on existing un-neighbourly uses. The site 21 has a medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>The sites 18 and 19 perform well against objectives on flood risk whereas the site 21 has a strong negative impact against this objective. The site 17 has a medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>Opportunities for mitigation:</p>	
Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:	
<p>The sites 20 and 21 perform poorly against access to employment opportunities. The sites 17, 18 and 19 have a medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>All of the sites with the exception of site 21 perform poorly against the proximity to a GP surgery and a convenience shop. The site 21 performs particularly well against these objectives as the site is within 800m from a GP surgery and within 400m from a convenience shop. All of the sites except site 18 have a strong negative impact in terms of proximity to a Primary School. The site 18 is within 600m from a Primary School. All of the sites in North Taunton perform poorly against access to Secondary Schools. None of the Primary or Secondary Schools near the sites have capacity to provide additional school places.</p> <p>All of the sites perform relatively well against access to formal recreational opportunities. The sites 17, 20 and 21 are within 800m from a public open space designation whereas the sites 18 and 19 are within 1km from such designations. All of the sites perform well against opportunities for cycling. There are existing cycling trails between housing, employment and services. There are also some new proposed cycling routes within close proximity of the sites.</p> <p>The site 21 is within 200m from a bus stop and therefore performs well against this objective. The site 18 is within 300m from a bus stop and also performs relatively well against this objective. The sites 17 and 19 have a strong negative impact against this objective whereas the site 20 has a medium impact against this objective.</p>	
Suggested Preferred Option(s):	
<p>The site 21 is the Council's Preferred site. Whilst the site currently lies within Flood Plain, its identification for development would see the completion of a flood scheme, channel work improvements and ground –raising. It would also secure the completion of the Norton Bypass which would reduce traffic through the heart of the Village. Out of the 4 sites in North Taunton, the site 21 is the best site in terms of access to services and facilities criteria followed by site 18.</p> <p>The sites 19 and 20 score the lowest in terms of access to services and facilities criteria. All of the sites perform poorly against landscape impact but the sites 18 and 19 perform the best in terms of the environmental criteria and have the lowest impact on nature conservation. A significant part of site 17 is affected by a Flood Plain. The site 17 also performs poorly against access to services and facilities criteria.</p>	

Settlement (and sites assessed): South Taunton

24) Land at Longrun Farm / SCAT, Bishops Hull, South Taunton
 25) Land at Netherclay / Silk Mills Road, Bishops Hull, South Taunton

26) Parsonage Farm, Bishops Hull, South Taunton
 27) Land at Bishops Hull / Stonegallows, South Taunton
 33) Land at Wild Oak Lane, Trull, South Taunton
 34) Land off Trull Road, South Taunton
 35) Land at Queens Drive, Sherford, South Taunton

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

None of the potential site allocations in South Taunton are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation.

Sites 25, 33 and 35 have a potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats. The site 27 is likely to affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP). Sites 24, 26 and 34 have a low impact on nature conservation.

The sites 25, 26, and 34 have a strong landscape impact whereas sites 24, 27, 33 and 35 have a medium landscape impact. All of the sites perform well against objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural heritage. The site 25 borders a Conservation Area. All of the sites perform relatively well against protecting areas of archaeological importance although the sites 25 and 26 both border an area of High Archaeological Potential.

All of the sites perform well against impact on existing un-neighbourly uses and air and water quality. All of the sites except the sites 33 and 35 perform relatively well against the objective to maintain soil quality. The site 34 is not best or most versatile agricultural land and sites 24, 25, 26 and 27 are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land.

All of the sites except the site 24 perform well against the flood risk objectives. The site 24 lies partially within a Flood Zone 3 and therefore has a medium impact against this objective. All of the sites except the site 27 lie wholly within a Green Wedge and therefore have a strong negative impact against this objective.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

All of the sites with the exception of sites 24 and 27 perform poorly against proximity to employment opportunities. All of the sites except the site 24 perform poorly against proximity to a GP surgery. The site 24 has a medium/low impact against this objective.

None of the Primary or Secondary Schools near the sites have capacity to provide additional school places. The sites 25, 26 and 33 are within relatively close proximity to a Primary School. The sites 27, 34 and 35 perform particularly poorly against this objective. The site 24 has a medium impact against this objective. The sites 24, 25 and 26 are within close proximity to a Secondary School whereas the sites 33, 34, and 35 perform poorly against this objective.

All of the sites with the exception of the site 27 perform poorly against proximity to a convenience shop. The site 27 has a medium/low impact against this objective as it is within 600m from a convenience shop.

All of the sites are within 800m from a public open space, and therefore perform well against the objective to locate development close to recreational areas. The sites 25, 26, 27 and 33 are within close proximity to a bus stop whereas the sites 24, 33 and 35 perform poorly against this objective.

All of the sites perform well against opportunities for walking and cycling. There are existing cycling trails and routes from the site to employment and services. There are also some new proposed cycling routes. There are dedicated footpaths from the site to services and employment.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

The sites 24 and 27 have been identified as the Council's Preferred Options. These options score fairly well against some of the accessibility criteria compared to the other sites. The site 27 would have the least landscape impact and has no access issues. The Green Wedge Assessment has recommended that the southern part of the site 24 to be removed from the Green Wedge. Given the current location in relation to the Caste School, it is considered appropriate to reserve this site for educational purposes.

The sites 33, 34 and 35 score the lowest in terms of accessibility to services and facilities criteria and have poor access arrangements. The Green Wedge Assessment has recommended retaining the sites 25, 26, 33, 34 and part of site 24 within the Green Wedge. The site 35 would have a significant impact on nature conservation and the access arrangements for this site are unclear possibly rendering the site undeliverable.

Settlement (and sites assessed):	
22) Land at Hyde Lane, Bathpool	
Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:	
<p>The site 22 is not within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation.</p> <p>The Site 22 would not have a potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats but the site is likely to affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP).</p> <p>The site 22 has a strong landscape impact but the site performs well against objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural heritage. The site 22 borders a County Archaeological site, and therefore has a medium impact against the objective to conserve archaeological importance.</p> <p>The site performs well against objectives on air and water quality. The site is Grade 3 agricultural land and therefore performs relatively well against the objective to maintain soil quality.</p> <p>The site is on a green wedge and therefore has a negative impact against this objective.</p> <p>The site has a medium/low impact against the flood risk objectives as the site lies wholly within a Flood Zone 2.</p> <p>Opportunities for mitigation:</p>	
Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:	
<p>The site 22 is at least 1km from employment opportunities and therefore has a medium impact against this objective. The site performs quite poorly against the other accessibility criteria such as proximity to a GP surgery, Primary School and a convenience shop.</p> <p>The site performs relatively well against access to a Secondary School as the site is less than 1,500 from a Secondary School. The Primary or Secondary Schools near the site do not have the capacity to provide additional school places. The site performs relatively poorly against access to formal recreational areas and proximity to a bus stop.</p> <p>The site performs well against opportunities for cycling as there is an existing cycling trail from the site to employment and services</p>	
Suggested Preferred Option(s):	
<p>The site has not been identified as a Preferred Option. The site performs poorly against the environmental and access to services and facilities criteria. The site lies within the Bathpool Green Wedge and the Green Wedge Assessment recommends retaining the Green Wedge in this area. Development of this site would have a significant landscape impact. The site has a medium impact against nature conservation and flood risk.</p>	

Settlement (and sites assessed): Wiveliscombe

1. North of Plain Pond
2. Land off North Road
3. Greenway Farm
4. Burges Lane
5. Land at Norderns

6. Land at Ashbeers
7. Land south of Jews Lane
8. South of Croft Way
9. Land off Hartswell

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

None of the sites would impact upon international or national conservation sites or protected species. Sites 1, 2, 4 and 7 are likely to affect the favourable Conservation Status of a species listed in the Somerset BAP.

None of the sites are within close proximity to national landscape designations or would affect local designations. Most sites would have a strong landscape impact although sites 6 and 7 would have a medium impact.

Sites 7 and 8 perform poorly against the historic and cultural environment objective. Sites 6 and 7 lie partially within an Area of High Archaeological Potential /County Archaeological Sites and have a medium impact against the objective.

All of the sites with the exception of site 6 perform well against the objective to maintain and improve soil quality. Site 7 lies partially within a Ground Water Protection Zone and has a medium impact against this objective.

Opportunities for mitigation:

It is considered that sites 6 and 7 can have landscape impact effectively mitigated.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

All sites would have a medium impact on capacity of the nearest primary school and score negatively against secondary school capacity. Similarly opportunities for cycling are limited and consequently all sites score negatively against this objective.

Sites 6 and 8 are the only options within 800m of Class B employment opportunities whilst the remaining sites score poorly against this objective. All sites with the exception of 5, 6 and 9 are within close proximity of a GP surgery and sites 1, 2, 3 and 7 are also in close proximity to the nearest primary school. Sites 1, 2, 5 and 6 are more than 800m from the nearest convenience store and score negatively against this criteria. Sites 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9 would have a medium impact against the proximity to formal recreational areas objective, sites 6 and 7 score strongly positively against this consideration.

Sites 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9 are more than 400m from the closest bus stop and have a strong negative score whilst 2, 6 and 7 are more than 300m and have a medium impact against the objective.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

Land at Croft Way lies in a reasonably accessible location. It is in close proximity to the Secondary School, Recreational Open Space, the new Dr's Surgery and is reasonably close to the centre of the Town.

Settlement (and sites assessed): Bishops Lydeard

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Land off High Street | 6. The Paddock |
| 2. Delta Rise | 7. Taunton Road |
| 3. The Barton | 8. Land off Hithermead |
| 4. Lime Tree Farm | 9. Land West of EC22 |
| 5. East of Bishops Lydeard | 10. Saved Local Plan allocation EC22 |

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

Sites 5 and 8 have potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or protected species. Sites 1, and 3 are likely to affect the favourable Conservation Status of a species listed in the Somerset BAP.

Sites 1, 2, 3 and 4 are within close proximity to the AONB. Sites 1, 3, 4 and 9 would have a strong landscape impact.

Sites 6 and 7 would have a moderate impact. sites 1, 2, 4 5, 7 and 8 have a strong negative impact against this objective due to the fact that the site 1 contains a historic park of a garden, the north western corner of the site 4 adjoins a historic park or garden, the site 4 adjoins a Historic Park or Garden, the southern corner of the site 5 is within a historic Park or Garden, the southern boundary of site 7 borders a historic Park or Garden and the site 8 contains one historic Park or Garden and the eastern part of the site borders a historic Park or Garden.

Site 3 lies partially within the Conservation Area and partially within an area of High Archaeological Potential.

Sites 3, 4 and 5 either lie wholly or partially within Flood Zone 3.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

Sites 4, 6, 7 and ADD9 and ADD10 perform well against the employment objectives, these sites are within 800m from Class B employment opportunities. All of the other sites in Bishops Lydeard perform poorly against access to employment opportunities. All of the sites except the land to the west of existing Local Plan allocation EC22 are within 400m of a GP surgery, and therefore perform well against this objective.

Sites 1, 2, 3 and 5 are within 400m of the Primary School, and perform well against the objective to locate development close to essential services. Sites 7, 8, ADD9 and ADD10 are the furthest from a Primary School and perform particularly poorly against this objective.

All of the sites except the land to the west of existing Local Plan allocation EC22 (ADD9) perform are within relatively close proximity to a food shop. 1, 2 and 3 are within 400m from a convenience shop and therefore perform particularly well against this objective. All of the sites except the land to the west of existing Local Plan allocation EC22 (ADD9) and saved Local Plan allocation EC22 are within 800m from an urban or rural open space.

All sites perform relatively well against access to a bus stop with sites 2, 4, 6, 7 and ADD9 being within 200m from a bus stop and the rest of the sites being within 300m from a bus stop. Bishops Lydeard has a train station and bus stop with regular services (more than twice hourly, including Saturday and Sunday services).

All sites have a strong negative impact on capacity of the nearest primary school and score negatively against secondary school capacity. Similarly opportunities for cycling are limited and consequently all sites score negatively against this objective.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

Land at Taunton Road and Hithermead are not as accessible as some of the other options. However, these sites have a lesser landscape impact than other options considered. They will also not impact to the same extent on localised congestion and parking issues (which are not part of the SA site selection criteria).

Settlement (and sites assessed): Cotford St. Luke

1. Land north and north west of Cotford
2. Land at Highlands
3. Land east of West Villas

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

None of the sites would impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats, or affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP). None of the sites in Cotford St Luke are wholly or partially within an area of local conservation interest. All of the sites are likely to contain some pipistrelle bat activity but no major roost identified.

Site 1 has a strong landscape impact and performs poorly against the criteria on historic environment. It has a medium impact on sites of archaeological importance. The sites 2 and 3 have a medium landscape impact and perform well against the objectives on historic environment and sites of archaeological importance.

None of the potential site allocations in Cotford St Luke are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation.

Site 1 has a medium impact on maintaining soil quality. Sites 2 and 3 perform relatively well against this criteria as they are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land. The site 1 has a medium impact on flood risk whereas sites the 2 and 3 perform well against this objective as they do not lie within areas of flood risk

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

The 3 options perform relatively well against proximity to employment opportunities. Although none of the sites are currently within 800m from Class B employment opportunities, if any of the sites were to be allocated they could include employment provision as part of an allocation. All of the sites in Cotford St Luke perform poorly against access to GP surgeries and all three sites perform quite poorly against access to a Primary School. The Primary School in Cotford St Luke has some capacity to provide additional primary school places.

All of the sites perform poorly against access to secondary schools and none of the secondary schools have existing capacity to provide additional school places. Sites 1 and 2 perform relatively well against access to a convenience shop whereas site number 3 has a medium impact against this objective. All of the sites perform well against access to recreational areas as all of the sites are within 800m from an open space designation. All of the sites perform poorly against opportunities for cycling but perform relatively well against opportunities for walking as there are some good quality walking networks including the Rights of Way network between housing and services. Sites 1 and 3 perform poorly against access to a bus stop whereas the site 2 performs relatively well against this objective. All of the sites perform relatively well against public transport provision.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

Each of the Cotford options perform relatively similarly. Sites 2 and 3 would not have such a significant impact on historic importance and archaeology, further, by identifying a combination of the two sites, landscape impact can be minimised.

Settlement (and sites assessed): Creech St. Michael

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Land at North End | 5. Hyde Lane (pp / res to grant) |
| 2. Land at Worthy Lane | 6. North of School (pp / res to grant) |
| 3. Land at Glenthorne | 7. Land off Hyde Lane (pp / res to grant) |
| 4. Land east of Recreation Ground | 8. Mill Lane |

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

Sites 3, 4, 5 and 8 have a potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats. Sites 1, 2 and 6 perform well against the objective on nature conservation. Site 7 has a medium/low impact against this objective as the site partly or borders an area of local conservation interest.

None of the potential site allocations are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation. Site 1 is the best site in terms of landscape impact whereas sites 2, 3 and 5 would have a strong landscape impact. Site 8 would have a medium landscape impact. All of the potential site allocations except the site 6 perform well against the objective to conserve and enhance the District historic and cultural environment. Site 6 performs particularly poorly against this objective.

Sites 1, 4, 5 and 6 perform well against the criteria on archaeological importance whereas 2, and 7 have a medium impact against this objective. Site 3 has a medium/low impact against this objective due to the fact that the eastern boundary of the site borders a County Archaeological site.

All sites except 3 and 8 have a medium impact against the objective to maintain soil quality. These sites have a medium/low impact against this objective as they are Grade 3 agricultural land.

Site 8 performs particularly poorly against flood risk objectives whereas the site 4 has a medium impact against this objective. None of the other sites in Creech St Michael lie within areas of flood risk.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

All sites except site number 8 have a medium impact against access to employment opportunities. Site number 8 performs well against access to employment opportunities as the site is within close walking distance from the Creech St Michael Business Park.

Sites 6, 7 and 8 are within 800m of a GP surgery. Sites 6 and 7 are within 400m from a Primary School and therefore perform well against this objective. Sites 6 and 7 are more than 400m but less than 600m from a convenience shop, and therefore perform relatively well against this objective. Sites 2, 4 and 5 have a strong negative impact against this objective whereas sites 1, 3 and 8 have a medium impact against this objective.

All sites have a strong negative impact against capacity of Primary and Secondary Schools within or near the settlement to accommodate additional school places, and all of the sites except site 4 have a strong negative impact against access to a Secondary School.

All of the sites except sites 2 and 3 perform relatively well against access to formal recreational facilities. All of the sites perform relatively well against opportunities for walking as there are Public Rights of Ways linking housing to services and employment. Site number 7 performs particularly well against this objective as there are Public Rights of Ways linking housing to services and employment directly south of the site.

All of the sites except site number 7 have a medium impact against opportunities for cycling. Site number 7 performs relatively well against this objective as there is a dedicated cycle link directly south of the site to Taunton where most of employment exists.

Sites 1 and 8 are within 200m from a bus stop and perform well against this objective. Site 3 is within 300m of a bus stop. Sites 2, 5 and 6 perform particularly poorly against access to a bus stop whereas sites 4 and 7 have a medium impact against this objective.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

Sites 5, 6 and 7 all now have planning permission or resolutions to grant. These options appear to be the most appropriate sites for allocation in the Village.

Settlement (and sites assessed): Milverton	
1. Land west of Milverton 2. Land east of Saw Mill 3. Houndsmoor Lane 4. Land off High Street 5. Land at Houndsmoor Farm ADD11. West of Milverton Village Centre	ADD12. Land off Huntash Lane ADD13. Land at Butts Way ADD17. Station Road ADD16. Mount Farm ADD21. Land at Olands Lodge ADD22. Land off Creedwell Orchard
Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:	
<p>None of the potential sites are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation. All of the sites except sites ADD13 and ADD22 have a strong landscape impact. Sites ADD13 and ADD22 have a medium landscape impact.</p> <p>Sites 1, 2, 4, ADD11 and ADD17 have a potential to impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats. 3, 5 and ADD21 perform well against the objective on nature conservation. Sites ADD12, ADD13, ADD16 and ADD22 have a medium/low impact against this objective due to the fact that the sites either border or are partially within an area of local conservation interest.</p> <p>Sites 1, 5, ADD13, ADD16 and ADD21 perform well against the objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural environment. Sites 2, 3 and ADD21 have a medium/low impact against this objective as the sites border a Conservation Area. Sites ADD11, ADD12 and ADD17 have a medium impact against this objective whereas site 4 performs particularly poorly against this objective.</p> <p>Sites 3, 5, ADD13, ADD16 and ADD21 perform well against impacts on archaeological importance. Sites 1, 4, ADD12 and ADD16 have a medium/low impact against this objective as they border an area of High Archaeological Potential or a County Archaeological site.</p> <p>Sites 5, ADD11, ADD12 and ADD21 have a strong negative impact on the objective to maintain soil quality. Sites 1 and ADD13 have a medium impact against this objective. Sites 2, 3, 4, ADD17, ADD16 and ADD21 have a low/medium impact against this objective as the sites are mainly Grade 3 agricultural land. Sites 2 and ADD17 have a medium impact against the objective to ensure that development is not at risk of flooding. None of the other sites lie within an area of flood risk.</p>	
Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:	
<p>All sites perform poorly against access to employment opportunities. Sites 3, 4, ADD11, ADD12, ADD17 and ADD22 are within 800m from a GP surgery, and therefore perform particularly well against this objective. Sites 1, 2, ADD16 and ADD21 are more than 800m but less than 1km from a GP surgery and therefore have a low/medium impact against this objective. Sites 5 and ADD13 have a medium impact against this objective.</p> <p>Sites ADD12 and ADD21 are within 400m from a Primary School and therefore perform particularly well against this objective. Sites 5 and ADD21 are more than 400m but less than 600m from a Primary School and these sites also perform relatively well against this objective. There is capacity at the school to accommodate the scale of development proposed. All sites perform poorly against proximity to a secondary school. None of the secondary schools near the settlement have capacity to provide additional school places.</p> <p>Site number 2 has a strong negative impact against proximity to a convenience shop. Sites 1, 3, 5, ADD13, ADD17 and ADD16 have a medium impact against this objective. Sites 4, ADD11, ADD12 and ADD22 are within 400m from a convenience shop and therefore perform particularly well against this objective.</p> <p>All of the sites in Milverton perform well against access to recreational opportunities. All the sites except site 5 are within 800m from a public open space designation. The site 5 is more than 800m but less than 1km from a Public Open Space. All of the sites perform poorly against opportunities for walking and cycling. Site ADD22 has a medium impact against these two objectives. There are very limited range of walking networks including the Rights of Way between housing, services and employment.</p>	
Suggested Preferred Option(s):	
Land at Butts Way is the Council's preferred option. Whilst the site is not as well-located and accessible as some of the other options considered, the site would not score so poorly against Landscape Impact, Nature Conservation or Archaeological Objectives as other sites. The site could provide a stronger, landscaped edge to the Village and deliver around 20 new homes.	

Settlement (and sites assessed): North Curry

1. Whitewell Cottage	6. South of Knapp Lane	11. North of Oxen Lane
2. Land at Stoke Road	7. North of Nine Acre Lane	12. Corner of White Street
3. E of St Peter's / St Paul's	8. South of Nine Acre Lane	13. Land at Manor Farm
4. NE of Manor House	9. Land off Windmill Hill	14. Land at Greenway
5. NE of The Fosse	10. Land off Greenway	15. South of Stoke Road

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:

None of the potential site allocations in North Curry are within a close proximity to a national landscape designation or would affect a local landscape designation. Sites 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, ADD15 and ADD20 have a strong landscape impact whereas sites 6, 8 and ADD14 have a medium landscape impact. All of the other sites in North Curry have low or not so significant landscape impact.

All of the potential site allocations in North Curry perform well against the objective on nature conservation. None of the sites in North Curry would impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats, affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP), or affect Local Conservation interest.

Sites 1, 2, 69, 11, 12, and ADD15 perform well against the objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural environment. The sites 4, 8 and ADD14 all border a Conservation Area and therefore have a medium/low impact against this objective. Sites 3, 5, 7, 10 and ADD20 have a strong negative impact against this objective.

Sites 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, ADD15 and ADD20 perform well against the objective on archaeological importance whereas sites 1 and 5 have a medium impact against this objective. Sites 3, 4, 6, 8 and ADD14 all border an area of high archaeological potential or a County Archaeological site and therefore have a low/medium impact against this objective.

All of the sites in North Curry have a low/medium impact against the objective to maintain soil quality as all the sites are Grade 3 agricultural land. All of the sites in North Curry perform well against objectives on air quality, impact on existing un-neighbourly uses, water quality, flood risk and to maintain the separate identity of settlements.

Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:

All of the sites perform poorly against proximity to employment opportunities. All of the sites except sites 1, 2 and ADD20 are within 800m from a GP surgery and sites 1, 2 and ADD20 are more than 800m but less than 1km from a GP surgery.

Sites 7, 8 10, ADD14 and ADD15 are within 400m of a Primary School and therefore perform well against this objective. Sites 6, 9 and 11 also perform relatively well against this objective as these sites are more than 400m but less than 600m from a Primary School. Sites 1, 2 and ADD20 perform poorly against proximity to Primary School whereas sites 8, 9, 10 11, ADD14, ADD15 and ADD20 have a medium impact against this objective. All of the sites perform well against capacity of the existing Primary School to accommodate development. All of the sites perform poorly against access to a Secondary School. None of the Secondary Schools near the settlement have capacity to provide additional school places.

Sites 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and ADD14 are within 400m of a convenience shop and perform well against this objective. Sites 1, 4 and 9 are between 400-600m and perform relatively well against the objective.

All sites except ADD20 perform well against proximity to recreational areas. All sites except ADD20 and 2 are within 800m from an open space designation. Site 2 is more than 800m but less than 1km from an open space designation. All of the sites perform quite poorly against opportunities for walking and cycling, and the public transport provision in the village is limited.

Sites 2, 3, 6, and 7 are within 200m from a bus stop and perform well against this objective. Sites 4 and 5 are less than 300m from a bus stop and therefore perform relatively well against this objective. Sites 8, 9, 10 11, ADD14, ADD15 and ADD20 have a strong negative impact against proximity to a bus stop whereas sites 1 and 12 have a medium impact against this objective.

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

Many of the sites considered in North Curry would have a significant landscape impact and/or also impact on historical/archaeological considerations. Land at Knapp Lane has a lesser landscape impact than most sites considered and lies in an accessible location. Land at Manor Farm (Overlands) is also relatively accessible and subject to sensitive design and the number of dwellings limited to respect the setting of the Listed Farm Complex can also be included.

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Settlement (and sites assessed): Churchinford
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1. Ford Farm

Summary of Assessment against Environmental Criteria:
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<p>The site at Ford Farm lies wholly within a national landscape importance (AONB) and therefore, has a strong negative impact against the objective to protect, enhance and improve local distinctiveness and landscape and townscape quality. The site at Ford Farm also has a strong landscape and the site performs poorly against the objective to conserve and enhance the District's historic and cultural environment.</p> <p>The site at Ford Farm performs well against objectives on nature conservation as development here would not impact on international or national conservation sites or international or/and European protected species/habitats, affect the Favourable Conservation Status of a Species listed under the Somerset Priority Species List (Somerset BAP), or affect Local Conservation interest.</p> <p>The site also performs well against the objectives on archaeological importance, air quality, and impact on existing un-neighbourly uses, water quality, flood risk and maintaining the separate identity of settlements. The site is wholly Grade 3 agricultural land and therefore has a medium/low impact against the objective to maintain soil quality.</p>

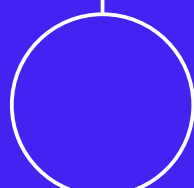
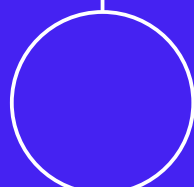
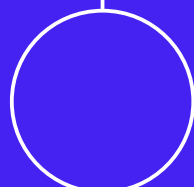
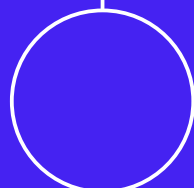
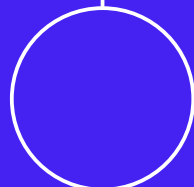
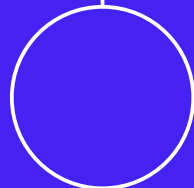
Summary of Assessment against Residential Criteria:
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<p>The site at Ford Farm performs poorly against proximity to employment opportunities, proximity to Primary and Secondary Schools, access to formal recreational facilities, opportunities for walking and cycling and capacity of public transport to accommodate further growth. The site has a medium impact against capacity of the Primary School to accommodate further growth. The site is less than 300m from a bus stop and therefore performs relatively well against this objective. The site is also within 800m from a GP surgery and the site therefore performs well against this objective. The site is also within 400m from a convenience shop and therefore performs well against this objective.</p>

Suggested Preferred Option(s):

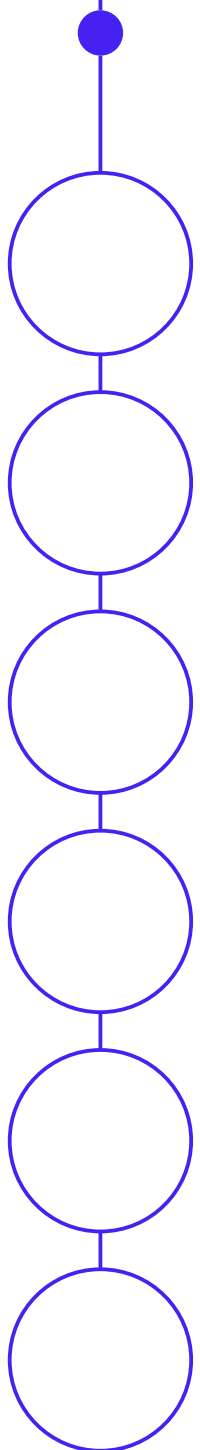
Ford Farm is the only option considered. There are no fundamental concerns identified by the SA to justify the exclusion of the site from the Preferred Options.
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Statement of Community Involvement



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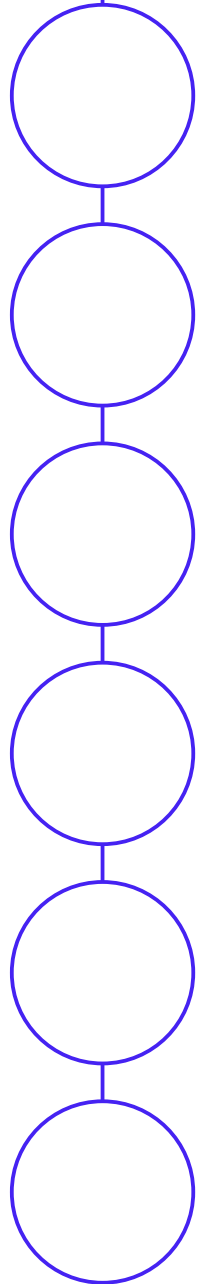
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Introduction – What is a Statement of Community Involvement

Introduction – What is a Statement of Community Involvement

Our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Taunton Deane Borough Council will involve the community and stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of local planning policy and the consideration of planning applications. This our second SCI and has been prepared to take account of changes to planning policy nationally and the way in which the Council is structured and organised.

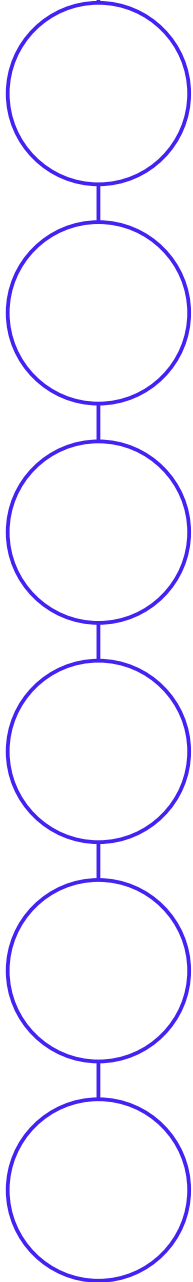


Why have an SCI?

Why have an SCI?

Decisions on where new homes, jobs and shops, etc should go must take account of the capacity of infrastructure and other local constraints. Often, local communities have the best understanding of how their areas work. To this end it is vital that the views of local communities and other stakeholders are taken into account through both plan-making and decision-taking (development management) processes.

We also have a legal duty to consult in the preparation of local plans and on planning applications. These duties and responsibilities are set out in a number of pieces of legislation including the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the Localism Act (2011), the (1990) Town and Country Planning Act and recent (2012) Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

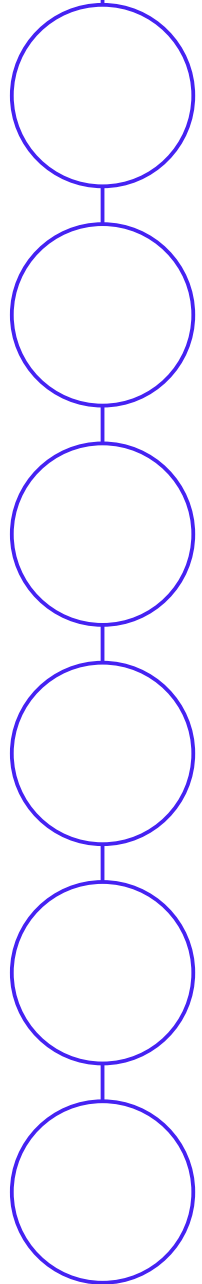


How can you get involved?

How can you get involved?

There are two areas of planning that you can be involved in:

- **Plan preparation** (Development Plan Documents) - setting the policy framework against which development proposals will be assessed. Decisions on planning applications are made in line with these local planning documents.
- **Planning applications** (Development Management) - most types of development require a planning application to be submitted and approved. Anyone can view and make comments on a planning application.



Corporate Context

Corporate Context

Our first SCI was adopted in 2007, it was one of a suite of documents aimed at developing a shared Vision for the future of Taunton Deane. Since 2007 there have been a number of changes to planning policy, the Council's wider approach to engagement and the way in which it is organised. The original context for this vision has moved on and these National, Corporate and Equalities changes should be reflected in an updated SCI.

We are committed to being a Council for the Community. Our Corporate Consultation Policy identifies the following Core Values:

- Aim for the highest standard of consultation practice – having a programme of improving the quality of consultation and research across the Council will be implemented and regularly monitored;
- Seek community's views as an essential part of the evidence base for its decision making – public will be invited to be actively involved in community planning, best value reviews and other Council processes, and will be informed how their views affect action in the community;
- Work towards full involvement of all elements of community and recognise different viewpoints via appropriate consultation techniques – as part of equality review, good practice on how to gain views of hard to reach groups will be made widely available;
- Flexible approach to seeking views and diverse ways of consulting and involving the public – review of consultation and research will be conducted, further information technology and other innovative tools will be examined;
- Target planning of our services by sharing information on established needs and aspirations of the community – sharing consultation and research information;
- Add value by sharing information with resources across partner agencies – invest in Somerset Influence and other County wide initiatives for sharing information, seeking opportunities for joint resourcing and training;
- Invest in building the skills of our staff as researchers and consultation experts – full training programme to equip staff with appropriate high-level consultation and research skills will be designed and implemented. Regular updates on consultation issued to members.

The Taunton Deane Partnership (TPD) previously known as the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is a group of representatives from the public, voluntary and private sectors that work together to improve the quality of life of the local community. It aims to help coordinate and improve local services and has published a Priority Area Strategy this supersedes the previous Sustainable Community Strategy. The

Corporate Context

Partnership comprises a number of sub-groups including the Spatial Planning Working Group. This group acts in a co-ordinating role helping to ensure that community planning is reflected in our emerging local plans. It also advises on best practice for community consultation. We have worked closely with the SPWG in the shaping of this revised SCI.

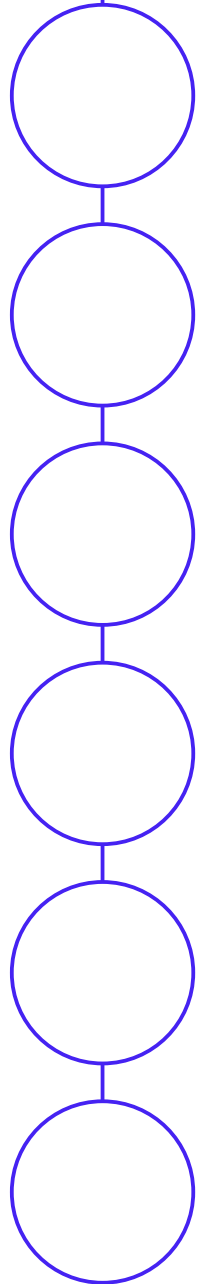
We now produce an Equalities Information Report. This Report provides a profile of the area against the Equality Act's protected characteristics. It is used by us to ensure the needs of particular groups are taken into account in the shaping of Council Policy.

To aid the Council in identifying potential inequality an Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) is undertaken for all reports, policies and significant projects. This should enable TDBC to anticipate and recommend ways to avoid discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group. The revised SCI will be subject to an Equality Impact Analysis prior to its adoption.

Our new Corporate Business Plan identifies 'Quality Sustainable Growth' as its first aim. Against this aim are two objectives:

- Facilitate a significant increase in the number, quality and range of available houses within the Borough, including the highest achievable proportion of affordable housing;
- Delivering the infrastructure necessary to bring forward development opportunities.

Our SCI builds on the Corporate Consultation Policy to set out how the Council will consult with the development industry, local communities and stakeholders to produce effective and robust planning policy and development management decisions to deliver the necessary housing and infrastructure. The SCI needs to be aware of and take account of the other documents and groups listed above. To this end we have shared and discussed a draft of this SCI with the Community Planning Working Group and LDF Steering Group and taken on board a number of their suggestions.



Community Involvement in Planning Policy

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

The Planning System

The planning system requires local authorities to produce local development documents. These set out the spatial strategy for an area and associated policies to manage land uses. They provide the basis on which planning applications are determined.

Planning Legislation, regulations and guidance set out what documents must be produced, how they must be developed and examined by an independent Examiner.

Further information regarding the council's programme for preparing development plan documents is contained in the Local Development Scheme.

Copies of the Local Development Scheme are available from:

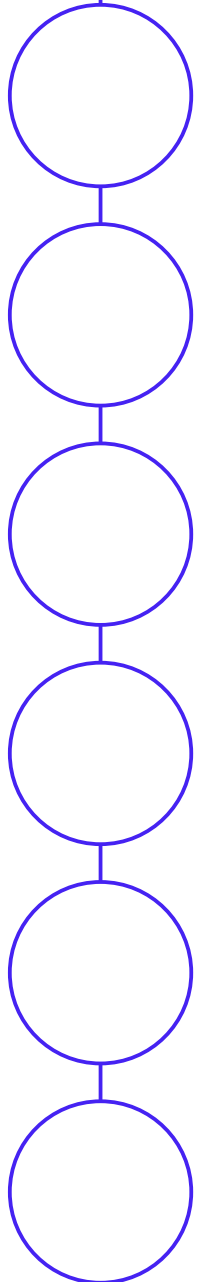
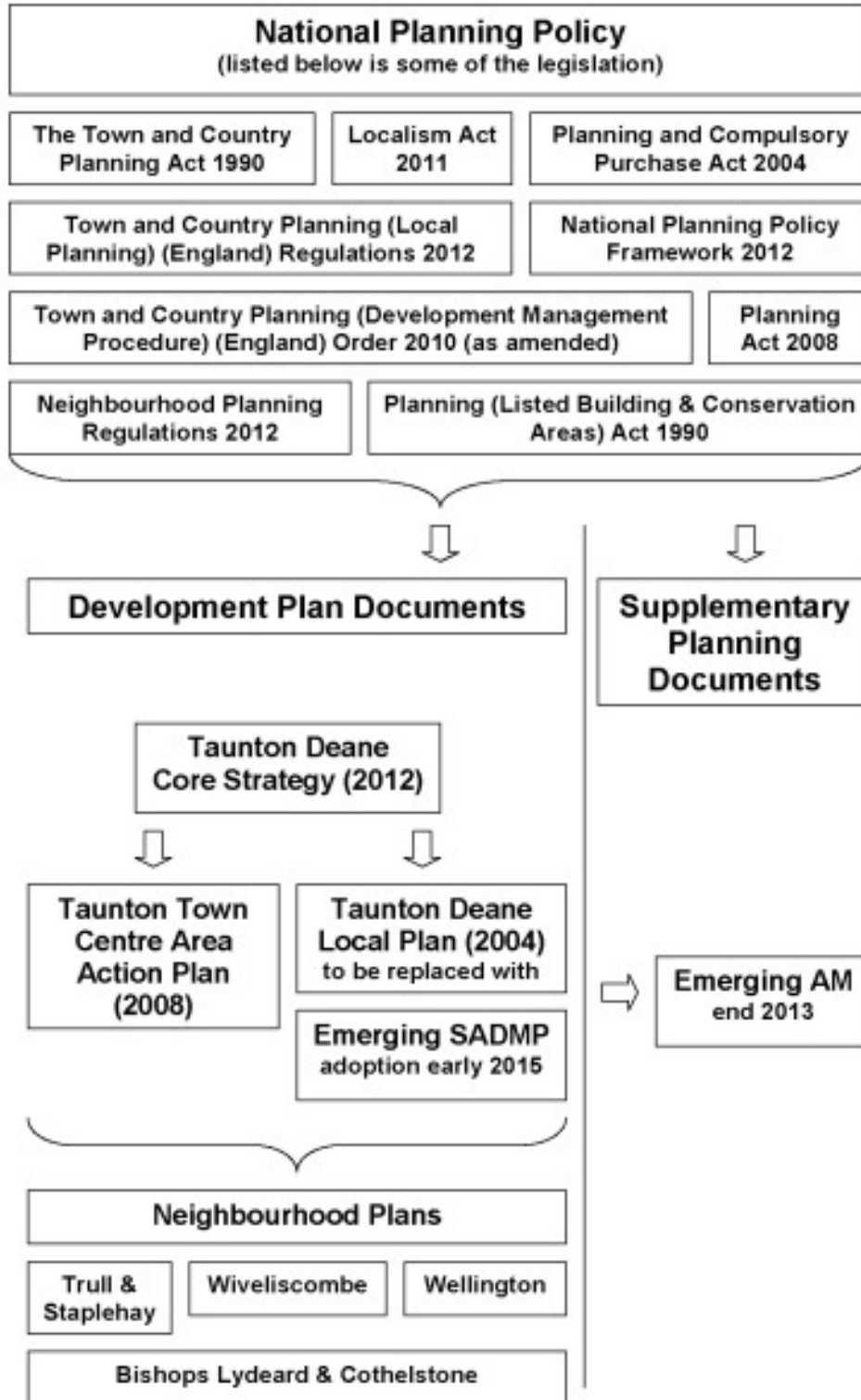
- the council's website – www.tauntondeane.gov.uk
- the council's office – Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE

The Statement of Community Involvement will be used by the Council to guide the our approach to the consultation undertaken in the preparation of our local plans.

There are two types of local plans: Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

Current Local Planning Coverage in Taunton Deane



Community Involvement in Planning Policy

Development Plan Documents

The Core Strategy, emerging Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan, adopted Local Plan and Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan are all types of Development Plan Documents (DPDs). These plans set out policies and proposals for the regulation and use of land within the Borough.

Each DPD goes through a series of formal stages of production prior to adoption. These comprise the consideration of alternative options, public consultation, a publication stage at which formal representations are made and submission for independent examination.

Following the most recent changes to the Planning Regulations, the only formal stages in the production of a development plan document are:

- Pre-publication consultation – this could be undertaken once or a number of times. The exact scale and extent of consultation may depend on the scope and content of the Plan being prepared.
- Publication – at which point stakeholders and members of the community can make formal representations on the Plan. These representations are ultimately put before an Examiner considering the soundness of the Plan.
- Submission – the Council must submit the published plan to the Secretary of State along with all representations received at the publication stage.
- Examination – an independently appointed Examiner will consider the soundness of the Development Plan Document against several tests as well whether the Council has complied with the relevant Regulations.
- Adoption – following receipt of the Examiner's Report (and subject to the Plan being found sound) the Council can formally adopt the Plan as a Development Plan Document.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

The planning system requires DPDs to go through a process called a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of an SEA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to assess the effects of the plan on the environment.

An SEA/SA is produced when starting the process of DPD preparation; it is consulted on to allow interested parties to make representations on what it should contain.

An SA is undertaken when preparing each stage of a DPD, and a report is consulted on throughout the plan-making process, at the same time as the DPD.

Where both these documents are required TDBC may combine them into one publication.

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

An SA is not generally required for SPDs. ⁽¹⁾

Supplementary Planning Documents

These provide additional information or detail on the policies in the Development Plan Documents, examples of SPDs include; masterplans, development briefs, design guidance or issue based documents – green space strategy, energy efficiency strategy or affordable housing strategy. The preparation of SPDs has slightly different formal requirements to a DPDs.

Following the most recent changes to the Planning Regulations, the only formal stages in the production of a development plan document are:

- Publication – at which point stakeholders and members of the community can make formal representations on the Plan. Representations received will be collated into a report which also says how the issues have been addressed.
- Adoption – following consultation the document will go before Council Members for formal adopt.

Neighbourhood Planning

In 2012 Government introduced a new community led planning policy tier, Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders. TDBC is only responsible for notification of regulatory stages in the Neighbourhood Plan process:

- Designation of an area and appropriate body or forum - at which point stakeholders and members of the community can make formal representations on the compliance of the area and body with the regulations
- Publication – at which point stakeholders and members of the community can make formal representations on the Plan. These representations are ultimately put before an Examiner considering the soundness of the Plan.
- Examination – an independently appointed Examiner will consider the soundness of the Development Plan Document against several tests as well whether the Neighbourhood Plan Group has complied with the relevant Regulations

1 The Planning Act 2008 altered Section 19(5) of the 2004 Act removing the requirement for local authorities to produce an SA for SPDs. A separate SA is not required if the SPDs do not contain any new policies, but provides supplementary guidance relating to policies set out in overarching local plans that have been subject to SA. If the SPD is likely to give rise to significant effects the impacts of which have not been formally covered in the appraisal of the parent plan or where an assessment is required by the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive then an assessment may be required.

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

- Adoption – following receipt of the Examiner’s Report (and subject to the Plan being found sound) the Plan is put to a local referenda, if a majority support the Plan the Council can formally adopt the Plan as a Development Plan Document

Other elements of engagement and consultation will be the responsibility of the appropriate body.

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations⁽²⁾ set out who must be consulted at which stage.

Who we will consult

We will consult people at various stages in the development of local plans. The Town and Country Planning Regulations require Local Planning Authorities to meet a minimum level of community involvement and specifically a number of organisations which must be consulted if the Council consider that they will be affected, known as Statutory Consultees and General Consultation Bodies. A list of Statutory Consultees, General Consultation Bodies, and other organisations and groups the Council proposes to involve in plan-making included in Appendix A.

In addition to meeting its statutory obligations, the Council is committed to ensuring that local groups, organisations and individuals are provided with the opportunity to be involved in the preparation of local development documents.

TDBC has a database of consultees, who have either commented upon or expressed an interest in being involved with the development of local plans. This database is used to keep individuals, companies and organisations informed on the production of any local plans. New consultees can add themselves to the consultation database via the TDBC consultation portal or can write to the Policy Team requesting inclusion on to the database. The Data Protection Act will be followed to ensure personal data is kept securely and personal details are not disclosed.

Consultation methods

The Town and Country Planning (local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the minimum requirements for public participation in the preparation of Development Plan Documents. These are marked with an “M”. The Council aims to go beyond these requirements to enable the local community, stakeholders and organisations that want to participate aware of and able to engaging in shaping the Local Planning Documents, these are marked with •.

A variety of methods will be used at various stages of the planning process to enable community involvement in the preparation of local plans. These methods included, but are not limited to:

2 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012: statutory instrument 2012 No. 637

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

M The website – consultation activities will be publicised through the Councils website, on the Planning Policy pages, the home page and dedicated DPD. specific pages. Adopted local plans evidence base will also be available for download. Our consultation portal will be available for people to read the comments and provide comments online.

M Inspection Points – hard copies of documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices during consultation periods. In addition we may also make them available at local libraries and community centres. Copies of the evidence base will also be available to view on request at Deane House.

M E-mails – notifications will be sent to statutory bodies, stakeholders, relevant groups and other individuals and organisations on our consultation base. The Councils Planning Policy team is contactable via e-mail, talkingtomorrows@tauntondeane.gov.uk .

M Letters – where we have no e-mail details notifications will be sent to statutory bodies, stakeholders, relevant groups and other individuals and organisations on our consultation base where we only have a postal address or they have specifically requested to be contacted by post.

- **Local News Media** – Public Notices will be placed in the Somerset Gazette and Wellington Weekly. Advertisements will include details on when and where planning documents can be inspected, how copies can be obtained, the closing date for representations and where to send them. We will also issue a press release to all local news media and utilise the Deane Dispatch pages of the Somerset Gazette to inform people.
- **Involve...** - an electronic newsletter is circulated to all schools, equalities organisations, members, parish and councils, libraries and community centres, organisations for hard to reach groups in the Borough (i.e. age concern, Somerset Chinese organisation, compass disability, etc).
- **Leaflets** – leaflets, flyers and brochures may be distributed separately, or with other Council correspondence, to summarise detailed information.
- **Public exhibitions/displays/roadshows** – for larger consultation events, the Council may promote the consultation at an exhibition, display or roadshow. This has the ability to target members of the community who may not get involved through electronic media or more formal methods.
- **One-to-one meetings** – with individuals, groups, organisations and stakeholders as appropriate, to provide the opportunity for exchange on information, discussions and problem solving. However, it is the responsibility of the individual, group or organisation to submit written comments after the meeting if they wish.

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

- **Presentations** – to groups, organisations and stakeholders as appropriate, to target particular people in the community who may be interested in a specific issue.
- **Questionnaires, Surveys or focus groups** – such research can target people with particular interests or characteristics and determine attitudes towards particular issues and options.
- **Community and resident meetings and groups** – use of pre-existing community and resident meetings to target people with specific characteristics or interests.
- **Interactive workshops** – used to identify and focus discussion around issues and key themes. This informal environment may help to reach people who might not get involved with more formal processes.
- **Social Media** – we may advertise consultation through the Councils Twitter account with additional tweets if appropriate during the course of the consultation.
- **Council Meetings** – where appropriate plans and evidence base will be taken to the following Members meetings: LDF Steering Group, Leaders, Portfolio Holders Briefing, Political Groups, TDBC's Scrutiny, Executive and Full Council meetings. It may also be useful to take information to the following corporate meetings: Leads and Corporate Management Team.

We recognise that some of the methods outlined above may not suit everybody, however it is hoped that the variety of methods will enable a wide range of people to get involved in the consultation process.

In line with the Councils Participation Strategy/Equalities legislation, all of our publications will be written clearly and concisely, explaining any technical terms or language, using images and pictures where practical. A translation facilities box will be included on all consultation and adopted DPDs and SPDs. We will also offer an appropriate timescale for representations to be received to allow everyone to have the chance to participate.

Equalities and Diversity

The Equality Act (2010) defines nine “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council will aim to ensure that these characteristics do not effect people’s ability to respond to our consultation and have their views heard.

Community Involvement in Planning Policy

It is recognised that some groups are harder to engage with than others. These can include: those for whom English is not their first language, people with disabilities, children and young people, older people, gypsies & travellers, ethnic minorities, and the homeless. This is not an exhaustive list, it provides an indication of the breadth of harder to reach groups. Such groups may not be engaged by or may be unable or unwilling to engage in traditional consultation methods.

The Council will endeavour to take account of barriers faced by these groups and try to overcome these by using alternative methods of consultation, or by asking affected groups or individuals how they would like to be involved.

Using expertise and networks of communication already established throughout different areas of the Council to engage such groups. Where appropriate; meetings or presentations will be held at a mutually convenient time and venue with such groups.

Appendix A provides a list of some of the key community and voluntary organisations in Taunton Deane with links to equality and diversity groups to assist with consultation and engagement. This is not an exhaustive list.

What we do with representations received – planning policy

We will read and publish all representations received and respond to those which are related to planning policy. Because we get a large number of responses we cannot always respond individually to them, but we will produce a summary document which will be published on our website or consultation portal.

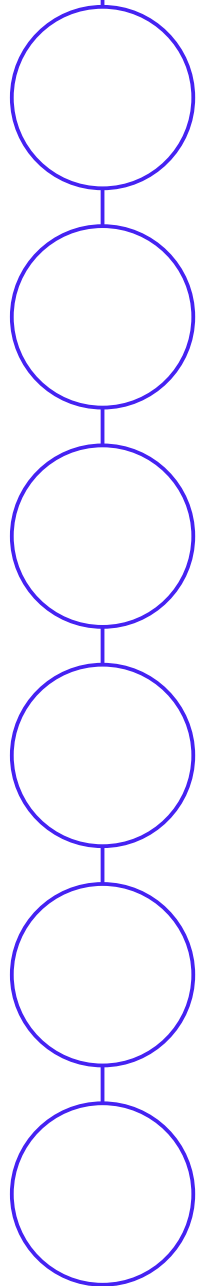
All representations received will be public documents and as such will be available for other to see. In line with the Data Protection Act we will not publish personal information such as e-mails, signatures, telephone numbers or addresses. We cannot keep your name secret.

The Council will not accept comments that are offensive, obscene, racist or illegal. We may pass any such material to the Police.

A statement of consultation will be produced which contains an overview of the consultation activities undertaken, summary of representations and how or what the Council will do to accommodate these into account in the final document. A copy of this statement will be available on the TDBC website and at the Councils Planning Reception at Deane House.

For Council DPDs and SPDs a report outlining the main issues raised in representations and recommendations for future actions will be taken to the LDF Steering Group.

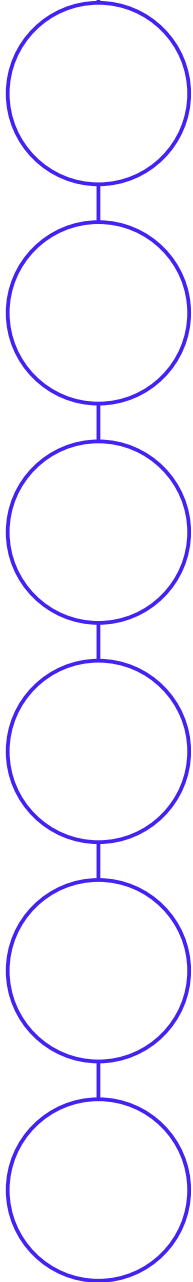
When submitting a DPD to the Secretary of State the Council is also required to submit a statement of compliance setting out which bodies and other persons have been consulted, how they have been consulted, the main issues that were raised and how these have been addressed.



Community Involvement in Planning Policy

The level of service you can expect from the Council is set out in our Customer Charter. If a person is not happy with the service they have received they should contact the Planning Policy team in the first instance. If they are dissatisfied with the response they can make a formal complain through the Councils Complaint Procedure.

The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints of injustice arising from misadministration by Local Government and certain other bodies. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how a Council has done something. However, they can not question that a Council has done simply because someone does not agree with it. www.lgo.org.uk



Community Involvement in Development Management

Community Involvement in Development Management

The Planning Application Process

Development Management decisions shape the character of an area. The Council determines a range of applications from household extensions, fences, listed building and conservation area applications, changes of use, advertisements to major housing and business premises. ⁽³⁾

There are three stages at which the local community and stakeholders are consulted and/or notified on development proposals: pre-application stage, application stage and when a decision has been made.

Because Taunton Deane is rarely the applicant for planning permission, this section of the SCI is primarily focused on setting the standards we would expect an applicant to follow prior to making an application for planning permission. Beyond this, the Borough Council has a duty to ensure applications and decisions are properly publicised but in order that the public and stakeholders can meaningfully influence the process, it is important to ensure that consultation is 'frontloaded' and undertaken prior to an application being made.

Planning Acts, Orders and Regulations set out the minimum consultation the Council and applicants are required to undertake, the requirements for pre-application consultation and the duty to take account of the responses from it.

Pre-application (for the applicant to undertake)

There are benefits to early engagement with the Council and local community as well as key stakeholders. It can be helpful in identifying and addressing issues before applications are submitted, shaping the design of the development and ensuring sufficient information is submitted for an application to be registered and a recommendation made.

An applicant's early engagement with the Council is important and can vary from a short conversation with a Council Officer to a number of meetings with various TDBC departments and Elected Members. Open and transparent consultation with Parish and Town Councils at public meetings is recommended. Advice from the Council and Parish or Town Councils is confidential and will be "without prejudice" to any eventual decision of an application. Since 2012 pre-application advice has been subject to payment of an appropriate fee. The fee is based on the size and type of development. Details of the fees are on the TDBC web site:

www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/public/council/departments/department/?id=guid%2F409d7309-a538-2c10-268d-cd440c84b8ec

3 Applications for waste, minerals and major highway schemes are considered by Somerset County Council. Applications for nationally significant infrastructure projects are considered by the Planning Inspectorate.

Community Involvement in Development Management

We recommend that all applicants undertake appropriate and effective pre-application consultation with the community before submitting an application. The Council's Development Management and Policy Teams can advise of the relevant issues and suggest ways to involve and inform the community. Every planning application is individual therefore the scale of community consultation and techniques used will vary, appendix B contains examples; but not an exhaustive list of different types of engagement.

The Council has a tiered approach to the level of pre-application consultation we would like to see the applicant undertake.

- **Significant & Departure Applications:** applications where there are considerable issues of scale and controversy, and/or the application is contrary to or out of line with the Development Plan (a "departure" application). This includes departures not covered by Circular 02/09.

Examples, but not an exhaustive list, include: Strategic Site Allocations, large scale retail or residential development, departures from TDBC's Core Strategy, Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan or Site Allocations Document, applications requiring a full transport assessment, proposals to remove community facilities – such as development on playing fields, developments for significant new retail floor space, schedule 1 and 2 developments under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations ⁽⁴⁾.

- **Small Scale & Other Minor Applications:** applications for sites that are of local significance or are sensitive to development pressures and allocated sites that have not generated significant objection in the Development Plan Document process.

Examples, but not an exhaustive list, of local significance and sensitive sites include: developments which impact on a local landmark, propose the loss of a community facility – such as post office or public house, sites within a Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Site of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI).

The Council recommends that all pre-application consultation be presented within the appropriate policy context, relevant national and local policies and links to local strategies.

The applicant should provide a summary of the pre-application community involvement and/or consultation when they submit a planning application. It should include: a list of the organisations, bodies and people who engaged with the consultation, a summary of their responses and explain how the developer has amended their scheme to take account of any relevant issues raised. The Council expects reasonable access to all information relating to the community involvement undertaken.

4 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

Community Involvement in Development Management

A number of bodies can advise and provide training to communities on a range of planning issues including pre-application engagement, representations to planning applications and planning policy consultations. Planning Aid England provides a range of advice and support to individuals and communities. See their web site for more information: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/> . The Planning Portal also provides information on the planning system to individuals, developers and Councils: <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk> .

Application (for the Council)

Once an application has been received it will be registered. When it has been validated it will be included on the weekly application register. The register as well as all information and correspondence pertaining to the application will be available on the Council's website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/planning. Paper copies of current planning applications will also be available to view on request at Deane House Planning Reception.

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 requires the Council to consult with the community. For certain type of applications TDBC is also obliged to consult with specific groups and organisations, often referred to as statutory consultees, these are listed in Appendix B. Consultation will be proportionate to the application being considered.

The Council is required to publicise the application, either by site notice or write to neighbours. The site notice/s will be placed in a prominent position on or near the site. For some larger developments, applications contrary to the local plan and some statutory applications, such as those effecting Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas, a Public Notice will also be placed in that section of the local newspaper. ⁽⁵⁾

The letter, notice or advert will contain details of the planning application and information on where plans and any supporting documents accompanying the application can be viewed. It will also explain where to make representations and when they have to be returned to the Council.

The Council has a Neighbourhood Leaflet with information on the Development Management process, the community's role in it and guidance on how to comment on applications. The leaflet is sent out with letters and is also available from Deane House Planning Reception and on the Council's website:

www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/public/councildepartments/department?id=guid%409d7309a5382c10268dcd440c84b8ec

5 Article 13 Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended), DMPO, and Regulation 5 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended), and Section 67 & 73 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to be amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

Community Involvement in Development Management

Sometimes planning applications are revised after they have been submitted; this could be as a result of matters of concern or items raised in objections. In these cases, the Council may re-consult those people originally notified of the application to give them the opportunity to comment on the amendments. The Council has a statutory time limit within which TDBC has to determine most applications. Given this a 14 day response period will usually apply for re-consultation.

Representations received will be put with the application documentation on the Council's website. The Council will only be able to consider matters relating to planning and the planning application.

Parish Councils are consulted on the majority of applications in their area, other than those that are determined by them Under the Boroughs Parish Delegation Scheme – Milverton, Pitminster and Wellington.

What happens to comments received?

The Council will only be able to consider matters relating to planning and the planning application. Where appropriate, comments may result in changes to an application, conditions attached to an application decision to address particular issues or refusal of an application. There are nearly always differing views and competing interests, we are required to make informed decisions having regard to national and local planning policies, development impacts and what will be in the best interest of the community.

Decisions

For most minor and householder applications decisions are made by the Planning and Development Manager under powers delegated from the Planning Committee.

For major, significant and controversial applications decisions are made by Councillors on the Planning Committee. The Development Management Officers prepare a report for committee outlining the proposal, issues raised and recommendations of either approval, approval with conditions or refusal.

Any person who has made a representation will be notified when the application is to be reported to the Planning Committee for determination. The Council has written a Planning Committee Leaflet which explains the Planning Committee Process and how individuals are able to make representations at such meetings. This leaflet will be enclosed with the letters; copies are also available at The Deane House Planning Reception and on the Council's website.

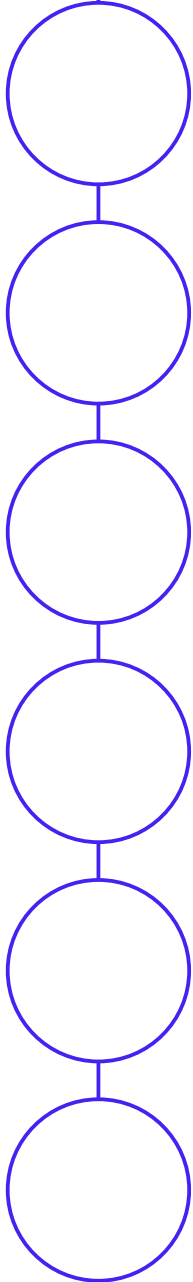
On occasion the Secretary of State calls-in an application. The Council will provide copies of all correspondence to the Secretary of State and publicise the call-in on its website.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and Review

The contents of the Statement of Community Involvement will be regularly reviewed in order to keep up to date with any changes in policy, to update consultee groups, where necessary, and to review the relative success of the various community involvement measures undertaken.

TDBC's online consultation portal allows for registered consultees to input equal opportunities monitoring data when signing up to the system. If completed, this will help us to monitor the effectiveness of our policies surrounding equal opportunities and make changes where required. In addition we may include an optional monitoring form alongside the consultation response form.



Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

Specific Consultation Bodies

The specific consultation bodies which the Regulations⁽⁶⁾ require the Council to consult are:

- Town and Parish Councils in the Borough and adjacent to the Borough
- Adjacent District Council (Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Mendip, West Somerset, East Devon, Mid Devon)
- County Councils (Somerset & Devon)
- Blackdown Hills AONB
- Quantocks AONB
- Exmoor National Park
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- Marine Management Organisation*
- Natural England
- NHS Somerset and Primary Care Trust (from April 2013 these were replaced by Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS Commissioning Board)
- Relevant communications companies (such as BT, Broadband Delivery UK, Mobile Network Companies, Mobile Operators Association)
- Relevant electricity and gas companies (such as National Grid, West & Wales, Western Power Distribution)
- Relevant sewerage and water undertakers (such as Wessex Water, Parrett Drainage Board, Somerset Drainage Board Consortium, South West Water)
- The Coal Authority*
- The Environment Agency
- The Highways Agency

6 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage)
- The Homes and Communities Agency
- Network Rail
- The Secretary of State for Transport

*Unlikely to be relevant for Taunton Deane Borough Council.

General Consultation Bodies

The Regulations also require the Council to consult general consultation bodies, where appropriate. For TDBC, these include:

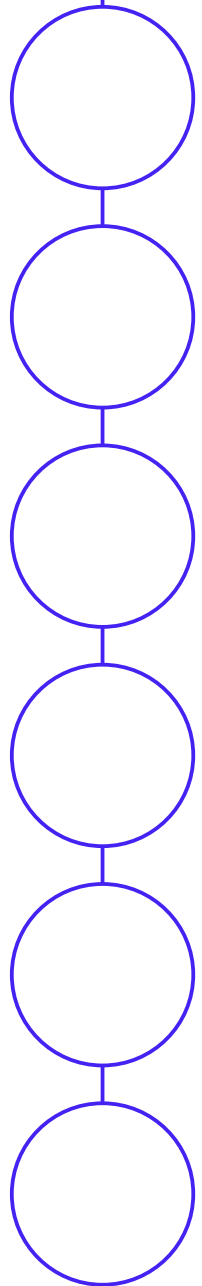
- Community/resident groups (such as Friends of Wellington Park, Blackbrook and Holway Residents Association, Community Council for Somerset)
- Developers, house builders, the development industry and their agents
- Local business groups (including local business forums such as Somerset Chamber of Commerce, Wiveliscombe Business Group)
- Local community action groups (e.g. Transition Towns, Creech Local Action Team)
- Local community transport groups (such as Wive Link)
- Local disability groups (see hard to reach groups)
- Local education trusts and associations (such as Somerset College, Somerset Skills & Learning, Travellers Education Service)
- Local environmental groups (e.g. Somerset Ecological Record Centre, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset Garden Trust, Somerset Hedge Group)
- Local health associations (such as Somerset Ambulance Trust, Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, St Johns Ambulance)
- Local housing groups and associations (such as Taunton Deane Sheltered Housing Forum, Falcon Housing,
- Local history and conservation groups (e.g. Building Preservation Trust)
- Local leisure and sport groups (e.g. Tone Leisure, Wellington District Sports Federation, Somerset Cricket Board, Somerset Playing Field Association)
- Local racial, ethnic or national groups (see hard to reach groups)

Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- Local registered providers (such as Falcon Rural Housing, Raglan Housing Association)
- Local religious groups (e.g.
- Local resident associations
- Local retail associations
- Neighbourhood Watch groups (see hard to reach groups)
- Older persons groups (see hard to reach groups)
- Voluntary organisations (see hard to reach groups)
- Youth groups, schools and colleges

We will also involve local residents and the following organisations, where necessary:

- DCLG
- Home Office
- Department for Education
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for Transport
- Department for Health
- Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Justice
- Office of Government Commerce
- Age UK
- Airport operators
- Chemical Business Association
- British Geological Survey



Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
- British Chambers of Commerce
- Church Commissioners
- Civil Aviation Authority
- CABE and the Design Council
- Crown Estate office
- Diocesan Board of Finance
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- Environmental groups at national, regional and local level, including Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Friends of the Earth, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the Woodland Trust and other Wildlife Trusts
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Fields in Trust
- Fire and rescue services
- Forestry Commission
- Freight Transport Association
- Gypsy Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Home Builders Federation (HBF)
- Learning and Skills Council
- Local public transport operators
- Network Rail
- Rail companies and the Rail Freight Group
- Regional housing boards
- Road Haulage Association
- Sport England

Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- Tenancy Services Authority
- Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform Coalition
- Women’s National Commission

The Council retains a large consultation database of all interested groups and bodies allowing it to target consultation exercises accordingly.

Hard-to-Reach Groups

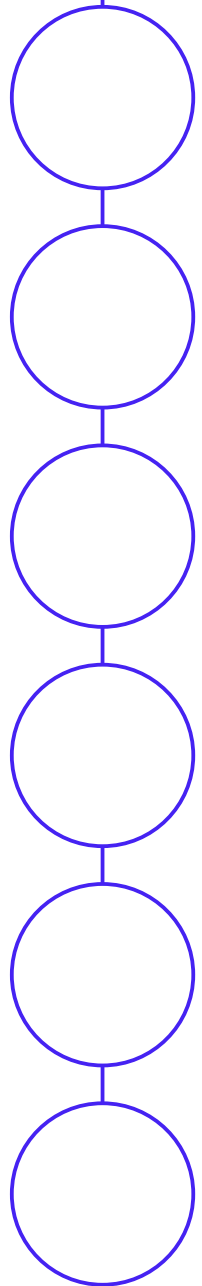
The Council intends to specifically target and engage the following groups who represent hard-to-reach sectors of the community we have traditionally struggled to involve in the plan-making process. Please note, this is not an exclusive list (the Council will look to work with any other groups that come to light during consultation periods):

Older people's groups:

- Age Concern Somerset
- Help the Aged
- Senior Citizens Association
- Taunton and District over 55's
- Taunton Old Peoples Housing Society
- Taunton and Wellington Pensioners Forum

Young people's groups

- Youth Centres (e.g. Trident Community Association)
- Connexion
- Somerset County Scout Association
- Somerset Youth – Youth Council
- Young Homeless Group
- Youth Council



Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- Young Somerset
- YMCA

Disability groups:

- Apple Disabled Sports Clubs
- Bridgewater & Taunton Deaf Club
- Conquest Centre for Disabled Riders
- Compass
- Disability Employees Network
- Learning Disabilities Service
- MENCAP
- MIND
- Sense
- Seeability
- Somerset Association for the Blind
- Somerset Access and Inclusion Network
- Somerset Tinnitus Support Group for hard of Hearing
- Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group

Women and men's groups:

- Association Women's Refuge
- Men's Advice Line and Enquiries (MALE)
- Standing Conference for Women's Organisations
- Women's Resource Centre

Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

Race, nationality and ethnicity groups:

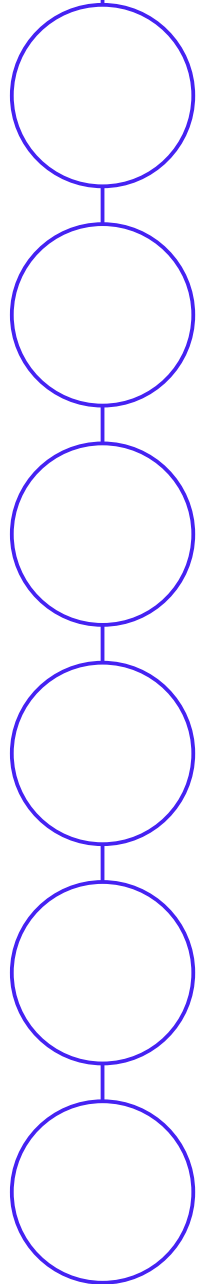
- Bangladesh Association Taunton and West Branch
- Black and Ethnic Employment Group
- Chinese Association
- Friends and Families of Gypsies and Travellers
- Polish Somerset
- Showmens Guild of Great Britain (Western Section)

Equalities groups:

- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) groups
- Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset (FEDS)
- Gay Community
- Jehovah’s Witness South West Region
- Somerset Racial Equalities Council
- Taunton Christians Together
- Taunton Townswomens Guild
- Taunton vale Gospel hall Trust
- Temple Methodist
- 2bu - Somerset
- World Forum for Ethnic Communities

Other groups:

- Alzheimer’s Society
- Avon & Somerset Independent Custody Visitors Scheme
- Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- CVS
- Motor Neurone Disease Association



Appendix A – stakeholders to be involved in local planning policy

- MS Society Taunton and District Branch,
- Depression Alliance Somerset
- POhWER
- Somerset Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
- Somerset Carers Network
- Relate – Taunton, Wiveliscombe and Wellington
- Haven

Appendix B – stakeholders to be involved in development management

Appendix B – stakeholders to be involved in development management

The Regulations⁽⁷⁾ require the Council to consult specific consultation bodies when considering some planning applications.

The statutory consultees for Development Management include:

Local highway authorities

Local planning authorities

Natural England

Parish councils

Rail network operators

Regional development agencies

The British Waterways Board

The Coal Authority

The English Sports Council

The Environment Agency

The Health and Safety Executive

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England

The National Park authority

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The Secretary of State for Transport

The Theatres Trust

The statutory consultees which need to be consulted vary depending on the type of application submitted, and the specific site circumstances. Therefore, the detailed table within Schedule 5 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 should be referred to for more detailed information.

7 Article 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010

Appendix C - Definition of application type

Appendix C - Definition of application type

Application type	Definition / details
Significant applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 or more dwellings or where site is more than 0.5 hectares • All uses where floor space is more than 1,000m² or the site is more than 1 hectare • Applications are normally determined within 13 weeks
Departure applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications considered to be in breach of and/or may significantly compromise the delivery of Local Planning Policy - Core Strategy, Local Plan, Town Centre Area Action Plan and Site Allocations • Applications which must be submitted to DCLG for their consideration
Small Scale applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 10 dwellings • For all other uses where floor space is less than 1,000m² • Normally determined within 8 weeks
Other minor applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally determined within 8 weeks • Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applications for advertising consent ○ Applications for tree works ○ Conservation Area Consent ○ Listed Building Consent ○ Householder applications ○ Change of use for non-major developments where no building or engineering works are proposed

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

Glossary of town planning terms and acronyms

This appendix is not an exhaustive anthology of all terminology used within the town and country planning process. It is a short, non-technical summary of terms and acronyms widely used in the preparation of development plans or in determining planning applications. More detailed and technical information from legally competent, authoritative and academic sources widely available in libraries and on the Internet.

Adoption: The formal adoption, by Council, of a local plan (cf) or Development Plan Document following public examination and receipt of a positive report from the Planning Inspectorate is the final formal stage in the evolution of a statutory planning document. Once a plan is adopted it has full legal weight in the determination of planning applications.

Allocation: Formal identification of a land parcel for a specific use through a development plan. Most commonly associated with housing allocations.

Amenity: A positive element, or elements, that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

Ancillary use: Where a building or plot of land is in a variety of uses (as defined by the Use Classes Order), the principal use will be the defined use of the land in planning law terms. For example, a factory may have a storage building, offices, a staff restaurant and over-the-counter sales to the public. All of the other uses are ancillary to the predominant use of the factory falling within Use Class B2. If there is no one dominant use a mixed use will exist. Changes in the balance of uses in both instances may constitute a material change of use (cf) and, therefore, require planning permission.

Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR): This measures how the council is progressing with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (cf). It also assesses the effectiveness of the various policies contained in the Development Plan Documents and monitors key indicators, such as house-building, employment land take-up, etc.... The Localism Act will remove the statutory requirement to produce this document.

Appeal: Within a set time of a planning application being determined, or if the Council has failed to determine the application within the statutory timeframe, an aggrieved applicant may ask for a decision to be (re)considered by the Planning Inspectorate. The appeal may be conducted (i) in writing, (ii) by an informal discussion led by the Inspector or (iii) by a formal public inquiry, with cross-examination of witnesses and perhaps barristers to present the respective parties' cases. The Planning Inspectorate decision is binding (but may be challenged by judicial review).

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

Application form: Each planning application must be accompanied by a formal application form. These forms follow a national standard and include the name and address of the applicant, the location of the development and details of the proposal. Must be accompanied by: a signed ownership certificate; a plan of the proposal at an appropriate and recognised scale; and usually by a variety of other information i.e. Design and Access Statement, an Environmental Impact Assessment, Ecological Surveys, Transport Assessments, etc.

Approved plans: A plan at a recognised scale that shows the development permitted by a grant of planning permission. Any significant variation in the built form from that shown on the approved plans may require a further planning application or may lead to enforcement action, which could include the demolition of the offending buildings or cessation of the aberrant use(s). See also 'Decision Notice'.

Area Action Plan (AAP): These provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed or anticipated. These plans have Ordnance Survey based maps, which will act as insets to the main proposals map. The Council has the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (TTCAAP). AAPs will effectively cease to have statutory support once the related provisions of the Localism Act come into force.

Biodiversity: The 1992 United Nations Earth Summit defined biological diversity or biodiversity as "the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, 'inter alia', , , and other , and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystemsterrestrial, , and other , and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystemsmarine, and other , and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystemsaquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems". The term covers species diversity; ecosystem diversity; genetic diversity; and molecular diversity. Many industrial materials derive directly from biological sources. Biodiversity is also important to the security of resources such as water, timber, paper and food. As a result, biodiversity loss is considered to be a significant risk factor. Consequently, it is a pertinent consideration in planning matters. A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for Taunton Deane was created in 2008.

Blight: The reduction, or perceived reduction, in value of a building or piece of land as the result of a planning decision.

Brownfield land: Land which has been previously developed. Often associated with urban land but equally relates to previously developed land in the countryside. May be contaminated by pollutants which require remediation before re-use and redevelopment occur.

Building control/regulations: An entirely separate and distinct regime from planning, with its own procedures, fees and decision-making process. Many forms of development do not require express planning permission but will require building control approval. The national Building Regulations ensure that buildings are safe,

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

fuel and energy efficient, reduce CO₂ emissions and provide access for people with disabilities. Building Control exists in both public and private sectors (the latter being known as Approved Inspectors), with the two sectors competing for business. Local authorities are required to provide a Building Control service for use by the public.

Call-in: Some planning applications must be notified to the Secretary of State to give her/him the opportunity to 'call-in' an application for her/his own determination. The Secretary of State also has powers to call-in any application and may direct us to hand it over to them. The application is considered at a public inquiry by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate (cf) who make recommendations to the Secretary of State, who decides whether or not to allow the application.

Capacity study: A study designed to identify what capacity or 'headroom' there is for a particular form of development. Uses population projections and other statistical data/assumptions to identify whether there is a gap between the current amount of provision and the level of provision projected as being necessary (usually at some point in the future). Most commonly associated with retail capacity studies, where a developer wants to show that there is the capacity for a new store that will not undermine existing stores. But see also 'Urban capacity study'.

Carbon emissions/footprint: See 'Greenhouse effect'.

Carbon neutral: Has a nil-net effect on carbon emissions. See also 'Greenhouse effect'.

Carbon offsetting/trading: A reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide or greenhouse gases made to compensate for, or to offset, an emission made elsewhere. There are two markets for carbon offsets. In the compliance market, companies, governments, or similar buy carbon offsets in order to comply with caps on the total amount of carbon dioxide they are allowed to emit. This market exists in order to achieve compliance with obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. In the voluntary market, individuals, companies, or governments purchase carbon offsets to mitigate their own greenhouse gas emissions. Offsets are typically achieved through financial support of projects that reduce the emission of greenhouse gases in the short- or long-term. The most common project is renewable energy, such as wind farms, biomass energy (burning biological material from living, or recently living organisms or solid municipal waste), or hydro-electric dams. Other examples include large-scale tree planting schemes in Third World countries.

Change of use: Planning permission is usually required to change the use of a building or land to another use class. Intensification of a use may constitute a change of use.

Climate change: See 'Greenhouse effect'.

Code for Sustainable Homes: A national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. It aims to reduce carbon emissions and promote higher standards of sustainable design above the minimal set out in the Building Regulations. The code awards new homes a star rating from 1 to 6, based on their performance against nine sustainability criteria which are combined to assess the overall

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

environmental impact. Six stars are the highest achievable score, reflecting exemplary developments. Code level 3 compliance became mandatory in September 2010 for new-build residences, currently compliance with higher levels of the Code is voluntary.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A new means of securing planning obligations for Borough wide infrastructure projects through a flat rate levy. How the levy is calculated and apportioned to the various infrastructure projects is set out in publicly available documents on the Councils website. Individually negotiated Section 106 agreements will still be used across the Borough for on site items such as Affordable Housing and Children's Play.

Comparison shopping: Shopping for non-essential items, generally of a higher value (such as furniture and electrical goods) but also extends to clothing, books, cosmetics, etc. Comparison shopping has traditionally been conducted in town centres, but since the 1980s has also been carried out in retail [warehouse] parks and, most recently, on-line. See also: 'Convenience shopping' and 'Town centres first'.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO): An Order issued by the government, or a local authority, for the enforced acquisition of land or buildings for public interest purposes. For example, for the construction of a major road or the redevelopment of certain brownfield sites. The purchasing authority needs to be capable of demonstrating that they have tried to acquire the property by negotiation before a CPO can be issued. Most CPOs are preceded by a CPO Inquiry conducted by a member of the Planning Inspectorate, who will either confirm or reject the Order.

Conditions: Planning permission is usually granted subject to conditions, all of which must be complied with. Conditions should only be imposed when permission would otherwise have to be refused. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met.

Conservation area: A defined area, designated by a local council, which is to be preserved or enhanced because of its special architectural or historic interest. There are 41 conservation areas in Taunton Deane. A special planning regime operates in conservation areas.

Conservation Area consent: Alterations to buildings (including total or substantial demolition), advertising and trees cannot be undertaken in conservation areas (cf) without permission from the council. No planning fee is charged for such applications but pre-application discussions attract a flat fee.

Convenience shopping: Shopping for goods of an essential day-to-day nature, such as food, newspapers, tobacco, etc.

Decision notice: The official document, issued by the Local Planning Authority, Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State, that grants or refuses planning permission. Development may not legally begin before the decision notice has been issued. Reasons for permitting or refusing development, and for any conditions

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

imposed on a permission, are always given. In conjunction with the approved plans, this is the definitive statement of the development that has been granted or refused permission.

Delegation/delegated decision: Decisions on planning applications where officers make decisions rather than an elected planning committee. The overwhelming majority of decisions are made in this way, provided that there are no complex issues, or the proposal is wholly acceptable in planning terms. It is also used for refusal when an application is clearly not in accordance with planning policies or practice.

Demolition: Requires planning permission only in certain circumstances (such as homes), but planning permission is normally required to rebuild on the site. Demolition of listed buildings requires Listed Building Consent and special provisions apply in conservation areas.

Density: In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms (any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, cooking, living or eating purposes i.e. not bathrooms, hallways, utility rooms) per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare [dph].

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG): Government department responsible for, inter alia, preparing primary and secondary legislation on town planning and for preparing guidance to direct and assist in the day-to-day interpretation and operation of the statutory town planning system, such as the National Planning Policy Framework. Also determines called-in or recovered planning applications.

Departure: A proposed development that is not in accordance with the adopted development plan, but for which the Local Planning Authority proposes to grant planning permission subject to no intervention from the government.

Design & Access Statement: Prepared by applicants for planning permission. Describes the development and explains how the design was arrived at, what local planning policies have been observed, how any public engagement has been reflected in the design, and how relevant principles of good design have contributed to the proposal. This document enables the lay public to understand how the finished proposal was arrived at, and acts as a check upon the quality of the decision-making process which led to that proposal by the developer concerned.

Detailed application/'Details': A planning application seeking full permission for a development proposal, with no matters reserved for later planning approval. **Antithesis:** outline application development: Defined in the 1990 Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land" (known as operational development) or "the making of any material change of use of any buildings or other land". Not all development requires planning permission - see 'Permitted development'.

Development Brief: See 'Masterplan'.

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

Development Management: The new name for development control. The act of determining planning applications (and similar) in conformity with the development plan and material considerations.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Statutory documents produced by LPAs that must be taken into account in determining planning applications. Currently, planning permission must be granted in accordance with these documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Development Plan Documents must be subjected to examination by a member of the Planning Inspectorate before being adopted. The Core Strategy is the principal DPD under the 2004 Act, Site Allocations and Development Management DPD's providing additional details. Under the Localism Act these documents will be combined into a single Local Plan.

Ecology: The scientific study of the relations that living organisms have with respect to each other and their natural environment. Variables of interest to ecologists include the composition, distribution, amount (biomass), number, and changing states of organisms within and among ecosystems.

Ecosystems: Ecosystems are functional units in a given area consisting of: (i) living things, (ii) the non-living chemical and (iii) physical factors of their environment, all linked together through (iv) the nutrient cycle and by (v) energy flows. Central to the ecosystem concept is the idea that living organisms interact with every other element in their local environment. Ecosystems are sustained by the biodiversity within them. Because the impact of development on ecosystems and biodiversity can be unpredictable, even when assessed through an Environmental Impact Assessment, many people advocate the use of the precautionary principle when determining planning applications.

Edge of centre: A location that is within easy walking distance of the primary shopping area.

Enabling development: Development that is usually contrary to established planning policies but which is exceptionally permitted because it has been demonstrated to be necessary to generate funds to enable the conservation of a Listed Building or its setting and where the indirect benefit of the enabling development clearly outweighs any direct harm that it would cause.

Enforcement: The investigation and resolution of alleged breaches in planning control, usually undertaking development without permission or failing to observe conditions. An otherwise acceptable breach of planning control can be corrected by a retrospective planning application. Formal enforcement action, which could include issuing of an Enforcement Notice to require the demolition of any offending buildings/structures or cessation of any aberrant use, may only be undertaken if the development would not be permitted and it is considered "expedient" to take action. Can ultimately lead to action in the County Court against the defaulting party if negotiation and service of an Enforcement Notice fails to remedy the breach of planning control.

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

English Heritage: National Body responsible for overseeing the historic built environment of England, advising local authorities on such matters and acting on behalf of the government (the Department for Culture, Media and Sport) in matters such as registering listed buildings.

Environment Agency (EA): National Body, established in 1973, to protect and improve the environment and to promote sustainable development. Has a particular focus on climate change, water, land and air quality. Has roles as a regulator, operator, monitor and advisor. A key consultee.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Likely to be required for nationally defined large-scale developments. Undertaken by the developer when applying for planning permission, the EIA assesses the social, economic and environmental impacts of the development and identifies what remedial measures may be necessary to counter any negative impacts. Used as an informative to decision-making rather than a determinant of whether permission should be granted.

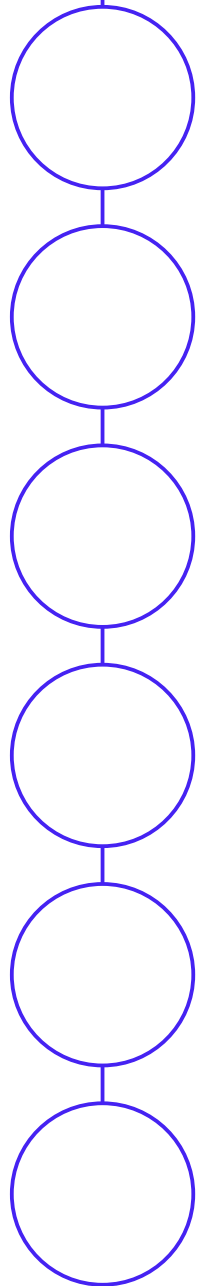
Environmental Information Regulations 2005 (EIR): Provide a statutory right of access to environmental information held by public authorities. Covers information about air, water, soil, land, flora and fauna, energy, noise, waste, emissions and information about decisions, policies and activities that affect the environment.

Examination: See 'Public examination'.

Fee: Nationally set fees are required for a planning application to be determined. Locally-set fees are payable for pre-application discussions and advice. In both cases, the fees vary depending upon the scale and nature of the development being proposed. The fee income is kept by the Borough Council and offset against the costs of providing the planning service. There are limited exemptions from paying planning application fees, including householder applications by registered disabled persons.

Fossil fuels: Carbon-rich fuel (coal, oil and natural gas) formed from the remains of ancient animals and plants. Their combustion is considered to contribute to the 'greenhouse effect'.

Freedom of Information (Fol) request: The Freedom of Information Act 2000 creates a general right of access, on request, to information held by public authorities. On receipt of a freedom of information claim a public authority has two corresponding duties. First, a duty to inform a member of the public whether or not it holds the information requested, and second if it does hold that information, to communicate it to the person making that request. However, there are numerous exemptions. Some of these are absolute bars to disclosure; some are qualified. Most planning information is covered by the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than Fol.



Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

General Permitted Development Order (GPDO): The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 allows for the extension of, or changes to, a property without the need for express planning permission, within certain guidelines. This includes small domestic extensions which comply with pre-determined measurements.

Grampian-type condition: A negative condition imposed on a planning permission barring development from happening until a particular action on another piece of land not owned by the applicant has been performed (usually highways works). Named after a court case involving Grampian Regional Council in 1984.

Green Belt: Green Belts are specifically designated areas to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. In the green belt there is a general presumption against inappropriate development, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated to show that the benefits of the development will outweigh the harm caused to the green belt. The NPPF sets out what would constitute appropriate development in the green belt. There is no Green Belt land in the Borough of Taunton Deane.

Greenfield land: Land which has not previously been developed (hence antithesis: brownfield land). Most commonly associated with land in the countryside but could equally apply to an undeveloped site within an urban area.

Greenhouse effect: A process by which thermal radiation from Earth's surface is absorbed by atmospheric greenhouse gases, and is re-radiated in all directions, including back towards the surface. As a result, the surface temperature is higher than it would be if direct heating by solar radiation were the only warming mechanism. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the burning of fossil fuels (wood, coal, gas, oil) has contributed to the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from 280ppm to 390ppm. If this process continues, many ecosystems will be damaged and become uninhabitable for Mankind. As a part of sustainable development there is a current drive towards reducing carbon emissions. Hence terms such as "reducing the carbon footprint" and "zero carbon homes".

Highways Agency: National Body responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and strategic A roads on behalf of the Department for Transport. The HA is responsible for the M5 and A303 in the Borough. A statutory consultee on planning applications and in the preparation of DPDs.

Highways Authority: The county council are the Highway Authority for Somerset. They are charged with the statutory responsibility of adopting, maintaining, designing, making safe and constructing all roads, footways and public rights of way which are not the responsibility of the Highways Agency (see above). A major consultee on planning applications and in the preparation of DPDs.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA): National Body that is the national housing and regeneration agency. Founded in December 2008, superseding English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation. Its role is to create opportunity for people

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

to live in high quality, sustainable places. They provide funding for affordable housing, bring land back into productive use and improve quality of life by raising standards for the physical and social environment.

Householder application: A, generally smaller-scale, application to alter or enlarge a house, including works within the garden of a house which are not permitted development. Nationally these form the majority (60%) of the applications received by LPAs.

Infrastructure deficit: Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures needed for the operation of a society. The term typically refers to the technical structures such as roads, water supply, sewers, gas and electrical grids, telecommunications, etc. Hence, if it is perceived that there is a shortfall in the infrastructure provision, there is said to be an infrastructure deficit. The TDBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan identified the scale and nature of the infrastructure required to meet the Boroughs Growth and the level and nature of the investment needed to deliver this.

Inquiry: See 'Appeal'.

Judicial Review (JR): A challenge to the High Court by any aggrieved and affected party against a decision made by, for instance, the council, the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State. Can only be made on points of law (viz, not planning judgments) and must be made "expeditiously" after the decision to be challenged has been made. This means that applications for JR must be made within 3 months, at most.

Landbank: A stock of land (for housing, for example) which has planning permission but has yet to be developed. Housebuilders commonly have considerable landbanks, which bolster their value on the Stock Exchange.

Lawful Development Certificate (LDC): A specialist type of application that determines: (i) whether the existing use of land or buildings is lawful for planning purposes or (ii) confirms that a proposal does not require express planning permission. Often necessary to confirm that the use, operation or activity named in it is lawful when land or property is placed on the market for sale. A fee is charged for an LDC. Is not the same as a planning permission. Sometimes used in enforcement cases.

Listed Building: A building or structure on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest run by English Heritage. Listing began in 1950 and currently protects 500,000 across England and Wales. By reason of their significance, Listed Buildings fall into three categories of descending importance: Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II, of which the majority - over 90% - are Grade II. A listed building may not be demolished, extended or altered without permission from the local planning authority. No fee is charged for such Listed Building Consent but a flat fee is charged for pre-application discussions. Enabling development may be contemplated in order to secure the preservation of a Listed Building.

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

Local Development Framework (LDF): The collective terms given to a collection of planning and plan related documents, prepared by LPAs.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): This document sets out which documents are part of the Local Development Framework and the timetable for their review and the preparation of new documents. This is a statutory document.

Local Plan: A document produced under the pre-2004 planning system that set out all the council's policies on the development and change of use of land and buildings. The Localism Act has reintroduced the term to the planning system, replacing the separate tiered documents of Core Strategy, Site Allocations, Development Management Plan, etc introduced in 2004.

Local Planning Authority (LPA): A local authority charged by central Government with the statutory duty to prepare development plan documents and undertake other duties under the Planning Acts. District Councils, sometimes styled as Borough or City Councils, have planning powers for all development in their administrative areas with the exceptions of minerals and waste. County Councils have planning powers for minerals and waste proposals within their administrative areas.

Localism Act: Contains many changes to the planning system, including the revocation of regional strategies, the return of local plans and the introduction of neighbourhood plans. Enacted 15 November 2011.

Major application: Involves any one or more of the following: (i) mineral deposits; (ii) waste development; (iii) a site for 10 or more new homes or where the site area for new homes is 0.5ha or more; (iv) the provision of a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created is 1,000m² or more; or (v) any other development carried out on a site with an area of 1 hectare or more.

Masterplan: A widely used and abused term. Usually applied to a comprehensive written and/or cartographic representation of a potential development scheme. Sometimes a masterplan may be SPD or it may be submitted with a planning application. Alternatively, land-owners or developers often prepare masterplans to guide their own, or other party's, development. It is always best to inquire as to the status and intent of a masterplan in order to ascertain how much weight to place upon it.

Material considerations: Factors considered in the determination of applications for planning permission, alongside the statutory development plan. Includes residential amenity, highway safety, traffic, noise, smell, design and appearance, conservation and listed buildings and any relevant planning comments made by consultees. In order to be material a consideration must relate to the use and development of land and to the planning merits of the development in question. Non-planning comments and the number of objections received are not material considerations. What is considered to be material may be subject to appeal and/or judicial review but the weight to be attached to a material consideration is solely for the decision-maker and will not be challenged by the courts.

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Minerals Local Plan/LDF: A statutory long-term development plan framework for mineral extraction and associated development (such as railheads and storage facilities). Covers oil, coal, gas, sand, gravel, crushed rock and chalk. All minerals planning powers (plan-preparation and development management) reside with county council in Somerset.

National Land Use Database (NLUD): National database, compiled annually as a government initiative from various public sources (including local authorities), to provide information on the amount of brownfield land (cf) that may be available for development.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): From 1 April 2012 this 50 page document will replace 2,000+ pages of national government policy, advice and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes and their annexes. Until up-to-date local plans [or LDFs] are put in place, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.

Natural England: National Body responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, freshwater and marine environments, geology and soils, are protected and improved.

Neighbourhood plans: Introduced under the planning provisions of the Localism Act. Parish Councils (or authorised groups of local individuals in unparished areas) are able to prepare statutory development plans against which planning applications will have to be assessed. These Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan. After public examination, if found sound must be subject to a local referendum before being adopted by the LPA.

Net migration: Takes into account natural change in the population (births and deaths) and also those people who have moved into, and out of, the locality. Stevenage has seen net out migration in recent years as more people have moved out of the town than have moved into it: this is unusual as one would normally expect in-migrants to exceed out-migrants. A well accepted population projection model. See also: 'Nil-net migration' and 'Population projections'.

Nil-net migration: Takes into account natural change in the population (births and deaths) but not those people who have moved into, and out of, the locality. In this model in-migrants are mathematically forced to equal out-migrants. A controversial basis for population projection modelling. See also: 'Net migration' and 'Population projections'.

Non-determination: If the council fails to make a decision on a planning application within the set time, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who then make the decision, rather than the council.

Objections: Representations received by the Local Planning Authority or any other determining body in respect of either a planning application or a development plan which opposes all or part of the proposals. In order for the objections to be considered

Appendix D – glossary of Town and Planning terms

and given weight they must raise legitimate planning matters (see 'Material considerations'). The number of objections received is not a legitimate ground for refusing planning permission.

Off-setting: Where the negative impact of a development or activity in one location is off-set or traded against a positive impact or activity implemented elsewhere, usually to obtain a nil-net effect. Most widely used in carbon trading (cf) but now spreading to the fields of biodiversity and ecology more generally.

Outline application: An application for planning permission primarily designed to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters. Usually applies to major developments where it is either uncertain whether the proposal is in conformity with the development plan or where the scale of the development is such that it is inappropriate to be exact in every detail at the time of applying for planning permission.

Out of centre: In retailing terms, a location that is clearly separate from the primary shopping area of a town centre but not outside the urban area.

Out of town: In retailing terms, a location clearly outside the current urban boundary.

Overbearing: A term used to describe the impact of a development or building on its surroundings, particularly a neighbouring property, in terms of its scale, massing and general dominating effect.

Over-development: An often pejorative term describing an amount of development (for example, the quantity of buildings or intensity of use) that is considered excessive in terms of demands on infrastructure and services, or impact on local amenity and character.

Overlooking: A term used to describe the effect when a development or building affords an outlook over adjoining land or property, often causing loss of privacy.

Overshadowing: The effect of a development or building on the amount of natural light presently enjoyed by a neighbouring property, resulting in a shadow being cast over that neighbouring property.

Performance targets: Local Planning Authorities have nationally set performance targets to meet, principally revolving around the time taken to determine different types of planning applications. These were originally set as Best Value Performance targets.

Permitted development: Building works and uses as defined by the General Permitted Development Order and Use Classes Order that can be undertaken without the need for express planning permission from the local planning authority.

Planning Acts: The first Planning Act was in 1909 but the modern planning system was introduced by the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. There have been a series of further Acts over the succeeding years, with the main ones in use today being the four 1990 Acts, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Acts of 1991 and

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2004 and the Planning Act of 2008. To these will be added the planning provisions of the Localism Act (which may not be commenced). Supplementing the Acts are various circulars, statutory instruments (such as the Development Plans (England) Regulations), guidance notes, policy statements, ministerial announcements and, from 1 April 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework.

Planning Advisory Service (PAS): A part of the LG Group that advises Local Planning Authorities how to improve their planning service. Includes peer review, best practice notes, etc.

Planning Aid: A government-subsidised service, offered by the RTPI, that provides free and independent advice and support to community groups and individuals unable to afford to employ a planning consultant.

Planning application: A planning application is necessary in order to secure express planning permission from the relevant Local Planning Authority for development that is not otherwise permitted development. See also 'Application form'.

Planning for Real: A term broadly, and inappropriately, used to refer to any consultation method involving creative exercises (for example, the use of maps and model buildings) to engage the public in plan-making and place-shaping. The term is commercially copyrighted and licensed: it should not be confused with similar consultation methodologies not provided by the copyrighted owners of the term.

Planning obligations: Securing the delivery of community benefits by legal agreement following negotiation with applicants for planning permission, without which any development would be unacceptable. May include the physical construction of facilities, the provision of land or the payment of a fee in lieu of on-site provision. The building of affordable housing and the provision of new children's play are examples. Also known as Section 106 agreements. May not be used to remedy existing infrastructure deficiencies: may only be used to meet the needs generated by the development being permitted. To be largely replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy (cf).

Planning Inspectorate (PINS): National Body that undertakes planning and enforcement appeals (usually against Local Planning Authority refusal of permission or non-determination of planning applications). As of 2012 it also determines nationally important infrastructure projects. Holds evidence-gathering, quasi-judicial examinations into both planning applications and local plans and DPDs. PINS decisions on planning applications are binding on all parties except Government, but all of its decisions may be overturned by the courts on limited technical grounds following judicial review.

Planning Officers' Society (POS): Body that represents senior professionals and managers of planning functions in the public sector serving the English Local Planning Authorities (cf). Provides advice, best practice and training opportunities.

Planning permission: The consent given by the local planning authority, the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State for development. Usually given with conditions and with a time limit for the beginning of development. May be subject to planning

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obligations. Reasons for permission will be given on the decision notice. Will be closely based on the information given in the planning application form and the ancillary information supplied by the applicant.

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs): Prepared by Department of Communities and Local Government arm of Government. Designed to set national planning policy, explain the Planning Acts and to provide national guidance on the intended interpretation of planning policies. LPAs must take their content into account when preparing DPDs and determining planning applications. PPGs began to be issued in 1988; and started to be superseded by PPS' from 2004. The National Planning Policy Framework purported to replace PPS' and PPGs in 2012. Government have subsequently issued guidance on the NPPF.

Planning Portal: A Government sponsored web-site from which much useful generic information about the statutory town and country planning and building control systems can be gathered. Most LPAs are connected to the Planning Portal via hyperlink, such that it acts as a 'one stop shop' for developers and the public wishing to gain access to the planning pages of their local authority's web-site. Many local authorities, including the Borough Council, offer electronic submission of planning applications and the payment of fees via the Planning Portal.

Population projections: The principal basis of determining the future development needs of an area when preparing a development plan. A number of different models of population projection are available, including net-migration and nil-net migration. Alternatives to population-based projections are economic-derived models, although these are less widely used, projecting past performance, assessing affordable housing needs and policy-led models (in which planning policy constraints are overlaid, generally to constrain the housing requirement). The antithesis of using population projections or other demand-led projections as a basis for determining development levels is the urban capacity model.

Pre-application discussions/fees: An opportunity for councils and developers to work together to achieve developments that deliver benefits to the community and the economy. These discussions are provided for a fee, for officer time, but in the long-term they can save time, costs and frustration and optimise the potential of a site.

Precautionary principle: If an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or to the environment, in the absence of a scientific consensus that the action or policy is harmful, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action. The principle implies that there is a responsibility to protect the public from exposure to harm when scientific investigation has found a credible risk. These protections can be relaxed only if further scientific findings emerge that provide sound evidence that no harm will result. Underpins much EU environmental policy but the application of the precautionary principle is not enshrined in UK planning law.

Presumption in favour of (sustainable) development: The Planning Acts have included a presumption in favour of development since 1947, as this was part of the post-war 'quid pro quo' that saw land and property owners' rights to develop their property as

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they wished nationalised without compensation. The presumption was amended to include the term 'sustainable development' following the work of the UN's Brundtland Commission.

Previously Developed Land (PDL): See 'Brownfield land'.

Primary Shopping Area (or Primary Shopping Frontage): A designated area where the number of Use Class A1 shops is most concentrated in a town centre. Beyond the primary shopping area will lie secondary and tertiary shopping areas, where shop uses become more diluted by other A-use classes (such as pubs, restaurants, banks) and other town-centre type uses (such as assembly and leisure uses).

Prior Approval: A procedure where permission is deemed granted if the Local Planning Authority does not respond to the developer's application within a certain time. Often relating to telecommunication or agricultural developments. Public examination: An interrogatory process led by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate, held to examine the soundness of a DPD. Similar to an informal hearing: see 'Appeal'.

Public [local] inquiry (PLI): See 'Appeal'.

Refusal of planning permission: The guiding principle in determining planning applications is that development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will "cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance". The person making the decision will issue a decision notice detailing the reasons for refusal. Within a set time, aggrieved applicants have the right to appeal against the refusal of planning permission.

Regional Strategy (RS): This is the successor to both the non-statutory Regional Planning Guidance and to the statutory Structure Plan. It sets the strategic context for development across the region, including setting the level of new housing to be accommodated. The South West Regional Spatial Strategy set a regional planning context for the South West. It was revoked under the Localism Act and ceases to have any relevance in planning.

Retrospective planning application: Occasionally a Local Planning Authority may receive, or in some enforcement cases encourage, those parties that have undertaken unauthorised development to submit a planning application to regularise the situation. Attempting to sell land or buildings upon which unauthorised development has occurred can lengthen the process and reduce the price received.

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI): Professional body representing town and country planners. Members of the RTPI must have a qualification recognised by the body and suitable post-qualification practical experience. Members are required to continually update their professional knowledge and skills by undertaking (and keeping a record of) Continuing Professional Development throughout their careers.

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Saved policies: Policies within a development plan that the Secretary of State has allowed to continue to have legal force, following passage of the 2004 Act, during the production of replacement Development Plan Documents. The non-saved policies – which replicated national and regional policies in force at December 2007 - are no longer in use.

Secretary of State: Head of the government's Department for Communities and Local Government or another government department.

Section 106 agreements: See 'Planning gain/obligations'.

Sequential test: The process of demonstrating that development is to occur on the most preferable location for the appropriate use. Most commonly associated with the 'town centres first' policy and the 'brown before green' test for housing development (wherein brownfield sites have to be used before greenfield ones).

Site Notice: Statutory notice posted on, or close to, a development site for at least 21 days, providing public notice of the existence of a planning application on the site. Usually accompanied by the publication of the same notice in a newspaper circulating in the locality.

Soundness, tests of: At a public examination held by one or more members of the Planning Inspectorate, local plans are checked against four tests of soundness - whether they have been positively prepared, are justified, effective and consistent with national policy - and whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate, legal and procedural requirements. Neighbourhood plans will be tested against fewer tests. These criteria are established in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): This sets out the council's policy on involving the community in policy-making and major planning applications.

Stop Notice: Notice served by an LPA on a land-owner where there is a breach of planning control that requires to be stopped. Serving a stop notice must follow an enforcement notice. Does not come into force for three days and gives reasons why the stop notice is necessary.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Required to be prepared for plans and policies under the terms of the European directive 2001/42/EC for "environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes". Undertaken in conjunction with the Sustainability Appraisal. All but the least important of planning documents now have to be subject to SA/SEA.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA): Study to provide a reference and policy document to inform the local plan; and to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligation to keep new development (especially housing) from being built in areas of (serious) flood risk.

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Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): Study to determine the availability and viability of possible future housing sites. Usually undertaken every year.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): Study to provide evidence on the types of housing that are needed to meet current and future demand. Used to inform both the local plan and development management decisions. Usually undertaken every 2-3 years.

Structure Plan: Documents produced by County Councils under the planning system pre-2004. Superseded by Regional Strategies. The few remaining residual policies of the Structure Plan 1998 were revoked under provisions of the Localism Act.

Sui generis use: A use in, and of, itself not falling within any Use Class (cf). Any change of use requires express planning permission.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): There is no legal requirement to take these documents into account in determining planning applications, so their nature is to provide guidance to applicants wishing to develop land. The community will be involved in their preparation, but there is no independent examination of the document. Under the NPPF councils are discouraged from producing SPD unless it will speed up the development process and not add to the costs of development.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): An assessment of the impact the proposals contained within a DPD would have on the environment, economy and society. It is carried out in conjunction with the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Sustainable Development: Although there are several definitions in use, the one most widely applied in planning is the definition of the Brundtland Commission "Our Common Future", the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, published in 1987. This states that sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This continues to appear in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Temporary Stop Notice: Served by an LPA on a landowner where a breach of planning control needs to be stopped immediately. Lasts for 28 days, during which the LPA must decide whether to issue an Enforcement Notice. Must specify the activity to be halted. See also 'Stop Notice'.

Third party rights of appeal: The right of an aggrieved party, other than the applicant, to appeal to an independent body against the grant of planning permission by a Local Planning Authority). There are third party rights of appeal in Eire but not in the UK. A judicial review of the decision (which could see the permission over-turned) or a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman on the grounds of maladministration (which would not see the decision over-turned) are the usual means open to an aggrieved third party in the UK.

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Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA): Founded by Sir Ebenezer Howard in 1899 to promote the idea of the Garden City, the TCPA is Britain's oldest charity concerned with planning, housing and the environment. Now a limited company with corporate and individual membership, it campaigns for the reform of the UK's planning system to make it more responsive to people's needs and aspirations and to promote sustainable development.

'Town centres first': A sequential locational test that developers and LPAs have to demonstrate has been followed in the placing of new shopping, leisure and office developments. The preferred order in the sequential test is: town centre; edge of centre; out of centre; out of town. Only if it can be clearly demonstrated that the development cannot be placed in a location higher in the preferential scale can the development be placed in a less favoured location lower in the hierarchy.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO): A means of securing the preservation of a single or a group of trees of acknowledged amenity value. A tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order may not normally be topped, lopped or felled without the consent of the Local Planning Authority. Trees on publicly owned land are not usually subject to TPOs as LPAs are considered to exercise good land husbandry.

Ultra vires: A Latin term meaning an action (usually of a Local Planning Authority, the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State) which it is outside the legal power of the decision-maker to take. In planning, usually refers either to the issuing of a permission or the imposition of one or more conditions. Whether something is ultra vires will be determined by the courts through a judicial review.

Unauthorised development: Development that requires planning permission but which does not have it. Once unauthorised development comes to the attention of the Local Planning Authority an enforcement investigation will be begun. Unauthorised development can be regularised by a retrospective planning application in some instances or it may be beyond the time limits for enforcement action (four years for operational development or ten years for a change of use or breach of a planning condition). A Lawful Development Certificate is sometimes applied for to regularise the situation.

Use Classes [Order]: Government statutory instrument that sets out broad classes of similar uses. Currently there are 15 different use classes. Within each class, planning permission is not required to change from one use to another e.g. changing from a butcher's shop to an internet café does not require planning permission as both fall within the same use class (A1 - shops). There are also certain changes of use from one class to another that do not require planning permission e.g. from a pub (class A4) to a shop (class A1).

Validation: The initial process carried out by the Local Planning Authority upon receipt of a planning application. Checks are undertaken to ensure that all of the necessary information has been supplied with the application form and that the appropriate planning application fee has been paid. Only once this process has been completed will: an application be registered as valid; be given a unique reference number;

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allocated to a specific planning officer (known as the case officer) to process and determine; and be added on to the weekly list. The necessary consultation letters will be sent out only after validation is completed.

Waste Local Plan/LDF: A statutory long-term development plan framework for managing and disposing of waste. All waste planning powers reside with county or unitary councils (i.e. not with district councils) - both plan-preparation and development management.

Weekly list: A compendium of all new valid planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority in the preceding seven days. Gives limited details including the application reference number, the address of the development, a brief description of the proposals and the name of the case officer. Available to view free of charge or to purchase.

Weight: The weight to be attached to an issue in the determination of a planning application is a matter for the decision-maker and will not usually be challenged by the courts. See also 'Material considerations'.

