



Site Allocations Plan

Sustainability Appraisal **Scoping Report**



Revised: March 2016

Contents	Page
Non-Technical Summary	5
1. Introduction	9
2. Task A1 The requirements of other plans, programmes and policies	15
3. Task A2 Baseline information and assessment	19
4. Task A3 Key sustainability issues and the Site Allocations Plan	39
5. Task A4 The Sustainability Appraisal Framework: objectives and indicators	43
6. Other assessments linked to the SA process	53
7. Next Stages and Methodology for the SA	55
Appendices	
A Review of Plans, Programmes and Policies	59
B Equality Impact Assessment Template	89
C Responses from statutory consultees	98
Diagram 1 Stages in the SA Process	12
List of Tables:	
1 Documents included in Appendix A	14
2 Jobs in North Somerset	19
3 Percentage of persons in employment by occupation	20
4 Employment and unemployment rates	20
5 Enterprise births and deaths	21
6 Retail vacancy rates: town centres – 2015	21
7 Retail vacancy rates: district and local centres – 2015	22
8 Population growth 1991 – 2011	22
9 Population comparisons by age group	23
10 HMOs in North Somerset 2013	24
11 Qualifications of population aged 16-64	25
12 Number of known tourist bed spaces in North Somerset	28
13 All-weather attractions and leisure facilities in North Somerset	29
14 SSSI condition	33
15 Carbon emissions	36
16 Current and likely future Sustainability Issues in North Somerset and the role of the Site Allocations Plan	38

17	The Sustainability Appraisal Framework	43
18	Compatibility of SA sub-objectives	51
19	SEA Regulations criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations 2004)	55

Non-Technical Summary

Sustainability and the Sustainability Appraisal Process

- i. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process is a way of ensuring that all significant plans, programmes and policies which relate to land use issues are compatible with the aims of sustainable development. These include the documents that will form the local planning policy framework for North Somerset.
- ii. 'Sustainable development' has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are economic, social and environmental dimensions to this. Sustainable development is not development that balances or trades off these three aspects but development that enables the economy, society and the environment to be sustained together.
- iii. The origins of the SA process lie with the European Union's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, which aims to ensure that all significant land use plans, programmes and policies take into consideration environmental issues and impacts. The UK's SA process has widened this scope to also include consideration of economic and social issues when assessing specific plans, programmes and policies relating to land use.

The Scoping Report

- iv. A Scoping Report was produced in 2007, which set the framework for appraising the Core Strategy. In view of the time that has elapsed since then, the changes to planning policy introduced by central government since 2010 and lessons learnt in the delivery of SA work, it is considered appropriate to review the 2007 report, by updating the review of relevant plans, programmes and policies and amending the SA Framework objectives. A Scoping Report was also produced for the Sites and Policies Part 1: Development Management Policies in 2014.
- v. This Scoping Report sets out a Framework for how the SA will be carried out for the Site Allocations Plan.
- vi. The first stage of the scoping process has been to identify and review a large number of relevant plans, programmes and policies that influence this Plan. This includes looking at documents at an international, national and regional/sub-regional level. They have been identified and reviewed in order to ensure the Site Allocations Plan is in compliance with the aims and objectives of complementary plans, programmes and policies.
- vii. In order to assess what options would be most sustainable for the future development of North Somerset, it has been necessary to identify those key environmental and other sustainability issues that currently exist in the District. This process has included looking at a range of information and indicators on

economic, social and environmental conditions to illustrate the issues relevant to the District.

- viii. The Report then sets out the SA Framework. This will be used to assess, against relevant sustainability criteria, the different options and alternatives being considered when progressing the Site Allocations Plan.
- ix. The Framework consists of a set of sustainability objectives against which the Plan's emerging policy options will be tested. The chosen sustainability objectives and associated appraisal criteria have been amended from those used in the draft Scoping Report and those of previous plans relating to the Core Strategy. This is both as a result of lessons learnt since, and also to allow assessment of spatial options. There are five broad 'high-level' objectives that are further divided into 19 more specific sub-objectives.
- x. The Scoping Report has been consulted on with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England and their comments considered and where appropriate changes made from the previous version.
- xi. Following on from this scoping stage, the SA will be undertaken. A Draft SA Report will be published alongside the Consultation draft of the Site Allocations Plan and a Final SA Report will then be published along with the adopted Plan. Feedback from consultation, together with any other additional findings and updates will be incorporated into an ongoing and iterative SA process.

Sustainability Appraisal Framework Objectives (REVISED)

1 Improve health and wellbeing

- 1.1 Achieve reasonable access to public open space
- 1.2 Achieve reasonable access to healthcare facilities

2 Support communities that meet people's needs

- ~~2.1 Promote development that contributes to a suitable mix of high quality housing types and tenures (including affordable housing) for all parts of society. Replace with:~~
- 2.1 Achieve reasonable access to a full range of community facilities
- 2.2 Achieve reasonable access to educational facilities
- 2.3 Provide opportunities for people to work locally
- 2.4 Achieve reasonable access to town centre services and facilities
- 2.5 Reduce poverty and income inequality, and improve the life chances of those living in areas of concentrated disadvantage

3 Develop a diverse and thriving economy that meets people's needs

- 3.1 Deliver a reasonable quantum of employment floorspace / land and access to work opportunities for all parts of society
- 3.2 Achieve reasonable access to major employment areas

4 Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets

- 4.1 Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings
- 4.2 To protect and where possible enhance biodiversity and geodiversity at a landscape scale, particularly with respect to protected habitats and species
- 4.3 Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance valued landscapes, recognising its wider purposes (natural beauty, enjoyment and cultural heritage) whilst having regard for its economic and social well-being. Including that within or close to the Mendip Hills AONB.
- 4.4 Promote the conservation and wise use of land, maximising the re-use of previously developed land
- 4.5 Minimise the loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile agricultural land
- 4.6 Minimise vulnerability to tidal & fluvial flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere
- 4.7 Minimise vulnerability to surface water, without increasing flood risk elsewhere
- ~~4.8 Minimise harm to, and where possible improve, water quality and availability. Replace with:~~
- 4.8 Minimise impacts on air quality through locating development in locations least likely to contribute to traffic congestion

5 Minimise consumption of natural resources

- 5.1 Achieve reasonable access to sustainable transportation

5.2 ~~Reduce non-renewable energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and provide opportunities to link into existing heat networks~~ **Replace with:**

5.2 Reduce harm on the countryside through maintaining development within the existing defined settlement boundary

1. Introduction

1.1 North Somerset Council is currently preparing the local planning policies that will replace the current local plans for its area. The Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1): Development Management Policies is due to be adopted (subject to consultation) in spring 2016 and along with (Part 2) the **Site Allocations Plan (SAP)** will sit alongside two other documents – the Core Strategy (2012) and the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011). Neighbourhood Development Plans are also being prepared for a number of parish areas within North Somerset. Once adopted these will also form part of the development plan.

1.2 The Core Strategy was appraised under a previous version of this Scoping Report published in 2007. The relevant documents can be viewed on the Core Strategy submission documents page:

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corestrategy

1.3 A separate Scoping Report was prepared for the Joint Waste Core Strategy.

1.4 The Core Strategy SA Scoping Report was reviewed for the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies in 2014. The Scoping Report that emerged from that review forms a suitable basis for this Scoping Report. It can be viewed at:

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies

1.5 This Scoping Report also draws upon the Scoping Report for the West of England Joint Spatial Plan, produced in 2015.

1.6 This Scoping Report provides the framework for the appraisal of the Site Allocations Plan. That document will:

- Allocate sites for future development throughout North Somerset;
- Define the boundaries of planning designations including Local Green Space and Strategic Gaps; and
- Ensure appropriate infrastructure is identified and delivered alongside new development.

1.7 Once fully adopted, the Plan along with the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies will supersede the remaining Replacement Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and Minerals Local Plan policies. For further details, please visit:

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies

1.8 National legislation and the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) require that local plans are prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Through their plans, local planning authorities should seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic,

social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and net gains across all three. Significant adverse impacts on any of these dimensions should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued.

Sustainable Development

- 1.9 The term ‘sustainable development’ originates from the Brundtland Commission Report of the World Commission of Environment and Development in 1987, which defined sustainable development as:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

- 1.10 The Government has developed a strategy for sustainable development that sets out a number of guiding principles:

- Living within environmental limits;
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- Achieving a sustainable economy;
- Promoting good governance; and
- Using sound science responsibly.

- 1.11 It has also identified four priority areas for immediate action across the UK:

- Sustainable consumption and production;
- Climate change and energy;
- Natural resource protection and environmental management;
- Sustainable communities.

- 1.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. It identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of mutually dependent roles which work simultaneously with one another:

- **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to

improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.13 Under the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (known as the SEA Directive) local authorities are required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of major land use planning documents.
- 1.14 The purpose of SEA is to consider issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, and material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage, and landscape (as well as the interrelationship between these) and to determine how the council's policies could influence each.
- 1.15 By considering these issues in detail, SEA seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are fully integrated in the preparation and adoption of plans, programmes and policies which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.16 Whilst SEA focuses on environmental issues, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) widens the approach to also include economic and social issues. The purpose of SA is to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are taken fully into account when preparing local planning documents.
- 1.17 The SA process has been designed so that, by carrying out one appraisal process, local authorities can also satisfy the requirements of the SEA Directive. Therefore, it should be taken that where the Scoping Report refers to the SA process it also incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.
- 1.18 The SA will also put in place a framework to monitor such policies once in operation, in order to ensure that they are working in a way that accords with sustainability objectives. This will enable future amendments to be made to policies as necessary.

SA Methodology and SEA Requirements

- 1.19 The SA process is typically conducted in four stages of preparation (see diagram below), the first being the 'Scoping' stage (stage A); and the second (stage B) being the actual appraisal stage.

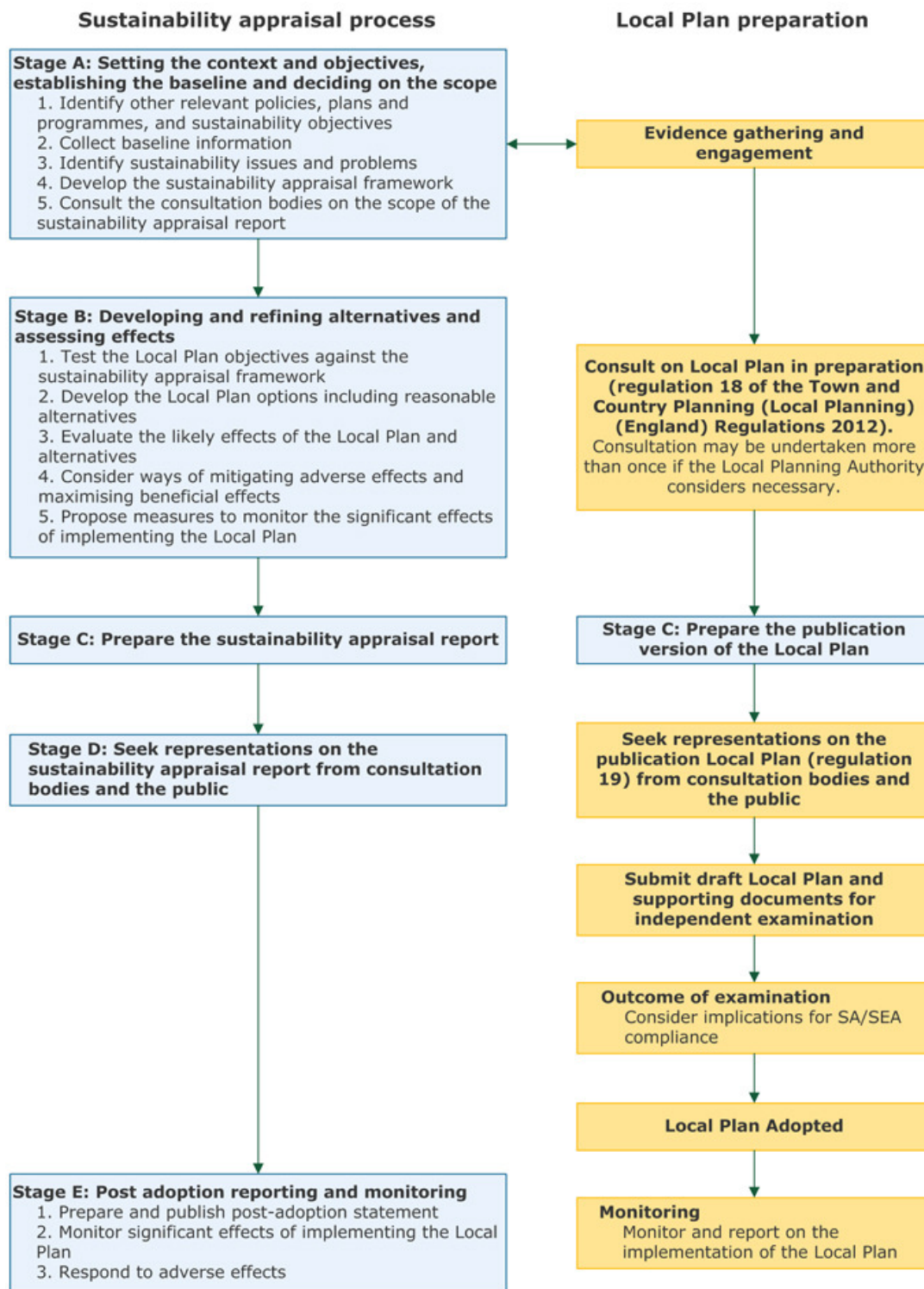


Diagram 1: Stages of the SA process
Source: National Planning Practice Guidance

Scoping Report

1.20 The Scoping Report is the first step in undertaking an SA. The Scoping Report undertakes the following tasks:

- Task A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives.
- Task A2: Collecting baseline information.
- Task A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems.
- Task A4: Developing the sustainability appraisal framework.
- Task A5: Consulting on the scope of the sustainability appraisal.

1.21 The scoping stage (Stage A) identifies the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in this SA report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives.

1.22 The process of SA requires an examination of the state of North Somerset as it is today and the identification of key issues that could affect its future sustainability. Using this information, sustainability objectives are then developed, against which the draft proposals of the Site Allocations Plan will be assessed, to inform any judgements on what options best achieve the sustainability objectives.

Consultation

1.23 In accordance with the relevant regulations, comments on an earlier version of this Scoping Report were invited from the following statutory environmental consultation bodies during a 5-week consultation period ending 29 January 2016:

- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England

1.24 In considering the Scoping Report, consultees were asked to address the following questions:

- ***Have all relevant plans, programmes and policies been referenced?***
- ***Is any significant economic, social or environmental data missing or misrepresented?***
- ***Are any judgments made concerning baseline information incorrect?***
- ***Are there any additional sustainability issues within North Somerset that need to be considered in the development of the Site Allocations Plan?***
- ***Do you agree with the proposed Sustainability Appraisal Framework?***
- ***Are the objectives and indicators set out appropriate?***
- ***Is the proposed methodology for the next stages of the Sustainability Appraisal correct?***
- ***Are there any other comments you would like to make?***

1.25 Summaries of the responses received from the statutory consultees are given in Appendix C. The responses have informed the production of this revised Scoping Report.

2. Task A1 – The requirements of other plans, programmes and policies

- 2.1 The purpose of reviewing other plans, programmes and policies is to identify relevant sustainability objectives and to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Site Allocation Plan are consistent with their strategies, objectives and policies. It is important to identify where there may be potential conflicts, and also where the Site Allocations Plan can contribute to the aims of these other plans/programmes.
- 2.2 Many of the documents listed below were previously reviewed as part of the 2007 Scoping Report. However many documents have now been updated, replaced outright, or deleted. In addition, a number of new documents have been published. The review is set out in Appendix A and represents an up-to-date reflection of the policy context as of March 2016.

Table 1: Documents included in Appendix A

General

- The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, (2002). Commitments arising from Johannesburg Summit.
- United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)
- DEFRA Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2000)
- DCLG National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and National Planning Policy Guidance (2014) in full
- DEFRA Climate Change The UK Programme (2006)
- The Carbon Plan: Delivering our Low Carbon Future (2011)
- West of England Duty to Cooperate Schedule (2015)
- North Somerset Core Strategy (2006 – 2026)

1: Improve health and wellbeing

- UK Fuel Poverty Strategy (2013)
- ODPM Sustainable Communities in the South West – Building for the Future (2003)
- Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century (Government White Paper) (2001)
- North Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (2009)
- Energy Act (2013)

2: Support communities that meet people's needs

- The Barker Review (2004)
- DCLG Written Statement to Parliament Planning and Travellers (2013)

- DCLG Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (2012)
- NPPG Rural Housing (2014)
- DCLG Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)
- Homelessness Act (2002)
- West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013)
- NSC Affordable Housing (2013)

3: Develop a diverse and thriving economy that meet people's needs

- The Portas Review: An independent review into the future of our high streets (2011)
- NPPG Ensuring the vitality of town centres (2014)
- West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2015 – 2030 (2014)
- **4: Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets**
- The Natural Environment White Paper: The natural choice: securing the value of nature (2011)
- Defra Biodiversity 2020: a Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)
- Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010)
- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of international importance especially waterfowl habitat (1971)
- Bonn Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (1979)
- Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC)
- Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna & Flora (Directive 92/43/EC) (The Habitats Directive)
- NPPG Considering and enhancing the historic environment (2014)
- NPPG Climate Change (2014)
- NPPG Planning and Flood Risk (2014)
- NPPG Planning and Coastal Change (2014)
- NPPG Air Quality (2014)
- NPPG Land affected by contamination (2014)
- NPPG Land Stability (2014)
- NPPG Light Pollution (2014)
- NPPG Tree Preservation Orders in conservation areas (2014)
- NPPG: Natural Environment (2014)

- NPPG: Noise (2014)
- DEFRA Working with the grain of nature – A Biodiversity Strategy for England, 2002 (Reviewed 2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) (2000)
- DETR Government Rural White Paper: Our Countryside – the Future – a Fair Deal for Rural England (2000)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- English Heritage A Strategy for the Historic Environment in the South West (2004)
- English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register
- Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2009-2014
- Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan (SMP1)
- North Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan 2005

5: Minimise consumption of natural resources

- NPPG Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking (2014)
- CLG Manual for Streets (2007)
- CLG Manual for Streets 2 (2010)
- CLG Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007)
- West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 3 2011 – 2026 (2011)
- Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992).
- Air Quality Framework Directive (Directive 96/62/EC).
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (1991)
- Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)
- Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
- Directive to Promote Electricity from Renewable Energy (2001/77/EC).
- Waste to Landfill Directive (99/31/EC).
- Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003), updated 2007 – Meeting the Energy Challenge
- NPPG Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (2014)
- NPPG Minerals (2014)

2.3 Through the process of this review, a number of relevant issues were identified which will need to be addressed in the Site Allocations Plan and its Sustainability Appraisal. These issues are outlined below:

- Need to protect, conserve and enhance internationally, nationally and locally recognised biodiversity, landscape character (including the Mendip Hills AONB) and heritage assets;
- Ensuring diverse, socially cohesive communities are maintained / created;
- Safeguarding and increasing jobs and productivity;
- Meeting local communities' aspirations for development;
- Better and more sustainable access to services, facilities and amenities for all;
- Reduce the need to travel by car;
- Need to address flooding and flood risk;
- High levels of carbon saving;
- Minimisation of waste and more prudent use of resources;
- Improve air quality and reduce all kinds of pollution; and
- Provision and protection of green open spaces and green infrastructure.

2.4 These issues, along with those identified in analysis of the baseline information in section 3, have been used to develop the objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal (as set out in [Table 17](#)) and will therefore go on to help shape the Site Allocations Plan.

3. Task A2 – Baseline information and assessment

Introduction

- 3.1 Sustainability appraisal requires the collection of baseline information to provide the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and to aid the identification of sustainability issues and possible methods of dealing with them. Within the baseline data collection, the use of indicators can help to identify issues and help in the provision of methods of monitoring within the sustainable development framework.
- 3.2 The data used to describe North Somerset's economic, social and environmental state has largely been drawn from the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and represents a wide range of indicators and data sources. The AMR for this and previous years are available on our website at:

<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/research>

An introduction to North Somerset

- 3.3 North Somerset covers an area of around 37,500 hectares (145 square miles) and has a population of 208,200 people¹. The District contains an international airport, a deep sea west coast port, part of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a large area of Green Belt stretching south-west from the edge of Bristol, as well as areas of low-lying levels and moors. The main settlements include the strategically significant town of Weston-super-Mare and the three smaller towns of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead. The M5 runs from north to south through the District and the mainline railway from Bristol to the South West also crosses North Somerset, where there are five stations.
- 3.4 North Somerset is an area that has undergone rapid expansion over recent decades, arising principally from its strategic road and rail communications and location adjoining the City of Bristol. It is a generally prosperous area, with low unemployment, good scores on health indicators and lower than average crime rates. It also contains important environmental assets. However, there is concentrated deprivation in parts of Weston-super-Mare. Growth has brought increasingly acute transportation pressures, with high rates of car ownership and usage, and of road traffic growth, as well as pressure on community and social infrastructure and increased house prices. Further growth is difficult to accommodate given the area's infrastructure capacity which has not kept pace with past growth, its relative lack of previously developed (brownfield) sites and the protective designations that apply to much of the rural area.

Economic baseline

Deprivation and Prosperity

¹ 2014 Mid-Year Population Estimate, Office for National Statistics

- 3.5 North Somerset is ranked as the 121st most deprived district out of 326 in England, based on the proportion of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the district that are within the most deprived 10% in England. Of the 135 LSOAs in North Somerset, 100 (74%) are in the least deprived half of LSOAs in England, but this relatively low level of overall deprivation hides a number of highly deprived urban wards. North Somerset has the 3rd largest inequality of all of the 326 authorities in England, based on the range between most and least deprived LSOAs. It includes areas within both the most deprived 1% nationally and the least deprived 1% nationally. Eighteen of the Lower Level Super Output Areas are within the most deprived 25% of areas nationally, all of these areas being in Weston-super-Mare.

Source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015

- 3.6 North Somerset is part of the West of England growth area. In 2012 an Enterprise Area was identified at Junction 21 in Weston-super-Mare. This is part of a select group of five strategically important employment locations across the West of England that complement the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone in Bristol. Each Enterprise Area will have defined incentives for business aimed at maintaining the importance of North Somerset for new business investment and growth.
- 3.7 The adopted Core Strategy focuses on supporting a successful economy and seeks to provide an additional 10,100 jobs by 2026, by allocating around 114 hectares of land for B class uses. This will help address the issue of out-commuting and will increase self-containment, particularly in Weston-super-Mare.

- 3.8 Some key statistics:

Labour Market

- There were an estimated 87,000 jobs in North Somerset in 2013, an increased in 4,000 since 2001.

Table 2: Jobs in North Somerset

Year	Number of jobs	Year	Number of jobs
2001	83,000	2010	88,000
2008	86,000	2011	92,000
2009	89,000	2012	87,000

Source: ONS

Table 3: Percentage of persons in employment by occupation**North Somerset**

1: managers, directors and senior officials	11.4
2: professional occupations	16.9
3: associate prof & tech occupations	15.8
4: administrative and secretarial occupations	13.0
5: skilled trades occupations	9.1
6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.7
7: sales and customer service occupations	9.4
8: process, plant and machine operatives	5.6
9: elementary occupations	9.6

Source: Annual Population Survey July 2013 - June 2014, ONS

- The local employment rate remains considerably above the regional and national rates, while the local unemployment rate remains considerably below them.

Table 4: Employment and unemployment rates

	North Somerset	South West	England and Wales
Employment rate – aged 16-64 %	75.5	74.9	72.1
Unemployment rate – aged 16-64 %	4.5	5.7	7.0

Source: Annual Population Survey July 2013 – June 2014, ONS

- 79.9% of North Somerset residents aged 16 to 64 are economically active. This compares to 78.8% in the South West and 79.0% in England and Wales.
 - *Source: Annual Population Survey April 2013 – March 2014, ONS*
- 73.7% of the economically active population of North Somerset work full time and 26.3% work part time. In England and Wales, 74.2% work full time and 25.7% work part time.
- 91.0% of the economically active males work full time and 8.7% work part time. In England and Wales, 88.5% of the economically active males work full time and 11.4% work part time.
- 53.4% of the economically active females work full time and 46.6% work part time. Nationally, 57.9% of the economically active females work full time and 42.1% work part time.

Income

- In 2012 the average gross annual pay for full time employees working in North Somerset was £26,974, an increase of £312 since 2011. Since 1991 there has been an increase in the average earnings of full time employees, by £9,282. Currently average earnings for employees across the South West are £24,582 per annum.

- The average full time gross pay for the residents of North Somerset in 2015 was £26,693.60, a reduction of £355 from the 2012.

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2015

Enterprise

Table 5: Enterprise births and deaths - 2014

Region	Enterprise Births	Enterprise Deaths	Active Enterprises
England and Wales	324,780	225,665	2,327,790
South West	25,300	19,275	215,905
North Somerset	1,180	795	8,700

Source: Business Demography 2014, Office for National Statistics

Town Centres and Retailing

Town Centres

3.9 The traditional town centres are Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare (which is classed in the Core Strategy as a sub-regional centre). Retail monitoring is reported for the whole of each town centre, and also reported for just the units in the Primary Retail Frontage (PRF), as defined in the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.

Table 6: Retail vacancy rates: town centres - 2015

	Weston-super-Mare	Portishead	Clevedon	Nailsea
Total units	623	133	153	174
Vacant units	91	5	5	31
% of vacant units	14.6%	4%	3%	18%
Total PRF units	157	77	63	46
Vacant PRF units	19	2	2	8
% of vacant PRF units	12%	3%	3%	17%
% of total units in A1 use	41.4%	50%	50%	49%
% of total PRF units in A1 use	64%	61%	70%	76%

3.10 In defined retail areas, policy indicators and targets state that the proportion of primary retail frontage (PRF) units in a non-retail use should not exceed 20% and vacant units should not exceed 10%. None of the towns currently meet the target for PRF in non-retail use. This can be attributed to the continuing economic downturn, and it is positive to retain active frontages, rather than vacant PRF units. Portishead and Clevedon have a PRF vacancy rate less than 10%. The PRF vacancy rate in Weston-super-Mare is at 12% and the rate in Nailsea is higher, but has fallen by 7% on the previous year's figure.

District and Local Centres

3.11 There are 4 district centres and 19 local centres (including two proposed local centres) listed in the Core Strategy. The vacancy rates at the following district and local centres were as follows.

Table 7: Retail vacancy rates: district and local centres -2015

Backwell	2%	Pill	13%
Banwell	43%	Queensway (Weston-super-Mare)	0%
Cleeve	0%	Winscombe	2%
Clevedon Hill Road	1%	Worle High Street	4%
Congresbury	5%	Wrington	11%
Locking Castle (Weston-super-Mare)	0%	Yatton	4%
Long Ashton	9%		

3.12 A1 uses in the local and district centres can be significantly lower than in the primary retail areas of the four towns, for example Banwell has an A1 use of 21%. This may be explained by the smaller size of the centres and the fact that they must serve a community as well as a retail function.

Other Retailing

3.13 There are retail parks at Weston-super-Mare and smaller groups of large retail units or freestanding superstores at Clevedon and Portishead.

Social baseline

Demographic Structure

3.14 Some key statistics:

Population Size

- The population of North Somerset is 208,200 (48.6% male, 51.4% female). This is an increase of 5,634 since the 2011 Census.

Table 8: Population growth 1991-2011

	North Somerset	England and Wales
1991	177,472	49.9 million
2001	188,564 (6.2% increase on 1991)	52 million (4.2% increase on 1991)
2011	202,566 (7.4% increase on 2001)	56.1 million (7.9% increase on 2001)

- The elderly are a larger proportion of the population than regionally and nationally and the working age population is correspondingly smaller. This also reflected in the higher median age.

Table 9: Population comparisons by age group

Age	North Somerset		South West		England and Wales	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Total	208,200	100.0	5,423,300	100.0	62,756,300	100.0
Aged 0 - 15	37,800	18.2	950,000	17.5	11,769,700	18.8
Aged 16 - 64	122,600	58.9	3,327,500	61.4	39,865,700	63.5
Aged 65 and over	47,800	23.0	1,145,800	21.1	11,120,800	17.7
Median age (2011 Census)	44		42		39	

Source: 2014 Mid-Year Population Estimates and Census 2011, ONS

Ethnic Composition

- At the 2011 Census the black and minority ethnic population made up 2.6% of North Somerset's population compared to 4.6% of the West of England area and 14.3% of the population in England.

Dwellings, Household Types and Tenure

- At the 2011 Census there were 88,227 occupied households in North Somerset. This means that on average there were 2.3 people living in each household.
- 30.7% of households are single-person households; nationally the figure is 30.2%.
- 8.8% of households are lone-parent households; nationally the figure is 10.6%.
- 50% of households are comprised of couples; nationally the figure is 45.3%.
- 36.8% of the population of North Somerset own their property outright and 36.1% own their property with a mortgage or a loan. This means that 72.9% of North Somerset residents are owner-occupiers compared to a figure of 63.5% nationally.
- 25.4% of the North Somerset population rent their properties.

Source: 2011 Census

Housing and Residential Accommodation

3.15 The North Somerset Core Strategy (Main Modifications to Policy CS13) identifies a total of 20,985 dwellings to be built in the District over the period 2006-2026. As at April 2015 the capacity of permissions and allocations across the District was a total of 8,033 units.

3.16 Current monitoring indicates that 91% of housing completions in 2013/14 were on previously developed land. Many of the committed sites are also on

previously developed land. However, because of the level of housing growth up to 2026, increasingly new housing development will be on Greenfield sites, as there is a declining amount of brownfield land available in sustainable locations.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

3.17 A SHMA is an objective assessment of local housing needs across housing market areas. In 2015, the Council, working jointly with the other authorities in the West of England, has prepared a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Bristol Housing Market Area for the period 2016-2036.

Vacant Housing

3.18 As at the end of 2014/15 there were 283 properties that have been empty for 6 months or more. This compares to around 1,296 empty homes in June 2011 and 1,160 recorded in 2008, demonstrating a significant reduction in empty homes.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

3.19 The number of licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) across North Somerset as at November 2013 is shown in the table below, and compared to previous years by location.

Table 10: HMOs in North Somerset 2015

The most up to date HMOs figures are as follows:

Ward	Number of licenced HMOs	% of total licenced HMOs
Weston-super-Mare Central	85	72.6%
Weston-super-Mare Hillside	22	18.8%
Weston-super-Mare Milton	4	3.4%
Weston-super-Mare Bournville	1	0.9%
Weston-super-Mare Uphill	1	0.9%
Clevedon East	2	1.7%
Clevedon West	1	0.9%
Clevedon Walton	1	0.9%

Due to ward boundary changes, it is not possible to directly compare previous year's figures.

Ward	Number of HMOs in 2010	Number of HMOs in 2011	Number of HMOs in 2012	Number of HMOs in 2013
Weston-super-Mare Central	32 55%	27 46%	25 46%	23 43%
Weston-super-Mare West	18 31%	22 37%	19 35%	20 37%
Weston-super-Mare Clarence and Uphill	2 3%	4 7%	3 6%	3 6%

Weston-super-Mare East	3 5%	3 5%	2 4%	2 4%
Weston-super-Mare South	1 2%	1 2%	1 2%	1 2%
Clevedon North	1 2%	1 2%	2 4%	2 4%
Clevedon Central	1 2%	1 2%	2 4%	2 4%
Total	58	59	54	53

Education and Skills

3.20 Education is available to further and higher level within North Somerset. Weston College has three main campuses; the modern University Campus which accommodates more than 800 students, the town centre Knightstone Campus and the South West Skills Campus.

3.21 In 2013, 3.2% of 16-18 year olds were known to be not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

Source: Department of Education, 2013

3.22 There are currently 14 Children's Centre's throughout North Somerset. Their main purpose is to improve the outcomes for all young children with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged. Details of the centers are available on the council website at:

<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/childrenscentres>

3.23 Some key statistics:

GCSE results

- percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A* to C grades including English and Maths in 2013 was 58.5%, down 0.3% on the 2012 results despite a national rise in results.

A Levels (Level 3 qualifications)

- A level results are above those for England as a whole, with the average pass rate for the District 90.3% compared with 89.8% nationally in 2013
- percentage of A* to B grades has increased by 0.3% to a total of 49.3%. 75.9% of candidates achieved grade A* to C in 2012, just under the national figure of 76%

Educational Qualifications

Table 11: Qualifications of population aged 16-64

	NVQ4 (HND, Degree level or equivalent) or	NVQ3 (A* levels or equivalent)	NVQ1 and 2	None
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	higher			
North Somerset	28.4% (47,041)	12.7% (21,012)	30.9% (51,294)	19.6% (32,539)
South West	27.4%	13.2%	30%	20.7%
England and Wales	27.2%	12.3%	28.6%	22.7%

NVQ1 equivalent = fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C, GNVQ or NVQ level 1

NVQ2 equivalent = 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, intermediate GNVQ or NVQ level 2

NVQ3 equivalent = 2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ or NVQ level 3

NVQ4 equivalent = HND, Degree, Higher Degree Level qualification or equivalent

Health

3.24 Some key statistics:

- 81.1% of people consider themselves to be in good or very good health (close to the national average of 81.2%), and a further 13.7% describe their general health as fair. This accounts for 94.8% of the total population, higher than the 91.4% that described their health as fair or better in 2001.
• *Source: 2011 Census*
- 4.1% of residents consider themselves to be in bad health, and a further 1.2% think they are in very bad health. Current proportions are similar to the up to date national averages.
• *Source: 2011 Census*
- 38,740 people in North Somerset describe themselves as having a limiting long-term illness of some form, 19.2% of the population. This is an increase from the 18.5% in 2001. The national average has decreased, from 18.2% in 2001 to 17.9% in 2011.
• *Source: 2011 Census*
- The average female life expectancy in North Somerset is 83.5 years and the average male life expectancy is 79.6 years. In England and Wales the average life expectancies are currently 83 years for females and 79.2 years for males.
• *Source: North Somerset Health Profile 2014, Department of Health*
- The premature mortality rate for 2010-2013 was 312 premature deaths per 100,000 the 139th best out of 324 local authorities in England.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

3.25 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is subject to a continuous rolling update process, and chapter refreshes are published quarterly. The JSNA aims to identify the current and future needs for health and social care services for all people in North Somerset. It contains a wealth of information and will be a useful tool in ensuring that development plan policies are effectively contributing to overall health and well-being across North Somerset.

The JSNA is available to view at: <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-council/statistics-data/jsna/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/>

Crime Rates and Perception of Safety

3.26 There were 47.55 crimes per 1000 population within North Somerset over the 2013/14 financial year. The force average for Avon and Somerset Constabulary was 59.39. This shows a slight decrease in the number of total crimes across North Somerset in 2012/13.

Source: ONS

3.27 58% of North Somerset resident adults feel very safe or fairly safe when outside in their local area after dark. 90% of adults feel very safe or fairly safe when outside in their local area during the day. These figures are slightly lower to last time the measure was recorded in 2012.

Source: North Somerset Residents Survey, October 2014

Tourism, Leisure, Open Space and Recreation

Tourism

3.28 Tourism, whether day visitors or staying visitors forms a significant part of the North Somerset economy. In 2013 there were over 7.6m day visitors and just over 501,000 staying. The GVA of tourism is estimated at £229,161,000 out of a total GVA for North Somerset of £3.141bn.

3.29 Key attractions are the Grand Pier, Puxton Park, Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Clevedon Pier, and Tyntesfield. The main events that bring people into the District are Weston Air Days, Beach Race and the Carnival. The Bristol Balloon Fiesta is held at the Ashton Court estate which is in North Somerset and also brings many visitors to the north of the District.

3.30 Weston-super-Mare is a strong focus for visits with over half the hotels/guest houses and self-catering accommodation being in the town in 2013. There is a significant coach party market linked to the larger hotels.

3.31 Some key statistics:

- Altogether there were just over 8,560m visitors to North Somerset in 2014.
- There were 8m day visitors to North Somerset in 2014, a big increase on the figure of 7.65m in 2012.
- There were 2.872m visits during August and September, the busiest time of the year, an increase on the 2013 figure.
- The number of visitors using the range of accommodation facilities was just over 4.5m this year.
- Visitor expenditure in 2013 was £489.5m.
- The number of people employed full time directly and indirectly by tourism in North Somerset is estimated as 6.695m people, an increase of 2.7% on 2012.

Source: North Somerset Council Visitor Economic Impact Figures 2014

Table 12: Number of known tourist bed spaces in North Somerset

Accommodation Category	North Somerset 2012		North Somerset 2013	
	Establishments	Beds / Sleeping Spaces	Establishments	Beds / Sleeping Spaces
+30 room hotels	23	3,044	23	3,041
10-30 room hotels	25	932	27	950
<10 room hotels/others	107	1,181	105	1,126
Serviced Total	155	5,157	155	5,117
Self-catering	80	1,120	73	1,028
Static caravans/chalets	0*	2,075	0*	1,904
Touring caravans/camping	37	2,274	35	2,310
Youth Hostels	0	0	0	0
Non-Serviced Total	117	5,469	108	5,242
TOTAL	272	10,626	263	10,359

* The number of establishments in this category cannot be reported, as some sites have both touring and static pitches, and therefore double counting would occur.

Source: North Somerset Council – Economic Development team

Leisure, Open Space and Recreation

3.32 Across the District there is a wide range of open space, sport and recreation facilities, both formal and informal. There are 12 sports and leisure centres in North Somerset, including public leisure centres in Nailsea, Backwell, Portishead, Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare, Churchill, The Campus (Weston-super-Mare). A number of schools also open their facilities in the evening for community use, namely Gordano (Portishead), Clevedon School, Worle, Hans Price (Weston-super-Mare). The council also maintain sports pitches which are hired out to clubs. A number of private health clubs exist around the District.

3.33 There are theatres at Weston-super-Mare (The Playhouse), and Backwell and cinemas at Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon. There are also a number of well-used community halls such as Somerset Hall in Portishead. The council operates 14 libraries and a mobile library service.

3.34 As the highways authority North Somerset Council is responsible for maintaining public footpaths, public bridleways, restricted byways and a byway open to all traffic (BOAT). The local rights of way network of North Somerset extends to 826km, the majority (704km) being footpaths. Despite the District's relatively small size, it has an array of opportunities for the public to gain access to the countryside. The opportunities for walkers are reasonably well distributed around the area, meaning that most people will have ready access

to the countryside. There are large areas of public access land at Ashton Court and Leigh Woods in the north of the District.

- 3.35 The northern parts of the Mendip Hills AONB are within North Somerset and are popular for walkers and mountain biking. Some parishes such as Backwell and Bleadon have produced walking guides to key footpaths in their areas.

Table 13: All-weather attractions and leisure facilities in North Somerset

Weston-super-Mare	Rest of North Somerset
Ashcombe Park	Backwell Leisure Centre
Blakehay Theatre	Barley Wood Walled Garden, Wrington
Boat trips	Blagdon Lake Pumping Station Visitor Centre
Campus	Bleadon Hill Pay and Play Golf Course
Clarence Park	Churchill Sports Centre
Crazy Golf	Clevedon Craft Centre
Designated Wind and Water Sports	Clevedon Court National Trust
Gala Bingo	Clevedon Pier
Go Karting	Clevedon School Sports Centre
Grand Pier	Court Farm Country Park, Banwell
Grove Park	Curzon Community Cinema, Clevedon
Hans Price Sports Centre	Fishing Lakes at Kingston Seymour
Helicopter Museum	Goblin Combe, Cleeve
Hutton Moor Leisure Centre	Gordano Sports Centre, Portishead
Jill Dando Memorial Garden	Hand Stadium, Clevedon
Lambretta Scooter Museum	Leigh Woods National Trust
Odeon Cinema	Mendip Snowsports Centre, Churchill
Playhouse Theatre	Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Wraxall
Punch and Judy	North Somerset Butterfly House, Yatton
Sand Sculptures	Oakham Treasures, Portbury
SeaQuarium	Portishead Lake Grounds
Water Adventure Play Park	Portishead Marina and Arts Trail
Weston Carnival	Portishead Open Air Pool
Weston Donkeys	Puxton Park, Hewish
Weston Golf Club	Salthouse Fields, Clevedon
Weston Museum	Scotch Horn Leisure Centre, Nailsea
Weston Woods	Strawberry Line cycle path, Yatton to Cheddar
Winter Gardens	Strode Leisure Centre, Clevedon
Worlebury Golf Club	Swiss Valley Sports Centre, Clevedon
Wyvern Sport Centre	Tyntesfield National Trust, Wraxall
Zones on Beach	Urchinwood Manor Riding Centre, Wrington

Environmental baseline

Transport and Accessibility

Congestion

- 3.36 In 2014 estimated traffic flows for all motor vehicles in North Somerset was 2,325 million kilometres, an increase from 2,283 million kilometres in 2013. Traffic on North Somerset roads has increased by 15% between 2000 and 2014.

Source: Department for Transport National Road Traffic Survey

- 3.37 Congestion continues to be an issue in North Somerset particularly around the motorway junctions and on key routes in urban areas. A number of key corridors also go through more rural village communities creating pinch points on the route which suffer from congestion particularly during peak hours. With significant housing and population growth, tackling congestion and supporting an employment-led approach will become a major challenge for the council.
- 3.38 North Somerset is an area where a high proportion of the working population commute out of the area to work. Data on travel to work patterns from the 2011 Census show that over 23,000 people travel to work in Bristol and areas of South Gloucestershire, approximately 24% of the working population. Mode of travel is predominantly car/van with 74% choosing this mode to commute.
- 3.39 The working population of North Somerset use the following types of transport to travel to work (national comparisons in brackets):

• Car or van (driver)	68.5%	(57.5%)
• Walking	9.5%	(10.7%)
• Working from home	6.6%	(5.4%)
• Public transport	5.5%	(16.4%)
• Car or van (passenger)	5.2%	(5.1%)
• Cycling	2.8%	(2.9%)
• Motorcycle, etc.	1.0%	(0.8%)
• Taxi	0.4%	(0.5%)
• Other	0.5%	(0.6%)

Over 37% of the working age population travel over 10km to work.

Source: 2011 Census Travel to work statistics

Car ownership

- 3.40 North Somerset has a large rural area and a higher than average car ownership and usage. The total number of cars/vans owned in North Somerset at the time of the 2011 Census was 121,381. The 2011 Census identified that 17.2% of households had no car or van compared with 26% in England and Wales and 41.3% had two or more cars/vans compared with 32.2% in England and Wales.

Source: 2011 Census

Accessibility

- 3.41 Despite high car ownership levels, North Somerset contains pockets of deprivation with two wards in Weston-super-Mare within the bottom 5% of most deprived wards nationally. This is reflected in car ownership levels with up to 49% having no access to a car in these areas. Accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling to services, facilities and employment in the rural areas is limited. Information for 2010/2011 indicates the following:
- 54% of households live within 30 minutes travel time by public transport of those health facilities in the Bristol Health Service Plan.
 - 55% of households live within 40 minutes travel time by public transport from key employment sites.

Buses

- 3.42 The four West of England authorities, in partnership with the Department for Transport and public transport operators, invested £80 million to improve key bus corridors as part of the Greater Bristol Bus Network programme which was completed in 2012. This investment, together with further investment in other schemes and improvements, has in recent years contributed to increases in bus passenger numbers. The number of passengers boarding services in North Somerset passenger numbers increased to 5,971,610 passengers in 2014/15.

Cycling

- 3.43 Cycling trips have also continued to grow with continued investment in new routes and cycling facilities as well as ongoing promotion of cycling in the area. Department for Transport figures show a 52% increase in cycling on North Somerset roads between 2000 and 2013.

Source: Department for Transport Traffic Count Data

Rail

- 3.44 On a single selected survey day in November 2014, 7,456 rail journeys were made using the five stations in North Somerset. Since 2003, when it stood at 4,507, the number has increased every year.

Air

- 3.45 Bristol Airport is the largest airport serving the South West and South Wales, the ninth largest in the UK and the UK's fifth largest outside London. During 2014, air transport movements increased by 2.51% to 54,244 as a result of the transfer of corporate charter movements from Filton and the growth of scheduled services to Europe. Total aircraft movements decreased by 1.6% to 64,230 (compared with 65,299 in 2013 and 66,179 in 2011). Terminal air passengers increased by 3.39%, to a total of 6,333,058. In August 2013, the Airport recorded the busiest month in its history, handling over 700,000 passengers. An estimated 13% of air passengers used public transport for their journey to or from the airport. The number of people working at the airport in summer 2013 was 2,618 (full-time equivalent), up from 2,585 in 2012. Planning permission was granted in February 2011 for a comprehensive expansion of the airport facilities.

Natural Environment

Biodiversity

- 3.46 North Somerset contains four areas with statutory designations of international/European importance. These include the coastline, which comprises part of the Severn Estuary European Site, with its multiple international/European designations of Ramsar (as a wetland of international importance); Special Protection Area, for the international importance assemblages of overwintering waders and waterfowl, and Special Area of

Conservation (SAC) (under the European Habitats Directive), for its habitats and qualifying interest bird species. The other SACs are: the North Somerset and Mendip Bats, Mendip Limestone Grasslands and Avon Gorge Woodlands SACs. The qualifying interest species of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC comprise greater and lesser horseshoe bats, which are dependent on foraging and navigation habitats outside of the designated SSSI/SAC roosting designated areas. Therefore any Habitats Regulation Assessment of likely significant effects would relate to how these species may be negatively impacted by loss of habitats within key foraging distances (5km) of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC.

3.47 Key habitats within the District include the coastline, inland wetlands (rivers, ponds, the extensive rhynes of the floodplain grazing marsh of the Levels and Moors (wet ditch drainage networks which may comprise SSSIs in certain locations); grazed pastures (notably cattle grazed as an important habitat for greater horseshoe bats); tall hedgerows, tree lines, and semi-natural deciduous woodlands. North Somerset is a stronghold for many rare species of European importance to include species of bats, otter, hazel dormouse and great crested newt. It also supports many other legally protected species which have suffered severe declines, such as water vole, which has been successfully reintroduced into the area at Portbury; and Schedule 1 birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), such as Kingfisher and Peregrine Falcon. Other such notable species of Principal Importance in England include the brown hare and common toad.

3.48 In terms of key assets in the natural environment, North Somerset has:

- 2 National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- 13 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) covering 291.424ha
- 205 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) covering 8509.39ha (although their condition is largely unknown as the majority are privately owned)
- 56 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) covering approximately 3,483 ha of area, as assessed by Natural England (2013)
- 1 Wildlife Site of International Importance (Ramsar)
- 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- 1 Special Protection Area (SPA)
- 77 Local Geological Sites (LGS)
- 933 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- 1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Source: North Somerset Council and Natural England

3.49 The 2014 mid-year population estimates from the Office for National Statistics gives the population of North Somerset as 208,200. This provides a ratio of 1 hectare of LNR per 707 residents, well within Natural England's access to natural green space target of 1 hectare of LNR per 1,000.

3.50 SSSI condition is assessed by Natural England. 77.2% of North Somerset SSSIs are in favourable condition. This greatly exceeds the national target of 50% of SSSIs in favourable condition by 2020 set within 'Biodiversity 2020'.

Table 14: SSSI Condition

	2013 hectares
Favourable	2,691.11
Unfavourable Recovering	441.19
Unfavourable No Change	278.46
Unfavourable Declining	64.80
Assessed area	3,483.70

Source: Natural England

Landscape

- 3.51 North Somerset has a highly varied landscape. The North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment, adopted in 2005, indicates that the District contains sections of four National Character Areas: Bristol, Avon Valleys and Ridges, Severn and Avon Vales, Mendip Hills and Somerset Levels and Moors.
- 3.52 These labels provide a broad indication of the landscapes of the District which range from the carboniferous limestone uplands of the Mendips to the level, wet pasturelands of the levels and moors. The significance of the landscape of the Mendip Hills is acknowledged by their designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), for which a Management Plan has been produced.
- 3.53 The North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment states that the District is characterised by a diversity of landscapes and these variations and differences are represented by 11 landscape types; e.g. Moors, and River Flood Plain. These have a distinct character with similar physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, land cover and historical evolution. The landscape types are further sub-divided into component landscape character areas; e.g. Clapton Moor and Lox Yeo River Flood Plain. The assessment identifies the characteristics of the landscape character areas and the forces for change affecting them.

Soil

- 3.54 Most agricultural land in North Somerset is Grade 3, with areas of Grade 1 and 2 along some of the river valleys and notably around Nailsea, Pill and Churchill. However, the age and precision of this data is variable. There are large areas of woodland in the centre of the District and along the Avon Valley as well as along major ridges. There is relatively little rural land in other non-agricultural uses. Details can be found here:

[http://magic.defra.gov.uk/StaticMaps/Agricultural%20Land%20Classification%20-%20Provisional%20\(England\).pdf](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/StaticMaps/Agricultural%20Land%20Classification%20-%20Provisional%20(England).pdf)

- 3.55 The re-use of previously developed land has contributed to major housing and employment growth at Weston-super-Mare (Weston Airfield and RAF Locking) and Portishead (Port Marine and Ashlands) but these opportunities are now approaching exhaustion.

Historic Environment

3.56 The built heritage and historic landscapes of North Somerset are an important element in providing a sense of place and civic pride for residents and visitors. This diverse heritage ranges from palaeoenvironmental deposits to prehistoric hillforts, Roman, Saxon and medieval settlement and the industrial archaeology of Nailsea.

3.57 In terms of key assets in the historic environment, North Somerset has:

- 36 Conservation Areas
- 1,072 Listed Buildings
- 70 Scheduled Monuments
- 8 Registered parks and gardens
- 58 Unregistered parks and gardens.

Source: English Heritage / North Somerset Council

3.58 These numbers give only a taste of the much larger numbers of regionally and locally important sites, monuments and structures that pepper the landscape of the District.

3.59 Nine sites within the District are on the English Heritage 'At Risk Register' 2014. Four of these sites are Conservation Areas, three are Listed Buildings and two sites are Scheduled Monuments. The four Conservation Areas at risk are:

- Clevedon Triangle, Clevedon
- Boulevard/Montpelier, Weston-super-Mare
- Birnbeck, Weston-super-Mare
- Melrose/Grove Park, Weston-super-Mare.
- The three Listed Buildings at risk are:
- Ashton Court, Long Ashton (Grade I listed)
- St Mary's Church, Portbury (Grade I listed – place of worship)
- Birnbeck Pier, Weston-super-Mare (Grade II* listed).
- The two Scheduled Monuments at risk are:
- Elms Colliery, Nailsea (the buildings are also Grade II listed)
- Conygar Hill, Portbury.

Currently four out of 36 of North Somerset's Conservation Areas are on the 'At Risk Register'. This represents 11.1% compares to 6.1% throughout England. All of these Conservation Areas have been identified as being 'at risk' due to their deteriorating condition.

Air Quality

3.60 The council has a duty to monitor and manage air quality within the District. The main pollutant of concern locally is nitrogen dioxide, which originates primarily from road traffic emissions. Data from non-automatic monitoring sites

operating around the District indicates that nitrogen dioxide remains well below the national annual mean objective.

Flood Risk

- 3.61 Much of North Somerset is low-lying and in Flood Zones 2 and 3, including extensive areas of fluvial floodplain (Zone 3b). As a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), North Somerset Council has prepared a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) which outlines how local flood risk is intended to be managed. Local flood risk means flooding from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. Further details are available at:

<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flooding>

Renewable Energy and Climate Change

- 3.62 The energy and climate change consultancy AEA have produced a microgeneration index recording the number and capacity of installed microgeneration systems in the area of local authority that has applied for Feed-in Tariff (FIT) registration based on data available from the Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem).
- 3.63 The AEA Microgeneration Index gives the total amount of energy from microgeneration technologies registered for the Feed-in-Tariff in North Somerset as 1.016MWe, 0.63% of the total in the UK. Most (976kWe (96.05%) of this is from photovoltaic sources.

Source: AEA Microgeneration Index

Table 15: Carbon Emissions

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) provide data at local authority level measuring industry/commercial, domestic and road transport carbon emissions in tonnes. Figures are available from 2005 to 2013.

Year	Industry and Commercial	Domestic	Transport	N. LULUCF Net Emissions	Grand Total	Population ('000s, mid-year estimate)	Per Capita Emissions (t)
2005	475.6	478.3	590.9	36.3	1,581.1	194.7	8.1
2006	486.6	483.9	580.1	35.4	1,586.0	197.0	8.1
2007	466.6	467.4	607.9	34.4	1,576.4	199.5	7.9
2008	448.1	464.1	586.5	33.8	1,532.6	200.9	7.6
2009	395.7	422.8	563.5	33.4	1,415.3	201.7	7.0
2010	415.8	451.3	551.2	32.0	1,450.3	203.0	7.1
2011	383.4	395.9	540.7	31.3	1,351.2	203.1	6.7
2012	415.1	441.2	552.0	30.5	1,438.8	204.4	7.0
2013	396.8	413.3	547.3	28.8	1,386.3	206.1	6.7

Waste and Recycling

- 3.64 North Somerset Council has responsibility for providing waste and recycling services to 88,227 households. The major facilities for waste management in North Somerset are at Aisecombe Way, Weston-super-Mare. There are also recycling centres across the District.
- 3.65 The four unitary authorities (South Gloucestershire, Bristol City, Bath & North East Somerset and North Somerset Councils) adopted the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy in March 2011. This sits alongside the Core Strategy adopted in April 2012.
- 3.66 North Somerset Council achieved a recycling rate of 60.1% in 2014/15, making it one of the best performing councils in the UK. Since 2005 the council's recycling rate has risen from 22%.

Source: Highest household recycling and composting rates (2014/2015) Letsrecycle.com

Minerals

- 3.67 Mineral working in North Somerset is predominantly the working of Carboniferous Limestone, producing crushed rock for the aggregates industry. There are three currently active quarries producing crushed rock, Stancombe Quarry near Backwell, Freemans Farm Quarry near Bristol Airport, and Durnford Quarry near Long Ashton. Planning consent was granted in August 2014 for an extension in time for the extraction of minerals, and also for production of recycled aggregate, at Durnford. A planning application for a southern extension of Stancombe Quarry was approved in May 2015.
- 3.68 Due to commercial confidentiality reasons, publication of data on minerals production in North Somerset alone is limited, and data tends to be amalgamated for North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, the two main aggregates-producing areas in the West of England. Production (sales) of crushed rock for the two districts combined has fallen in recent years, (for example from 4.32 million tonnes (mt) in 2008 steadily down to 2.66mt in 2013), probably due to the economic downturn, but increased to 3.19 mt in 2014.

Source: Work on emerging Local Aggregates Assessment for West of England 2015

4. Task A3 – Key sustainability issues and the Site Allocations Plan.

- 4.1 Through analysis of the baseline data set out in the previous chapter, a number of key sustainability issues affecting North Somerset have been identified.
- 4.2 Where possible, the following table (Table 16) sets out the role of the: Site Allocations Plan in tackling these identified issues. Also considered, as required by the SEA Directive, is the likely evolution of each issue without the implementation of this Plan. Such scenarios will be considered in more detail in later SA stages, when predictions are made about the effects of individual policies.

Table 16: Current and likely future Sustainability Issues in North Somerset and the role of the Site Allocations Plan

Key Issue (and comments)	Potential Influence of the Site Allocations Plan (and likelihood of issues without the new plan)	Possible Role of the Site Allocations Plan
<i>Economic:</i>		
EC1: Meeting the future needs of businesses for additional land and premises. Planning has an important role to play to maintain a ready supply of sites and premises to meet local requirements for business expansion and inward investment.	Major The achievement of the right balance between the distribution of housing and employment across all settlements in North Somerset during this plan period.	This will be important to enable the council to take the pro-active steps required in North Somerset towards restoring a closer balance between employment and housing in a manner that would not conflict with the longer-term objectives for the District, having regard to the sustainability objectives of reducing travel distances and safeguarding scarce land resources. This policy expression is demonstrated through the identification of the J21 Enterprise Area.
EC2: Provide opportunities for people to work locally	Major Development located in towns and principle urban areas with access to a good range of employment opportunities	Allocation of employment sites alongside new housing sites
<i>Social:</i>		
SO1: There are concentrations of deprivation in some parts	Moderate/Major Continuation of current	New employment land provision, housing and associated community facilities could help

Key Issue (and comments)	Potential Influence of the Site Allocations Plan (and likelihood of issues without the new plan)	Possible Role of the Site Allocations Plan
<p>of North Somerset where access to housing and local job opportunities is below that of the majority of residents of the District.</p> <p>This has created the situation that for certain sectors of the community, located principally in the older urban parts of the District, there is a widening inequality between their quality of life and that of the majority of the District.</p>	<p>trend, although other strategies and initiatives may well impact on this trend.</p>	<p>reduce deprivation within the most disadvantaged parts of the District.</p> <p>The plan will also sit alongside the complementary education, health, economic development plans, programmes and policies.</p>
<p>SO2: Need for new health and community facilities other than to meet future housing growth</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Continuation of current trend, although other strategies and initiatives may well impact on this trend.</p>	<p>To ensure that need created through new development is catered for, and does not add to existing problems in provision.</p>
<p>SO3: Need to improve health and well-being</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Continuation of current trend, although other strategies and initiatives may well impact on this trend</p>	<p>The Plan can ensure that the location of new development promotes improved health and well-being through: increased physical activity, reducing fear of crime, considering the needs of the elderly, air quality and access to good quality open space, services and facilities.</p>
<p>SO4: Protection and provision of open space, sport and recreation and tourism facilities</p> <p>Planning has an important role to play in the protection of valued open space, sport and recreation facilities, tourism facilities and attractions and the provision of new facilities, primarily through new development.</p>	<p>Major</p> <p>Continuation of the current use of locally derived standards for open space, sport and recreation provision and negotiation on a site-by-site basis.</p>	<p>Policies to protect and /or improve existing facilities, in particular designated Local Green Space.</p>
Environmental:		
<p>ENV1: Large area of North Somerset subject to flood risk (with increased risk due to impacts of climate change)</p> <p>Conflict between flood risk, employment / housing growth required for the district.</p>	<p>Moderate/Major</p> <p>Continuation of the current trend, although the extent to which new development is at risk has been reduced by national planning policy elevating the issue of flood risk.</p>	<p>Flood risk taken into major consideration when allocating employment and housing sites. The addition of protected green space can reduce flood risk.</p> <p>The Plan can mitigate the impact of development on the qualifying features of the international designations in the Severn</p>

Key Issue (and comments)	Potential Influence of the Site Allocations Plan (and likelihood of issues without the new plan)	Possible Role of the Site Allocations Plan
		Estuary and elsewhere.
<p>ENV2: North Somerset has significant historical / cultural assets that could be threatened by development and land allocations and by neglect through being unoccupied / underused.</p> <p>As identified in the baseline assessment, the District has a large number of listed buildings, archaeological sites and conservation areas, some of which are 'at risk'.</p>	<p>Major</p> <p>Continuation of current trend.</p>	<p>Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and their immediate surroundings can all be protected when determining site allocations.</p>
<p>ENV3: North Somerset has important biodiversity and landscape assets, which could be threatened by development and other human activity.</p> <p>There are significant areas of both statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites across the District. There is scope for the improvement of some of these areas.</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Continuation of current trend, although other strategies and initiatives (for example, local Biodiversity Action Plan) will also have a critical influence on future patterns.</p>	<p>The Plan should ensure that biodiversity and landscape assets are protected and enhanced in new development.</p> <p>The scope of influence of the Plan is restricted to managing development requiring planning permission. Changes to both landscapes and natural habitats arising from changing agricultural or management practices cannot be addressed through the Plan.</p>
<p>ENV4: Protection and improvement of environmental quality (air, land, water, noise)</p> <p>Planning has an important role to play in ensuring that new development does not lead to lessening of environmental quality and to also ensure that development is not introduced into areas of existing poor environmental quality unless it improves them.</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Continuation of current trend, although other strategies and initiatives may well impact on this trend.</p>	<p>The Plan can seek to not allocate development sites in areas where any facet of environmental quality is poor. The Plan can require mitigation measures for developments for certain types of problem, e.g. noise.</p>
<p>ENV5: Utilising vacant previously developed sites</p>	<p>Major</p> <p>The extent of such sites is, to an extent, likely to diminish irrespective of the Plan because the NPPF, and previous national guidance, already promote the reuse of previously developed land ahead of</p>	<p>The Plan will need to identify development sites that reuse vacant previously developed land. However, there will be other factors to take into consideration in deciding a site's suitability for redevelopment; the existence of previously developed land is not a reason alone to allow development.</p>

Key Issue (and comments)	Potential Influence of the Site Allocations Plan (and likelihood of issues without the new plan)	Possible Role of the Site Allocations Plan
	greenfield sites.	
<p>ENV6: North Somerset has higher than average car usage and congestion problems in specific areas of the authority.</p> <p>The area has a high proportion of people commuting out for employment to Bristol and surrounding areas largely by car. This impacts on congestion at motorway junctions and on key routes in urban / rural areas creating pinch points particularly in peak hours.</p> <p>Large parts of the District are rural in nature where public transport is usually sparser.</p>	<p>Moderate/Major</p> <p>Additional growth will lead to increased congestion.</p>	<p>The Plan allocations focus on jobs and growth which would facilitate working closer to home and reduce the need for out-commuting.</p> <p>The Plan can promote development sites which allow for walking, cycling and use of public transport and requires the early implementation of infrastructure and facilities to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport use right from the early stages of occupation.</p> <p>The land use aspects of the Local Transport Plan should be safeguarded in Local Plan documents, for example park and ride sites and cycle routes. Thereby encouraging walking, cycling and public transport use.</p> <p>The Plan can consider the possibility of additional development in key villages / towns to help them become more sustainable and reduce the need for and length of travel by car.</p>

5. Task A4 – The Sustainability Appraisal Framework: objectives and indicators

Introduction

- 5.1 The Government's methodology for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) recommends the development of objectives and indicators with which to appraise plans and plan options and to enable subsequent monitoring; together they form the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. Where possible, the objectives should be linked to measures the achievement of which should inform whether the plan is performing as required.
- 5.2 As a result of lessons learnt in the delivery of SA work since the publication of the Scoping Report for the LDF in 2007, the objectives and associated appraisal criteria have been amended.
- 5.3 Each SA objective is accompanied by one or more decision-making criteria that will be used in scrutinising and evaluating potential options for the Site Allocations Plan.
- 5.4 For each objective and set of decision-making criteria, a small number of indicators have been selected to allow the District's performance on that issue to be gauged, now and in the future. The objectives and indicators, which form the proposed SA Framework for Site Allocations Plan, are shown together in [Table 17](#) on the following pages.

Internal compatibility of the Sustainability Objectives

- 5.5 The internal compatibility of the SA objectives is then tested for conflict. There may be tensions between objectives that cannot be resolved: the compatibility assessment should clarify these so that subsequent decisions are well based, and mitigation can be considered. The diagram following Table 17 assesses each of the sub-objectives (as numbered).
- 5.6 The diagram ([Table 18](#)) shows that uncertain compatibility exists between numbers of the objectives. The ultimate effect of the objectives on one another is dependent on the way that they are implemented in North Somerset.
- 5.7 It is considered that the uncertainties identified do not necessitate the SA objectives to be re-written. Some areas of potential conflict will always remain. The conflict between the provision of a buoyant and diverse economy and conserving biodiversity will always be difficult to reconcile, but both are key elements of ensuring sustainable development. Potential negative impacts can, however, be avoided through the correct implementation.

Table 17: SA objectives for appraising SAP allocations

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
1. Improve health and wellbeing	1.1. Achieve reasonable access to public open space (Designated Open Spaces, Town and Village Greens, and Public Rights of Way)	SO4	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites located with public open space availability in proximity to site.	Hectares of accessible open space per 1000 population A range of well managed public open spaces within reasonable proximity of the site (800m)	Landscape Human health, population
			Assessed via the Local Green Space allocations:	Allocations leading to an increase in the availability of open green space available		
	1.2. Achieve reasonable access to healthcare facilities (Doctors, Opticians, Pharmacies, Dentists, Hospitals)	SO3	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites located with reasonable access to healthcare provision in proximity to site.	Development located within Reasonable distance of: Hospital 5km GP Surgery 1200m Dentist 1200m Opticians 800m Pharmacies 800m	Human health, population
2. Support communities that meet people's needs	2.1. Achieve reasonable access to a full range of community facilities (post office, meeting venues, youth centres)	SO2	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites located within a distance and ease of access to a range of community facilities. Assessed in terms of safety and convenience.	Development located within reasonable distance (800m) of convenience store post office, meeting venues	Material Assets, Population; human health

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
2. Support communities that meet people's needs	2.2 Achieve reasonable access to educational facilities (primary schools, secondary schools)	SO2	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites located with access to schools which have pupil capacity	Development located within reasonable distance of: Primary School = 800m/ secondary School = 1500m	Material assets, Population
	2.3 Provide opportunities for people to work locally	EC2	Assessed via residential and employment site allocations:	Sites within access to a range of employment opportunities surrounding the site	Economic activity rates. No. of jobs by sector and area	Population
	2.4 Achieve reasonable access to town centre services and facilities (Designated Town and District Centres)	SO4	Assessed via residential site allocations:	Sites located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy in accordance and as defined by the Core Strategy	Development located at reasonable distance to: Town / District Centre 1500m	Material Assets, Population
2. Support communities that meet people's needs	2.5 Reduce poverty and income inequality, and improve the life chances of those living in areas of concentrated disadvantage	SO1	Assessed via the employment site allocations:	Identification of the sites within Weston-super-Mare	A reduction in the gap between areas recorded within the most and least deprived wards in the IMD.	Material assets, population
3. Develop a diverse and thriving	3.1 Deliver a reasonable quantum of	EC1	Assessed via the employment site allocations	Allocations which make a realistic contribution to the	Economic activity rates	Material assets, population

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
economy that meets people's needs	employment floorspace/land and increase access to work opportunities for all parts of society			employment target and business needs as identified within the Core Strategy.	Average earnings No. of jobs by sector and area	
	3.2 Achieve reasonable access to major employment areas <i>Major Employment areas</i> J21 Enterprise Area Locally designated key employment areas	EC2	Assessed via the employment site allocations:	Site within or in close proximity to urban areas (Weston- super-mare, Clevedon, Portishead or Nailsea)	<i>Reasonable thresholds to be confirmed:</i> <i>Walking/Cycling distances, Served by Public Transport</i>	Material Assets, Population, Air, Climatic factors
4. Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	4.1 Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings <i>Assets</i> Listed Buildings,	ENV2	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites which do not have an adverse impact on constraints such as proximity to Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and other heritage assets.	No. of and % of conservation areas/ listed buildings/ historic parks and gardens/ scheduled ancient monuments No of up-to-date conservation area	Climatic factors, Cultural heritage

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
	Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens, Undesignated local assets (HER), Locally listed structure, Town and village greens, Local Green Spaces		Assessed via the Local Green Space allocations:	Allocations which take into account the historical significance of the site and may contain historical features	appraisals No. of listed buildings repaired and brought back into use	
	4.2 to protect and where possible enhance biodiversity and geodiversity at a landscape scale, particularly with respect to protected habitats and species (taking account of climate change) <i>National</i> SSSI, National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, UK	ENV3	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites which do not have adverse impacts on protected species and habitats.	No. of application approvals that generate significant biodiversity impacts Changes in areas and populations of biodiversity importance Change in priority habitats and species % of planning approvals likely to lead to a net gain in local biodiversity	Biodiversity, Fauna, Flora, Landscape

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
	Priority Habitat, Local Sites SNCI/Wildlife Sites, Ecological Networks?				No. of applications refused in part due to their lack of consideration of biodiversity impacts	
	4.3 Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance valued landscapes recognising its wider purposes (natural beauty, enjoyment and cultural heritage) whilst having regard for its economic and social well-being. National designations, AONB	ENV3	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites which do not cause any significant adverse impact on either the general landscape or townscape.	Number of planning applications in the Mendip Hills AONB with commentary on anticipated impacts Provision of new green infrastructure	Biodiversity, Fauna, Flora, Landscape
			Assessed via the Local Green Space Allocations:	Allocations which enhance the visual attractiveness of the area, contributing to townscape, landscape, and /or character of the settlement.	Number of open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard	
	4.4 Promote the conservation and wise use of land, maximising the re- use of previously developed land	ENV5	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites that are previously developed land (PDL), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Recognition that the amount of PDL is limited and in some instances	% of dwellings built on brownfield land	Fauna, Flora, Landscape, Soil

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
				there are problems with the site's deliverability and suitability for residential development.		
	4.5 Minimise the loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile agricultural land	ENV5	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites within areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality (Best and Most Versatile).	Development on land with no current or immediate potential agricultural value Loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land to development	Landscape, soils
	4.6 Minimise vulnerability to tidal & fluvial flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere	ENV1	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites that are outside Flood Zones or if are within 2 or 3A, risk reduced through flood mitigation works).	No. of planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice re. flooding or water quality Development proposed in areas of lowest flood risk Development which mitigates existing flood risk from tidal or fluvial sources	Climatic factors, water
			Assessed via the Local Green Space allocations:	Allocations which mitigates existing flood risk from tidal or fluvial sources		

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
	4.7 Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere	ENV1	Assessed via the residential site allocations:	Sites which do not contain areas that are within High, Medium or low (H/M/L) risk of flooding, as identified by the EA flood risk mapping	No. of planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice re flooding or water quality. A reduction in surface water flood risk across the district.	Climatic factors, water
			Assessed via Local Green Space Allocations:	Allocations which mitigates existing flood risk from surface water sources		
5. Minimise consumption of natural resources	5.1 Achieve reasonable access to sustainable transportation (rail station, bus stops, cycle paths, footways)	ENV6	Assessed via residential site allocations:	Sites with existing and potential links from the site to the nearest settlement.	Development which achieves Reasonable distance to: Rail Station = 800m Bus Stop = 400m Cycle and PRow = 400m Development that is on or adjacent to the existing cycling and PRow network No. of development that extends/ enhances cycling network	Material Assets, Population, Air, climate
			Assessed via employment site allocations:	Development which achieves reasonable distance to sustainable transport options.		
	5.2 Reduce harm	ENV5	Assessed via the	Site that are inside,	The number of	Material

SA Objective	Sub- objective	Addres ses sustain- ability issue	Decision-making criteria (SA will look for...)		Indicator(s)	Relevant SEA topic
	on the countryside through maintaining development within the existing defined settlement boundary		residential site allocations:	adjacent to the current Settlement Boundary, as defined by the NS RLP.	applications approved outside of the settlement boundary.	Assets, Population,

Table 18: Compatibility of SA sub objectives

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Key for Diagram

Effect uncertain ?

Positive effect: ✓

No/negligible effect: -

Negative effect: x

6. Other Assessments Linked to the SA Process

Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of the community is at the heart of sustainable development. North Somerset Council works with all parts of every community and is committed to ensuring that its policies and plans provide equality of opportunity for all. The council has an adopted Equality and Diversity Policy in order to maintain this commitment.
- 6.2 In order to ensure that the plans, policies and strategies produced by the council accord with the Equality and Diversity Policy, a brief but concise Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken for the Site Allocations Plan in conjunction with the SA process. The Equality Impact Assessment framework is set out in Appendix B.

Appropriate Assessment of the SA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitats Regulations)

- 6.3 In recognition of its internationally important natural features and wildlife, the Severn Estuary is protected by a range of national and international nature conservation legislation. As well as being notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, it is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds ('the Birds Directive'); and is a Ramsar site under the Ramsar Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of Importance. It is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora ('the Habitats Directive 1992'), implemented in Britain by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitats Regulations).
- 6.4 In addition to the Severn Estuary, North Somerset also has three other SACs – Avon Gorge Woodlands, Mendip Limestone Grasslands, and North Somerset and Mendip Bats.
- 6.5 Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) requires that:

'Assessment of implications for European sites and European offshore marine sites:

- (1) Where a land use plan—

- (a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and
 - (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, the plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.'
- 6.6 An appropriate assessment addresses the likely impact on those features of interest (e.g. waders or wildfowl) for which the site has been designated and has to be carried out regardless of whether those effects are direct or indirect, temporary or permanent, alone or in combination, negative or beneficial. The 'competent authority' can ask for sufficient information as is reasonable to enable that assessment to be carried out. Under European and national law, this has to be carried out before any planning permission can be granted.
- 6.7 The same legislative protection and constraints applies to habitat (e.g. coastal floodplain grassland) used by the European protected species, even if the land in question lies outside the SPA/Ramsar site.
- 6.8 The Habitats Directive applies the precautionary principle to protected areas; plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site(s) in question. However, plans and projects may be permitted if there are no alternatives to them and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensatory provision will be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.
- 6.9 In order to ascertain whether or not site integrity will be affected, a scoping assessment should be undertaken of the plan or project in question. The policies in the Site Allocation Plan that may impact upon any Natura 2000 sites in the District must therefore be subject to this scoping process, which will be carried out in conjunction with the SA.
- 6.10 Any policy relating to, or impacting in any way upon, the conservation objectives of the designated sites will be tested in strict accordance with the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

7. Next Stages and Methodology for the SA

What happens next?

7.1 This Scoping Report is the first stage of the SA process (Stage A). The stages that follow are:

- Developing and refining options (Stage B)
- Appraising the effects of the Plan (Stage C)
- Consulting on the Plan and the SA Report (Stage D)
- Monitoring the implementation of the Plan

Developing and refining options (Stage B)

7.2 Under the SEA Directive, the council is required to assess the plans effects in comparison with *“reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme”*. The Council will develop various spatial policy options capable of meeting the spatial planning objectives of the Local Plan. Each reasonable policy option, including the ‘do nothing’ option, will be tested against the SA Framework to determine their performance in sustainability terms.

7.3 The SA will be carried out on the basis of assessing the difference made by having, as opposed to not having, the spatial policies in their proposed form. This can be assessed against the various SA objectives and any opportunities to improve the spatial options to meet those objectives can be identified. This process will identify whether the effects are positive, negative or uncertain.

Appraising the effects of the plan (Stage C)

7.4 The next stage of the SA process is to assess each spatial option, in order to determine whether it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment and sustainable development (see [Table 19](#) below). The purpose of this stage is to predict and evaluate the effects of policies so that, where adverse effects are predicted, consideration will be given to what mitigation measures may be required. This stage will lead to the production of the main SA Report.

7.5 Each spatial option will be assessed and, where necessary, recommendations made for refining these included in the process. At this stage, if there are limitations in the data that is available, it is expected that the predictions regarding the impacts of spatial options may be broad-based and qualitative rather than detailed and quantitative. Where possible, the potential effects will be quantified, but, where this is not possible, a subjective judgment will need to be made.

- 7.6 Completion of this process will make it possible to decide if any of the options are likely to have any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts are predicted, information will be presented on the measures proposed to prevent, reduce or offset these adverse effects. Where an adverse effect cannot be mitigated, the council will consider deleting or modifying the policy. Even if a policy does not have any adverse impacts, the council will where possible seek to enhance its positive and beneficial effects.
- 7.7 Where policies are proposed for alteration in light of the SA process, these will be highlighted in the main SA report. The SA process will also provide a commentary on any sustainability issues that arise during the refinement of the option. Conclusions on the overall sustainability effects of the policy will also be provided as part of the main SA report.
- 7.8 Table 19 below sets out SEA regulation requirements for how significant effects on the environment should be determined. These criteria used throughout Stages B and C of the SA process but will also be applied to the determination of significant effects on economic and social circumstances, as well as the environment, so that the likely significant effects on broader sustainability may be determined.

Table 19: SEA Regulations criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations 2004)

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to -
 - (a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
 - (b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
 - (c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
 - (d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
 - (e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to -
 - (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - (b) the cumulative nature of the effects;
 - (c) the transboundary nature of the effects;
 - (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
 - (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to -
 - (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
 - (iii) intensive land-use; and
 - (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Stage D - Consulting on the plan and sustainability appraisal

- 7.9 An SA Main Report will be available for consultation at the same time as public participation on the Consultation Draft Version of the Site Allocations Plan. If changes are made in light of the public participation stage, the SA Main Report may need to be amended as necessary to reflect any changes, if the changes result in likely significant effects.
- 7.10 The revised SA Main Report will be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the submission of the Site Allocations Plan, which will be subject to independent examination by a Planning Inspector. The independent

examination will consider whether the SA process has been incorporated into the production of the submitted Plan and whether the requirements of the SEA Directive have been met.

Monitoring the implementation of the plan

7.11 It is a requirement of the SEA Directive that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of Plans must be monitored to identify any unforeseen adverse effects and to enable appropriate remedial action to be taken. SA monitoring will allow the Council to answer the following questions:

- Were the assessment's predictions of sustainability effects accurate?
- Is the plan contributing to the achievement of desired SA objectives and targets?
- Are mitigation measures performing as well as expected?
- Are there any adverse effects? Are these within acceptable limits, or is remedial action desirable?

7.12 SA monitoring will be undertaken annually following adoption in line with the requirement to produce an Annual Monitoring Report. Further information on monitoring will be set out in the SA Main Report.

Appendix A – Review of Plans, Programmes and Policies

Scope of the review of plans, programmes and policies

European Directives and commitments established at the European level

The review refers to a number of the more important Directives, such as the *Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds* (79/4098/EC) and the Directive on the *Conservation of natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora* (92/43/EEC).

National strategies, plans, programmes and policies

The review identifies a number of high level policy and strategy documents including the NPPF (2012) and NPPG (2014).

Regional strategies, plans, programmes and policies

A number of regional strategies exist. These have been listed in the following review and include the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 3 2011 – 2026 (2011) and the West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013).

General

- The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, (September 2002).
- United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)
- DEFRA Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2000)
- DCLG National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and National Planning Policy Guidance (2014)
- DEFRA Climate Change The UK Programme (2006)
- The Carbon Plan: Delivering our Low Carbon Future (2011)
- West of England Duty to Cooperate Schedule (2013)

1: Improve health and wellbeing

- UK Fuel Poverty Strategy (2015)
- ODPM Sustainable Communities in the South West – Building for the Future (2005)
- Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century (Government White Paper) (2001)

- The UK Energy Act (2013)

2: Support communities that meet people's needs

- The Barker Review (2004)
- DCLG Written Statement to Parliament Planning and Travellers July (2013)
- DCLG Planning Policy for Travellers Sites March (2012)
- NPPG Rural Housing (2014)
- DCLG Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)
- Homelessness Act (2002)
- West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013)

3: Develop a diverse and thriving economy that meets people's needs

- The Portas Review: An independent review into the future of our high streets (2011)
- NPPG Ensuring the vitality of town centres (2014)
- West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2015 – 2030 (2014)

4: Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets

- The Natural Environment White Paper (2011)
- Defra Biodiversity 2020: strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem services (2011)
- Making space for nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010)
- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of international importance especially waterfowl habitat (1971)
- Bonn Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (1979)
- Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC)
- Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna & Flora (Directive 92/43/EC) (The Habitats Directive).
- NPPG Considering and enhancing the historic environment (2014)
- NPPG Climate Change (2014)
- NPPG Planning, Coastal Change and Flood Risk (2014)

- NPPG Air Quality (2014)
- NPPG Land affected by contamination (2014)
- NPPG Land Stability (2014)
- NPPG Light Pollution (2014)
- NPPG Tree Preservation Orders in conservation areas (2014)
- NPPG: Natural Environment (2014)
- NPPG: Noise (2014)
- DEFRA Working with the grain of nature – A Biodiversity Strategy for England, 2002 (Reviewed 2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) (2000)
- DETR Government Rural White Paper: Our Countryside – the Future – a Fair Deal for Rural England (2000)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- English Heritage A Strategy for the Historic Environment in the South West (2004)
- English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register
- Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2009-2014
- Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan (SMP1)
- North Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan 2005

5: Minimise consumption of natural resources

- NPPG Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking (2014)
- CLG Manual for Streets (2010)
- CLG Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007)
- West of England Joint Transport Plan 3 (2011)
- National Policy Statement for Ports (2012)
- Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
- Air Quality Framework Directive (Directive 96/62/EC)
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (1991)
- Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)

- Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
- Directive to Promote Electricity from Renewable Energy (2001/77/EC)
- Waste to Landfill Directive (99/31/EC)
- Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003), updated 2007
- NPPG Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (2014)
- NPPG Minerals (2014)

Title of Policy, plan and programme	Objectives	Implications for Plan
General		
The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, Commitments arising from Johannesburg Summit (September 2002)	<p>A number of the sustainable development commitments originating from WSSD, are relevant to land use planning, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate energy into country-led poverty reduction processes. • Remove market barriers and create a level playing field for renewable energy and energy efficiency. • Greater resource efficiency (incl. decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation). • Support business innovation and take-up of best practice in technology and management; work on waste and producer responsibility. <p>Targets There are a number of follow-up processes, but no specific targets.</p>	<p>Many of these commitments are followed up and elaborated in more in detail in UK guidance and strategies.</p> <p>Consider policies to support objectives.</p>
United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. • Achieve universal primary education • Promote gender equality and empower women. • Reduce child mortality. • Improve maternal health. • Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. • Ensure environmental sustainability. • Develop a global partnership for development. <p>Targets: By 2015 all 191 UN Member states have pledged to meet these goals:</p> <p>Targets for 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger. • Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school. • Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. 	<p>The declaration and the goals have a key focus on developing countries and issues such as poverty, gender equality and education. However the declaration also contains commitments to address a broad range of issues some of which have relevance to identifying policy actions and priorities, particularly those relating to environmental sustainability.</p>

Title of Policy, plan and programme	Objectives	Implications for Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five. • Reduce by three quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth. • Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases. • Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. • Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water. <p>Targets for 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. • Develop further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction — nationally and internationally. • Address the least developed countries' special needs, and the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states. • Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems. • Develop decent and productive work for youth. • In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries. • In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies — especially information and communications technologies. 	
DEFRA Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)	<p>Objectives</p> <p>The Strategy sets out five guiding principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly <p>Priorities for UK action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable production and consumption. • Climate change and energy. • Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement. • Sustainable communities <p>Targets</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

Title of Policy, plan and programme	Objectives	Implications for Plan
	<p>Does not contain any targets but does include the following key commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing an integrated policy approach for protecting and enhancing natural resources with stakeholders in 2005. • Researching environmental limits and environmental inequalities. • Taking account of natural systems as a whole, through the use of an ecosystems approach. • Bringing together all the UK Government's policy frameworks, targets and strategies for natural resources. • Modernising the delivery framework through the creation of new agencies to manage the marine and terrestrial environments. • Launching Environmental Stewardship to incentivise farmers to deliver environmental benefits. • Addressing problems of degraded resources and environmental inequalities by enhancing the role of the Environment Agency, the creation of the Integrated Agency, and by strategic partnership work nationally and locally between Defra and the Department of Health and their agencies. • Working with international partners to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss worldwide. • Encouraging partner countries globally to integrate principles of sustainable development into poverty reduction and development processes, assisting developing countries in negotiation and implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and supporting multilateral institutions such as the UN Environment Programme. 	
DCLG National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	<p>In delivering sustainable development the key planning objectives should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a strong, competitive economy. • Ensuring the vitality of town centres. • Supporting a prosperous rural economy. • Promoting sustainable transport. • Supporting high quality communications infrastructure. • Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes. • Promoting healthy communities. • Protecting Green Belt land. • Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. • Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. • Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. • Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

Title of Policy, plan and programme	Objectives	Implications for Plan
DCLG National Planning Policy Guidance (2014)	The launch of National Planning Policy Guidance was announced in March 2014. The aim of the NPPG is to replace a large quantity of old guidance and make it a simpler system for everyone to use. It is a web based tool split into 41 sections of which relevant categories are included below.	Consider policies which support this guidance.
The Carbon Plan: Delivering our Low Carbon Future (2011)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make existing homes and buildings more energy efficient. • Deliver heating and electricity through renewable sources reducing the use of fossil fuels. • Support people in making low carbon travel choices. • Reduction in domestic transport emissions through low emission technologies. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All homes and buildings to have emission footprints close to zero by 2050 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
West of England Duty to Cooperate schedule (2013)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the strategic planning issues affecting more than one unitary authority area in the West of England; • To define the processes for taking these issues forward; and • To document the outcomes delivered. <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance the schedule demonstrates a table showing a key theme, issues and anticipated delivery outcome/benefits , the Local Authorities which are affected , any actions required and a proposed action date and by whom.</p> <p>There are no specific targets relating to this guidance.</p>	Ensures that cross boundary issues are consulted on at a strategic level

1. Improve health and wellbeing		
UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, (2015)	Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve the homes of the fuel poor by 2030. 	
ODPM Sustainable Communities in the South West – Building for the Future (2003)	<p>Contains an 'Action Plan' which includes action such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will help empower people and public services in disadvantaged communities by investing in the skills and know-how they need to turn their communities around (total funding of £148,500 for 2002/03). We will continue to work with SWRDA to establish a 'centre of excellence', providing services to enable the sharing of best practice on regeneration and renewal. We will plan in the main towns and cities for growth, and transport infrastructure and services that reduce the need for travel and support sustainable development as with the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study. We will work with local authorities to develop and implement effective local transport plans to tackle the region's transport needs at a local level and support the delivery of key schemes supporting sustainable growth such as the Poole Harbour Bridge, Gloucester South West by-pass and Barnstaple downstream bridge. We will use the planning system and other strategies to ensure that communities develop in a way that reduces the need to travel, particularly by private car. <p>Does not contain any targets.</p>	Consider policies to achieve this Action Plan.
The UK Energy Act (2013)	<p>The act sets out detail on measures on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer protection on domestic fuel tariffs, Requirement to set target dates for achieving Fuel poverty strategy objectives 	

2. Support communities that meet people's needs		
DCLG Written Statement to Parliament Planning and Travellers (July 2013)	This ministerial statement abolishes top down targets, increases projection of the green belt and aligned the planning system for traveller sites with that for settled housing. There is a call to revoke equality and diversity in planning as previous unauthorised developments have created tensions between travellers and the settled population, harming community cohesion.	The single issue for unmet demand is not sufficient evidence for providing traveller sites or conventional housing sites in the Green Belt.
DCLG Planning Policy for Travellers Sites March (2012)	<p>Objective To ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional nomadic way of life for travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.</p> <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make their own assessment of need for the purpose of planning; • Ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites; • Encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale; • Plan-making and decision-taking should protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development; • Promote a more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites; • Plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective; • Ensure that Local Plans include fair, realistic, and inclusive policies; • Increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply; • Reduce tension between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions; • Enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure; and • To have due regard for the protection of local amenity and local environment. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Rural Housing	Objectives	Consider policies to achieve

(2014)	<p>Understand the importance of providing housing to sustain other rural facilities such as schools, local shops, public houses, places of worship and local services.</p> <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering rural housing options at strategic, local and neighbourhood levels; • Avoid blanket policies which restrict development; and • Recognise that different sustainable transport policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. 	these objectives
DCLG Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)	<p>The Housing Strategy sets out a package of reforms to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the housing market moving again; • Lay the foundations for a more responsive, effective and stable housing market in the future; • Support choice and quality for tenants, and • Improve environmental standards and design quality. 	Consider policies to achieve this Strategy
Homelessness Act (2002)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of local housing authority to formulate a homelessness strategy. 	Consider policies to achieve this objective
West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 (draft)	<p>The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has been undertaken by the six authorities which make up the West of England Housing Market Area. The SHMA intends to go beyond the traditional descriptive amount of housing needs and base projected growth on understanding of the housing market, the economy and planning decisions.</p>	Consider policies to help deliver non-strategic housing growth in the District where there is community support
<h3>3. Develop a diverse and thriving economy that meet people's needs</h3>		
The Portas Review: An independent review into the future of our high streets. Mary Portas (2011)	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place a "Town Team": a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team for high streets. • Empower successful Business Improvement Districts to take on more responsibilities and powers and become "Super-BIDs". • Legislate to allow landlords to become high street investors by contributing to their Business Improvement District. • Establish a new "National Market Day" where budding shopkeepers can try their hand at operating a low-cost retail business. • Make it easier for people to become market traders by removing unnecessary regulations so that anyone can trade on the high street unless there is a valid reason why not. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should consider whether business rates can better support small businesses and independent retailers. • Local authorities should use their new discretionary powers to give business rate concessions to new local businesses. • Make business rates work for business by reviewing the use of the RPI with a view to changing the calculation to CPI. • Local areas should implement free controlled parking schemes that work for their town centres and we should have a new parking league table. • Town Teams should focus on making high streets accessible, attractive and safe. • Government should include high street deregulation as part of their ongoing work on freeing up red tape. • Address the restrictive aspects of the 'Use Class' system to make it easier to change the uses of key properties on the high street. • Put betting shops into a separate 'Use Class' of their own. • Make explicit a presumption in favour of town centre development in the wording of the National Planning Policy Framework. • Introduce Secretary of State "exceptional sign off" for all new out-of-town developments and require all large new developments to have an "affordable shops" quota. • Large retailers should support and mentor local businesses and independent retailers. • Retailers should report on their support of local high streets in their annual report. • Encourage a contract of care between landlords and their commercial tenants by promoting the leasing code and supporting the use of lease structures other than upward only rent reviews, especially for small businesses. • Explore further disincentives to prevent landlords from leaving units vacant. • Banks who own empty property on the high street should either administer these assets well or be required to sell them. • Local authorities should make more proactive use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to encourage the redevelopment of key high street retail space. • Empower local authorities to step in when landlords are negligent with new "Empty Shop Management Orders". • Introduce a public register of high street landlords. • Run a high profile campaign to get people involved in Neighbourhood Plans. • Promote the inclusion of the High Street in Neighbourhood Plans. • Developers should make a financial contribution to ensure that the local community has a 	
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	<p>strong voice in the planning system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support imaginative community use of empty properties through Community Right to Buy, Meanwhile Use and a new “Community Right to Try”. • Run a number of High Street Pilots to test proof of concept. 	
NPPG Ensuring the vitality of town centres (2014)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate local employment. • Promote beneficial competition within and between town centres. • Create attractive and diverse places where people want to live, visit and work. <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and plan to meet the main town centre uses in full, adopting a town centre first approach; • Be mindful of the different rates of development in town centres compared with out of town centre; • Improve the quality of car parking in town centres; • Use both sequential and impact testing; • Work with the private sector, Portas Pilot organisations, town teams, neighbourhood planning groups, town centre management organisations and other relevant groups to produce a strategic vision for town centres. • Take full account of relevant market signals keeping allocations under regular review; and • Assess the health of a town centre using relevant indicators. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2015 – 2030 (2014)	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the right conditions for business to thrive. Give confidence and certainty to our investors to attract and retain investment to stimulate and incentivise growth. • Ensure a resilient economy, which operate within the environmental limits. That is low carbon and resource efficient economy, increases natural capital and is proofed against future environmental, economic and social shocks. • Create places where people want to live and work, through delivery of cultural infrastructure, including broadband, transport and housing to unlock suitable locations for economic growth. • Shape the local workforce to provide people with skills that businesses need to succeed and that will provide them with job opportunities. • Ensure all our communities share in the prosperity, health and well-being and reduce the inequality gap. <p>Targets:</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	The West of England LEP aims to exceed the Oxford Economics baseline growth figure of 65,000 jobs and 2.6% GVA growth up to 2030.	
4. Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets		
The Natural Environment White Paper: The natural choice: securing the value of nature (2011)	Objectives: This White Paper recognises that nationally, the fragmentation of natural environments is driving continuing threats to biodiversity. It sets out the Government's policy intent to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. improve the quality of the natural environment across England; 2. move to a net gain in the value of nature; 3. arrest the decline in habitats and species and the degradation of landscapes; 4. protect priority habitats; 5. safeguard vulnerable non-renewable resources for future generations; 6. support natural systems to function more effectively in town, in the country and at SA; and 7. create an ecological network which is resilient to changing pressures. 	
Defra Biodiversity 2020: a Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)	This strategy builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a comprehensive picture of how we are implementing our international and EU commitments. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea. Seeks to ensure biodiversity considerations become embedded in all main sectors of public policy and sets out a programme to make the changes necessary to conserve and enhance natural systems.	
Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010) Also referred to as the "Lawton review"	Cites the importance of ecological networks, suites of high quality wildlife sites containing biological diversity, with connections between them enabling species, or their genes, to move. The overarching aim for England's ecological network should be to deliver a natural environment where: compared to the situation in 2000, biodiversity is enhanced and the diversity, functioning and resilience of ecosystems re-established in a network of spaces for nature that can sustain these levels into the future, even given continuing environmental change and human pressures Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To restore species and habitats appropriate to England's physical and geographical context to levels that is sustainable in a changing climate, and enhanced in comparison with those in 2000. 2. To restore and secure the long-term sustainability of the ecological and physical processes that underpin the way ecosystems work, thereby enhancing the capacity of our natural environment to provide ecosystem services such as clean water, climate regulation and crop pollination, as well as providing habitats for wildlife. 3. To provide accessible natural environments rich in wildlife for people to enjoy and experience. 	
Bern Convention on the	Objectives	Consider policies to achieve

Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)	<p>The Convention aims to ensure conservation of wild flora and fauna species and their habitats. Special attention is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species specified in appendices. The Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species. Such measures should be included in the Parties planning and development policies and pollution control, with particular attention to the conservation of wild flora and fauna. The Parties undertake to promote education and disseminate general information concerning the need to conserve species of wild flora and fauna and their habitats. The aims of the convention are threefold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to conserve wild flora and fauna and natural habitats; • to promote co-operation between States; and • to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species <p>General obligation for each Contracting Party to take action individually, with respect to the conservation of wild flora and fauna and all natural habitats in general, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting national conservation policies; • having regard for conservation in regional planning policies and pollution abatement; and • promoting education and information. <p>Targets: Does not contain any targets.</p>	these objectives
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of international importance especially waterfowl habitat (1971)	<p>Objectives: The Convention makes the following commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 2: Signatories will designate wetland sites to be included in the list of wetlands of international importance and promote the conservation and wise use of these. • Article 3: Under the Convention there is a general obligation for the Contracting Parties to include wetland conservation considerations in their national land-use planning. They have undertaken to formulate and implement this planning so as to promote, as far as possible, “the wise use of wetlands in their territory”. • Article 4: Contracting Parties have also undertaken to establish nature reserves in wetlands, whether or not they are included in the Ramsar List, and they are also expected to promote training in the fields of wetland research, management and stewardship <p>Targets: Does not contain any targets.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
Bonn Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species	<p>Objectives: The Convention was agreed based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that wild animals in their innumerable forms are an irreplaceable part of the earth’s 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

(1979)	<p>natural system which must be conserved for the good of mankind.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness that each generation of man holds the resources of the earth for future generations and has an obligation to ensure that this legacy is conserved and is used wisely. • Consciousness of the ever-growing value of wild animals from environmental, ecological, genetic, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, cultural, educational, social and economic points of view. • Concern particularly with those species of wild animals that migrate across or outside national jurisdictional boundaries. • Recognition that the States are and must be the protectors of the migratory species of wild animals that live within or pass through their national jurisdictional boundaries. • The conviction that conservation and effective management of migratory species of wild animals require the concerted action of all States within the national jurisdictional boundaries of which such species spend any part of their life cycle. <p>Targets: Does not contain any targets.</p>	
Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC)	<p>Objectives: The main provisions of the Directive include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maintenance of the favourable conservation status of all wild bird species across their distributional range (Article 2) with the encouragement of various activities to that end (Article 3). • The identification and classification of Special Protection Areas for rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I (PDF 106KB) of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance (Article 4). (Together with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive, SPAs form a network of pan-European protected areas known as Natura 2000.) • The establishment of a general scheme of protection for all wild birds (Article 5). • Restrictions on the sale and keeping of wild birds (Article 6). • Specification of the conditions under which hunting and falconry can be undertaken (Article 7). • (Huntable species are listed on Annex II.1 (PDF 29KB) and Annex II.2 (PDF 73KB) of the Directive). • Prohibition of large-scale non-selective means of bird killing (Article 8). • Procedures under which Member States may derogate from the provisions of Articles 5-8 (Article 9) — that is, the conditions under which permission may be given for otherwise prohibited activities. • Encouragement of certain forms of relevant research (Article 10). • Requirements to ensure that introduction of non-native birds do not threatened other biodiversity (Article 11). 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	Targets: Does not contain any targets.	
Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna & Flora (Directive 92/43/EC) (The Habitats Directive).	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of this Directive shall be to contribute towards ensuring bio-diversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. • Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest. • Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall take account of economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics. Targets: Does not contain any targets.	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Considering and enhancing the historic environment (2014)	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; • Ensure heritage assets remain used and valued; and • Where a heritage asset is justifiably lost or partially lost steps are taken to interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past. In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific opportunities within the area for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets; • Consider the relationship and impact of other policies on the delivery of a strategy for conservation; and • Hold clear and up to date information on designated and non-designated heritage assets. There are no specific targets relating to this document.	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Climate Change (2014)	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of appropriately sited green energy; and • Reduce greenhouse gases through effective spatial planning. In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through provision of sustainable transport; • Provide opportunities for renewable and low energy technologies; • Provide opportunities for decentralised energy and heating; • Promote low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings; 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider future climate risks such as flooding and availability of water; Engage with appropriate partners; and Advise developers on how to reduce energy consumption through materials and design. <p>There are no specific targets relating to this document.</p>	
NPPG Planning and Flood Risk (2014)	<p>Objective: The NPPG section on Flood Risk contains strict guidance on how local authorities should act on flood risk assessments in the preparation of its local plan and the decision making process. It states that the tests as set out in the NPPF should be followed and where the tests are not met, new development on flood risk sites should not be allowed.</p> <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a flood risk assessment of the area which will inform the local plan; For sites over 1 hectare developers should undertake a site specific flood risk assessment; Apply a sequential test approach to site selection and decision taking; Where development is located in areas at risk of flooding, it should be appropriately flood resilient, resistant and safe for the developments lifetime; and Seek flood risk management opportunities to reduce the causes and effects of flooding. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Planning and Coastal Change (2014)	<p>Objective: Reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas,</p> <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate Coastal Zone Management to integrate terrestrial and marine planning regimes; Identify Coastal Change Management Areas likely to be affected by physical change to the coast; Clear what development will be appropriate in Coastal Management Areas; and Make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from Coastal Management Areas. <p>There are no specific targets relating to this document.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Air Quality (2014)	<p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider what development is being proposed and where it is situated; Encourage sustainable transport; Take into account air quality management areas; Take account of potential cumulative impact of a number impact of a number of smaller developments on air quality as well as the effect of more substantial developments; 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the impact of point source pollution; and Consider ways in which new development would be appropriate in locations where air quality is likely to be a concern and not give rise to unacceptable risks from pollution <p>Targets: Refers to 2008 Ambient Air Quality Directive sets legally binding limits for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health.</p>	
NPPG Land affected by contamination (2014)	<p>There are no specific objectives and targets relating to this guidance but when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a strategic, phased approach to dealing with potential contamination if this is an issue over a wide area, and in doing so, recognise that dealing with land contamination can help contribute to achieving the objectives of EU directives such as the Water Framework Directive; Use sustainability appraisal to shape an appropriate strategy, including through work on the 'baseline', appropriate objectives for the assessment of impact and proposed monitoring; Allocate land which is known to be affected by contamination only for appropriate development – and be clear on the approach to remediation; Have regard to the possible impact of land contamination on neighbouring areas (e.g. by polluting surface water or groundwater); and Be clear on the role of developers and requirements for information and assessments. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Land Stability (2014)	<p>There are no specific objectives and targets relating to this guidance but when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying specific areas where particular consideration of landslides, mining hazards or subsidence will be needed; Including policies that ensure unstable land is appropriately remediated, prohibit development in specific areas, or only allow specific types of development in those areas; Circumstances where additional procedures or information, such as a land stability or slope stability risk assessment report, would be required to ensure that adequate and environmentally acceptable mitigation measures are in place; and Removing permitted development rights in specific circumstances. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Light Pollution (2014)	There are no specific objectives and targets relating to this guidance but when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should apply a test to a number of questions to assess whether or not the artificial light being proposed would result in light pollution.	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Tree Preservation Orders in conservation areas	There are no specific objectives or targets in relation to this guidance. This guidance outlines the responsibility of the land owner and the responsibility of the council in question to inform relevant members of the public.	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

(2014)		
NPPG Natural Environment (2014)	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authorities should seek to make a significant contribution to the achievements of the commitments made by Government in its Biodiversity Strategy 2020; Move away from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature; and Conserve and enhance the natural environment and reduce pollution. <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to work collaboratively with other partners to deliver a strategic approach towards protecting and enhancing the natural environment; Consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to enhance biodiversity; Assess the need for an ecological survey; and Consider the effect of a development on habitats or species in the natural environment. <p>There are no specific targets relating to this document.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Noise (2014)	<p>There are no specific objectives and targets but when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should consider the following in relation to noise;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; The time of day and frequency of the noise; Local topology and topography; and General character of the noise. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
DEFRA Working with the grain of nature – A Biodiversity Strategy for England (2002 - Reviewed 2011)	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture: encouraging the management of farming and agricultural land so as to conserve and enhance biodiversity as part of the Government's Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy; Water: aiming for a whole catchment approach to the wise, sustainable use of water and wetlands; Woodland: with the management and extension of woodland so as to promote enhanced biodiversity and quality of life; Marine and coastal management: so as to achieve the sustainable use and management of our coasts and seas using natural processes and the ecosystem-based approach; and Urban areas: where biodiversity needs to become a part of the development of policy on sustainable communities, urban green space and the built environment. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
Countryside and Rights	Objectives:	Consider policies to achieve

of Way Act (CRoW) (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasises the public's right of access to open country and common land, and gives additional protection to Sites of Special Scientific Interest. 	these objectives
DETR Government Rural White Paper: Our Countryside – the Future – a Fair Deal for Rural England (2000)	<p>Objectives: The Paper lists the Government's rural policy objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 1: To facilitate the development of dynamic, competitive and sustainable economies in the countryside, tackling poverty in rural areas. Objective 2: To maintain and stimulate communities, and secure access to services that is equitable in all the circumstances, for those who live or work in the countryside. Objective 3: To conserve and enhance rural landscapes and the diversity and abundance of wildlife (including the habitats on which it depends). Objective 4: To increase opportunities for people to get enjoyment from the countryside. To open up public access to mountain, moor, heath and down and registered common land by the end of 2005. Objective 5: To promote government responsiveness to rural communities through better working together between central departments, local government, and government agencies and better cooperation with non-government bodies. <p>These objectives will be taken forward in Departmental Public Service Agreement targets and their subsidiary Service Delivery agreements.</p> <p>Targets: Contains Rural Services Standard, which set out minimum standards and targets covering access to and the delivery of public services in rural areas. Some of the more relevant standards and targets are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Government services to be available online by 2005. Presumption against closure of rural schools; Formal requirement on the Post Office to maintain the rural network of post offices and to prevent any avoidable closures of rural post offices. <p>Targets set for the proportion of the rural population living within about 10 minutes' walk of an hourly or better bus service to increase from 37% to 50% by 2010, with an intermediate milestone of 42% by 2004.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, particularly sections 66 and 72	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (section 66). In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	functions under the planning acts, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area (section 72).	
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1 of the Act empowers the Secretary of State to schedule monuments which appear to him to be of national importance. 	Consider policies to protect scheduled ancient monuments
English Heritage: A Strategy for the Historic Environment in the South West (2004)	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional priorities include: Continue to improve our knowledge and understanding of the South West's historic environment and reflect this in informed and positive conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Put conservation at the heart of urban renewal and regeneration strategies, initiatives and proposals right across the South West. Encourage wider appreciation and conservation of the historic dimension of rural areas. Explore ways in which agri-environment and other funding initiatives could provide further support for the sustainable management of this part of the South West's historic resource. Agri-environment schemes should be more closely tailored to the characteristics and potential of the rural historic environment. Increase our understanding of the South West's coastal and maritime historic environments and wetland landscapes as a matter of urgency. Work with those responsible for managing these environments and, where appropriate, seek adequate protection. Promote the design of buildings and landscape that is sensitive to its location. Our aim should be to enhance the South West's historic environment and, ultimately, to add to it by championing appropriate and contemporary solutions to design problems. Promote the use of traditional conservation and management skills wherever possible and ensure professionals have a good understanding of current best practice. Encourage opportunities for training across the South West. Ensure the education sector in the South West takes full account of the value of the historic environment. Promote the widest understanding and appreciation of the historic environment at local, county and regional levels. Remove physical, cultural and social barriers that inhibit access, understanding or enjoyment of the South West's historic environment. Tackle the legacy created by poor management and maintenance of the historic environment across the South West. Encourage regular inspections and repairs, together with the positive re-use of redundant historic buildings. Develop a co-ordinated research Strategy for the South West to fill key gaps in our understanding 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets

	<p>of the historic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication between the public, private and voluntary interests on historic environment issues in the South West. • Increase the historic environment's contribution to the economic well being of the region by encouraging and supporting its sustainable use and sensitive reflection in new development. <p>Targets:</p> <p>The strategy contains a number of actions, some of which will be directly relevant to planning authorities and the development of the RSS. These actions are linked to 'goals and timescales' and 'outcomes', For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Promote policies to support the positive and appropriate re-use of historic buildings • Goal and Timescale: Consider development of model policies by end of 2005 • Outcome: Fewer redundant buildings • Action: Encourage regeneration strategies, development plans, and development control decisions to reflect the positive economic potential of the historic environment • Goal and Timescale: All plans to contain positive policies encouraging the sustainable implementation of the HE's economic potential • Outcome: Greater emphasis on reflecting the HE in development and regeneration proposals, thereby bringing economic, social and conservation benefits 	
English Heritage: Buildings at Risk Register	<p>Objective: To document the health of the nation's built heritage through an annually updated list of sites most at risk of being lost through neglect, decay and inappropriate development</p>	Source for monitoring indicators on built heritage at risk
Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2009-2014	<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the distinctive character of the location as described by the relevant landscape character assessment, strategy and guidelines. • Avoid damaging visual intrusions in to the landscape (such as radio masts, overhead power lines and wind turbines in unsympathetic locations). • Incorporate designs and landscaping consistent with the above, respecting the local settlement pattern and building styles and materials. • Incorporate appropriate sustainability elements and designs. • Ensure quarrying takes place in the least environmentally damaging manner until the consent expires. • Maintain or improve the existing level of tranquillity and dark skies. • Not have an adverse impact on the local community amenities and services and access to these. • Protect and where possible enhance, biodiversity. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be in accordance with a more sustainable pattern of development reducing dependence on travel by motorized transport. 	
Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan (SMP1)	The Aim of the Shoreline Management Plan is: To provide the basis for sustainable coastal defence policies and to set objectives for the future management of the shoreline. Sustainable coastal defence policies need to take account of the interrelationships between defences, developments and processes within the Estuary, and they should avoid as far as possible tying future generations into inflexible and expensive options for defence.	Consider policies to achieve this aim
North Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan 2005	Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To protect and enhance the biodiversity of North Somerset by maximising the wildlife value of habitats, open spaces, industrial estates and gardens. To raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity. To encourage community action as an integral part of the biodiversity process. To create green wildlife corridor links between different blocks of habitat to facilitate species movement. To fulfil obligations to protect habitats and species of national and international importance. 6. To achieve favourable condition of all nationally designated sites by 2011. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
5. Minimise consumption of natural resources		
NPPG Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking (2014)	Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plans, Transport Assessments and Statements are all ways of assessing and mitigating the negative impacts of a development. Required for all developments which generate significant amounts of movements. Travel Plans are long term management strategies for integrating proposals for sustainable travel into the planning process. They should where possible be considered in parallel to development proposals. Travel Assessments are thorough assessments of a development's implication. Travel statements are used to assess impacts in the instance where transport implications are thought to be less severe. It is at the discretion of local planning authorities, developers, relevant transport authorities, and neighbourhood planning organisations as to what method should be used in what proposal. There are no specific targets in relation to this document.	Transport Assessments can beneficially inform their Local Plans (for example, in order to facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport).
CLG Manual for Streets (2007)	Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A more collaborative approach between design professionals and other stakeholders. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all modes of transport, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. • Apply a user hierarchy to the design process with pedestrians at the top. • Recognise the importance of streets as places for social interaction. • Promote an inclusive environment that recognises the needs of all people. • Transform the quality of our streets in order to deliver the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Help to build and strengthen the communities in which they serve; ○ Meet the needs of all users, by embodying the principles of inclusive design; ○ Form part of a well-connected network; ○ Are attractive and have their own identity; ○ Cost effective to construct and maintain; and ○ Safe. 	
CLG Manual for Streets 2 (2010)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explains how the principles of Manual for Streets can be applied more widely. • Builds on the original principles of balancing movement and place status at any particular location. • Provides additional clarification on issues relating to Highway Design, Risk and Liability. • Contains further detailed design guidance on geometric and other parameters for new and improved highways. • Considers the layout in totality, including the relationship of the highway to its surroundings, both in urban and rural areas. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
CLG Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports National Planning Policy Guidance on Transport Assessments. • Assists stakeholders in determining whether an assessment may be required. Provides guidance on the content and preparation of TA's. <p>There are no specific targets in relation to this document.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 3 2011 – 2026 (2011)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce greenhouse gases. • Promote walking, cycling and public transport. • Reduce the number of road casualties. • Implement Air Quality Management Areas. • Improve personal security on the transport network. • Improve access to health and employment. • Assist regeneration in deprived areas. • Improve access for rural residents. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle congestion. • Support access to houses and jobs. • Increase capacity and reliability of transport networks. • Maintain, manage and make the best of transport assets. • Enhance the public realm. • Promote better access to leisure facilities. • Minimise the impact of the natural and historic environment. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UK Climate Change Act 2008 has established legally binding targets requiring the Government to reduce the country's CO2 emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 from a 1990 baseline figure. Road transport must make a contribution to these targets. 	
National Policy Statement for Ports (2012)	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage sustainable port development to cater for long-term forecast growth in volumes of imports and exports by sea with a competitive and efficient port industry capable of meeting the needs of importers and exporters cost effectively and in a timely manner, thus contributing to long-term economic growth and prosperity; • Allow judgments about when and where new developments might be proposed to be made on the basis of commercial factors by the port industry or port developers operating within a free market environment; and • Ensure all proposed developments satisfy the relevant legal, environmental and social constraints and objectives, including those in the relevant European Directives and corresponding national regulations. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)	<p>Objectives</p> <p>The ultimate objective of the Convention is “to achieve stabilization of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at levels that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interference with the climate system...” The Convention does not define what levels might be “dangerous”, although it does state that ecosystems should be allowed to adapt naturally, food supply should not be threatened, and economic development should be able to proceed in a sustainable manner. Defining what we mean by “dangerous” is a tough political question, involving social and economic considerations as well as scientific judgement.</p> <p>The Protocol set out a series of targets for specific greenhouse gases and established a framework of actions and requirements to meet these targets with the aim of achieving in a meaningful timeframe (up to 2012, with 1990 levels used as base) the objective of the UN Framework Convention. The two agreements are thus intrinsically linked with the Protocol essentially acting as a</p>	The LDF should be aware of, and seek to meet the Kyoto's commitments.

	<p>template for action to meet the commitments made in the Framework Convention.</p> <p>Targets Does not contain any targets.</p>	
Air Quality Framework Directive (Directive 96/62/EC)	<p>Objectives Objectives which may relate to regional planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain adequate information on ambient air quality and ensure that it is made available to the public, inter alia by means of alert thresholds, • Maintain ambient air quality where it is good and improve it in other cases. <p>Targets Targets and objectives from EU Directives must be adopted into UK legislation. This Directive covers the revision of previously existing legislation and the introduction of new air quality standards for previously unregulated air pollutants, setting the timetable for the development of daughter directives on a range of pollutants. The list of atmospheric pollutants to be considered includes sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, lead, ozone, benzene, carbon monoxide, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, cadmium, arsenic, nickel and mercury.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets
Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (1991)	<p>Objectives This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and the treatment and discharge of wastewater from certain industrial sectors. The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of these wastewater discharges.</p> <p>Targets The directive lays down uniform emission standards, or percentage reductions in pollutant concentrations, for discharges from sewage treatment works serving a population equivalent of 2,000 or more.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets
Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)	<p>Objectives This Directive has the objective of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources; and • preventing further such pollution <p>Targets Does not contain any targets.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).	<p>Objectives This Directive aims to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems; 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources; • Aims at enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment, inter alia, through specific measures for the progressive reduction of discharges, emissions and losses of priority substances and the cessation or phasing-out of discharges, emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances; • Ensures the progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater and prevents its further pollution, • Contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts <p>Targets Does not contain any targets.</p>	
Directive to Promote Electricity from Renewable Energy (2009/28/EC).	<p>Objectives The purpose of this Directive is to promote an increase in the contribution of renewable energy sources to electricity production in the internal market for electricity and to create a basis for a future Community framework thereof.</p> <p>Targets The UK target is for renewables to account for 15% of UK consumption by 2020.</p>	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets
Waste to Landfill Directive (99/31/EC).	<p>Objectives In addition to the general requirements that result from landfills being regulated under PPC, the Landfill Directive introduces others that are particular to landfills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites must be classified as hazardous, non hazardous or inert waste landfills • Waste acceptance procedures have to be in place at the landfill • Waste must be pre-treated before being landfilled • Certain waste types cannot be landfilled anymore e.g. clinical, liquid, certain hazardous waste, tyres etc. • Technical standards are set out in the Directive and its Annexes. • Introduces a specific closure procedure • Ongoing training and development of staff must be provided <p>Targets The directive also establishes guidelines and targets for the quantity of biodegradable waste being sent to landfill that are legally binding. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not later than 2006 biodegradable municipal waste going to landfills must be reduced to 75% of the total amount (by weight) of biodegradable municipal waste produced in 1995 or the latest year before 1995 for which standardised Eurostat data is available • By 2010 biodegradable municipal waste going to landfills must be reduced to 50% of the total amount (by weight) of biodegradable municipal waste produced in 1995 or the latest year before 1995 for which standardised Eurostat data is available; 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives and targets

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2015 biodegradable municipal waste going to landfills must be reduced to 35% of the total amount (by weight) of biodegradable municipal waste produced in 1995 or the latest year before 1995 for which standardised Eurostat data is available. 	
Energy White Paper Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003), updated 2007 – Meeting the Energy Challenge	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To put ourselves on a path to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions – the main contributor to global warming – by some 60% by 2050, as recommended by the RCEP, with real progress by 2020; To maintain the reliability of energy supplies; To promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve our productivity; and To ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (2014)	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies in order to ensure a secure future energy supply, reduce greenhouse gases and slow down climate change; Delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable; and Stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. <p>In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the local potential for renewable and low carbon generation; Consider the different technologies and their varying impacts; Encourage development in the right locations; and As with all other forms of development it is important that the planning concerns of local communities are heard. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver renewable and low carbon energy development of 50 megawatts or less installed capacity; and The UK has legal commitments to cut greenhouse gases and meet increased energy demand from renewable resources but there is no quota that the Local Plan must deliver. 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives
NPPG Minerals (2014)	<p>There are no objectives or targets relating to this guidance, but when preparing development plans, local authorities should take the following approach (In order of priority);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designating Specific Sites – where viable resources are known to exist, landowners are supportive of minerals development and the proposal is likely to be acceptable in planning terms. Such sites may also include essential operations associated with mineral extraction; 	Consider policies to achieve these objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designating Preferred Areas, which are areas of known resources where planning permission might reasonably be anticipated. Such areas may also include essential operations associated with mineral extraction; and/or • Designating Areas of Search – areas where knowledge of mineral resources may be less certain but within which planning permission may be granted, particularly if there is a potential shortfall in supply. 	
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Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Name of the policy being assessed:

Date of assessment

Lead contact details

Others involved in the assessment, including members of staff, the community, stakeholders or elected members

What are the intended aims of the policy?

Who is intended to benefit from the policy?

Service head sign off

Name:
Date:

1. Assessing relevance

Please assess the relevance of your policy on the following areas of equality. You should consider:

- Both positive and negative impacts
- Any barriers people may experience in accessing services
- How the policy is likely to affect the promotion of equality
- Knowledge of customer experiences to date
- It is not enough to state 'N/A' in this section, a more in depth explanation is required to demonstrate if/how each area is relevant.

Equality area	Relevant? Yes/No	Reason
Age - Old and young	Yes/No	
Disability	Yes/No	
Marriage or Civil Partnership	Yes/No	
Pregnancy or women on Maternity Leave	Yes/No	
Race - Including Gypsies and Travellers	Yes/No	
Religion and Belief	Yes/No	
Sex	Yes/No	

Sexual Orientation	Yes/No	
Transgender	Yes/No	
Other areas, if relevant consider: - Carers - Socio-economic disadvantage - Parents - Location - People living in rural areas - Ex-offenders - Looked after children - Service or Ex-service personnel and their families	Yes/No	

The remainder of your assessment should focus only on the areas that you have answered ‘yes’ to in the table above.

2. Information and Evidence

Under the Equality Act 10 we are required to carry out an **‘analysis of the effects on equality’ of all of our policies**. To enable this analysis it is important that each area has relevant equality information. This can be national, local or service specific information

a. Which equality areas do you routinely monitor?

The collection of equality information across our services is essential to enable us to understand the effect of our policies on equality groups. Please indicate the information collected in this policy area:

Age	Yes/No	Carers	Yes/No	Disability	Yes/No
Location	Yes/No	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Yes/No	Parents	Yes/No
Pregnancy/Maternity Leave	Yes/No	Race	Yes/No	Religion or belief	Yes/No
Sex	Yes/No	Sexual Orientation	Yes/No	Socio Economic	Yes/No
Transgender	Yes/No	Other area, please specify:			

b. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to this EIA?

If relevant you can include: quantitative/qualitative research, national reports, results from recent consultations, information from stakeholders, findings of recent inspections etc

c. What further data or information do you need to gather during the course of the policy development?

3. Engagement

When completing an EIA you should be mindful of the council's obligation to publish the results of its engagement activity. It is a statutory requirement and therefore a core element of the EIA. Engagement may be one-off or repeated over a longer period of time. It may be formal or informal. It may be focused on a specific issue or on service delivery or workforce issues. This section can reference previous engagement activity or any work done specifically during the policy development.

a. Have those affected by this policy been consulted?

Briefly describe what you did, with whom, when and where. You should list the methods of consultation used. Please outline a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents, as well as any actions.

4. Conclusions and mitigating action

Please review the information you have identified or collected through this assessment and indicate if any differential impacts exist. Importantly you should also consider what changes or actions you need to take to mitigate any negative impacts that have been identified.

a. What does the information you have gathered through monitoring and engagement tell you?

b. What course of action will you take as a result of this EIA?

When considering your actions please be mindful of the Council's general duties under the Equality Act 10.

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

The information in this section should focus on practical actions that can be taken to improve the outcomes for equality groups.

c. Final assessment of impact

Following this assessment please assess the likely level of impact of the policy/or proposals on the equality groups included within this assessment.

High		Medium		Low	
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5. Monitoring

To demonstrate achievements and to avoid challenge you need to identify what mechanisms are in place to review actual impacts or to monitor progress against the actions set within this assessment. Please indicate how you will monitor the results of this assessment.

Please tick as appropriate

Action	Yes/No	If yes, date:
Review of this EIA		
Incorporated into project reviews/reports		
Service/Team plan reviews		
Analysis of customer feedback		
Citizens Panel		
Staff survey		
Inspection reports		
Regular reports to Corporate Management Team		
Regular reports to elected members		
Other, please specify:		

6. Publishing this assessment

In order to demonstrate transparency in our policy development this assessment should be made available to the public and stakeholders through the most appropriate means. For example through the website, a section within the policy document, through committee reports.

Please send a copy of the completed assessment to the Equality and Diversity Team.

Procurement and partnerships

Consideration of external contractor obligations and partnership working

Is the work associated with this policy due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, you need to include equality considerations into the contract.

Specifically you should set out how you will make sure that any partner you work with complies with the Equality Act 10, the integral public sector duties and how you will monitor this. A reminder of the public sector duties:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

The Equality Act 10, also states:

A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions have due regard to the public sector duties'

You will need to think about:

- pre-qualification and approval of preferred suppliers
- tendering and specifications
- awards process

- contract clauses
- monitoring and performance measures

Please set out what steps you will take to build into all stages of the procurement process the requirement to consider equality.

Appendix C – Responses from statutory consultees

The three statutory consultees on SEA scoping reports are Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. A summary of the response from Natural England is set out below. Both Historic England and the Environment Agency responses did not require any amendments to the scoping report.

Natural England		
Question	Response	NSC comment
1. Have all relevant plans, programmes and policies been referenced?	We would encourage the Council to also refer to the following documents: 1. <i>The Natural Environment White Paper 2011: The natural choice: securing the value of nature</i> 2. <i>Defra (2011) Biodiversity 2020: a Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services</i> 3. <i>Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010)</i>	Have included reference to these documents
2. Is any significant economic, social or environmental data missing or misrepresented?	We are largely satisfied that the key environmental data has been identified and are not aware of any significant omissions or misrepresentations.	n/a
3. Are any judgments made concerning baseline information incorrect?	Judgments concerning the baseline information appear reasonable	n/a
4. Are there any additional sustainability issues within North Somerset that need to be considered in the development of the Site Allocations Plan?	We would encourage the Council to consider the issue of existing and future development pressure on landscape character, including that within and close to the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB).	Have included a sub-objective with specific reference to Mendip Hills AONB.
5. Do you agree with the proposed Sustainability Appraisal Framework? 6. Are the objectives and indicators set out appropriate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect and enhancing biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries, particularly with respect to protected sites and landscapes that fall partly within other administrative areas, such as the North Somerset Bat SAC, the Severn Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar site and the Mendip Hills AONB To set out criteria to firstly avoid, then mitigate and as a last resort compensate for adverse effects on biodiversity To achieve a net gain for biodiversity To recognise protection for biodiversity or geodiversity sites or landscape areas, distinguishing between international, 	Some amendments to the sustainability sub-objectives to include reference to these.

	<p>national and local sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recognise ancient woodland as a resource and to protect ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees • To promote the protection and recovery of priority species and habitats • To make explicit reference to geological conservation and the need to conserve, interpret and manage geological sites and features in the wider environment • To make provision for an appropriate quality and quantity of green space to meet identified need as part of wider open space provision and to remedy any deficiencies • To protect and enhance public rights of way and access • To improve public access to and enjoyment of the coast • To support the creation and maintenance of the future route of the National Trail around the coast of England within North Somerset • To support a strategic approach to green infrastructure, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of green infrastructure • To establish and support a strategy for climate change adaptation, recognising the role of green infrastructure in climate change adaptation • To protect soils and safeguard the long term capability of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land • To protect water quality and resources and protect habitats from water related impacts, especially international, national and local designated sites • To address the impacts of air quality on the natural environment, in particular traffic impact of new development on designated sites • To conserve and enhance the Mendip Hills AONB and its setting, recognising its wider purposes (landscape, natural beauty, understanding, enjoyment and cultural heritage) whilst having regard for its economic and social well-being. The SA should also reflect the AONB Management Plan objectives • To protect and enhance locally valued 	
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	<p>landscapes in line with the European Landscape Convention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and protect areas of tranquillity 	
Other comments	<p>It is not clear from the scoping report what indicators are being proposed and we would welcome further information about this. As a minimum we would expect to see suitable indicators for monitoring the effect of the plan on biodiversity and ideally for other aspects of the natural environment as well. It would also be helpful if the indicators used for the SA/SEA are also used to monitor the plan</p>	<p>Have added indicators in Table 17</p>
7. Is the proposed methodology for the next stages of the Sustainability Appraisal correct?	<p>The proposed methodology appears reasonable and to reflect SEA requirements</p>	<p>n/a</p>
8. Are there any other comments you would like to make?	<p>We are pleased to see the reference in the scoping report the requirement to undertake an appropriate assessment of the site allocations plan under the Habitat Regulations. However we also note that paragraph 6.5 incorrectly refers to <i>Regulation 61</i> of the Habitats Regulations. Please note the requirement to assess a local plan document is set out in <i>Regulation 102</i> of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).</p> <p>We recommend that the emerging plan is assessed at an early stage so that outcomes of the assessment can inform key decision making on strategic options and development sites. It may be necessary to outline avoidance and/or mitigation measures at the plan level, including a clear direction for project level HRA work to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of internationally designated sites. It may also be necessary for plans to provide policies for strategic or cross boundary approaches, particularly in areas where designated sites cover more than one Local Planning Authority boundary.</p>	<p>Have changed the reference from Regulation 61 to Regulation 102.</p>