



West Somerset Local Plan
Sustainability Appraisal Report
Non-Technical Summary

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report (SA report) for the latest draft of the West Somerset Local Plan (the version known as the West Somerset Local Plan Publication Draft) (hereafter in this report referred to as the plan or Local Plan).

The plan outlines policies to guide development within West Somerset to 2032. It also includes a number of sites for both housing and major employment development.

In order to test its effects on environmental, social and economic objectives, the preparation of the Local Plan has been subject to an integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process in line with the requirements of international and national regulations (hereafter in this report referred to as an SA). The SA is being carried out by an independent consultancy called ENVIRON.

Regulations require that at some point in the drafting of the Local Plan an assessment is carried out and an SA report is produced and consulted on. The SA report should set out the results of the SA process, outline why alternatives were selected, report on the assessment of the draft Local Plan and outline a programme for monitoring the effects of the plan.

This document is a summary in non-technical language of the contents of the SA report. Regulations state that the report should include a summary that addresses the following:

- An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes (see section 2 of this document);
- The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline) and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme (future baseline). This includes consideration of existing environmental problems (see section 3 of this document);
- The environmental protection objectives, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation (see section 2 of this document);;
- The likely significant effects on the environment;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme (mitigation and enhancement measures) (see section 6 of this document);
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (see section 5 of this document);
- A description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information (see section 4 of this document); and
- A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring (see section 7 of this document).

Please note that the full SA report is available from the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning--Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

1.2 How to comment on this report

The SA report is being published for comment alongside the West Somerset Local Plan Publication Draft. If you have any comments on this report please respond as indicated below:

The primary means of responding to this consultation is to use the website at:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

Alternatively representations can be made by e-mail to ldf@westsomerset.gov.uk

or by post to: Planning Policy Team, West Somerset Council, West Somerset House, Killick Way,
Williton, TA4 4QA

2 The West Somerset Local Plan Publication Draft

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 1 of the SA report – Introduction and Methodology available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

2.1 Introduction

The plan includes a spatial vision, strategic objectives and a number of policies for achieving the Local Plan objectives, setting out how much development is intended to happen where and by what means it will be delivered. The spatial vision for the plan addresses the economy, housing and environment of the district. The spatial vision is given more detail through the spatial objectives. The spatial objectives are shown Box 1.

Box 1: Spatial Objectives

- Strengthening the roles and functions of Minehead as the District's main service centre, and Watchet and Williton as secondary service centres;
- Implementation of types and quantities of development in locations appropriate to meet the requirements of the Strategy based on the evidence and engagement;
- Increase self-containment within Minehead, Watchet and Williton;
- Successfully managing flood risk in implementing new development at Minehead Watchet and Williton;
- Make a step change in the provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs;
- Make a significant reduction in Co2 emissions for the Local Plan area;
- Create an aspirational, enterprising and entrepreneurial culture within West Somerset;
- Develop the quality of the tourism offer within the Local Plan area;
- Protect and enhance biodiversity in the Local Plan area;
- Conserve and enhance the character of historic settlements, buildings and landscapes; and
- Deliver high quality design in new development which will contribute to the area's heritage in a positive way.

The plan policies are grouped under the following headings:

- Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Hinkley Point and other major energy generating development;
- Sustainable communities;
- Settlement policies Minehead;
- Settlement policies Watchet;
- Settlement policies Williton;
- Settlement policies - other;
- Economy;
- Transport;
- Community facilities and public health;
- Climate change;
- Natural and historic environment;
- Gypsies and travellers; and
- Implementation policies.

2.2 Relationship with other plans and programmes

The Local Plan has the following relationships with other plans and programmes:

- International legislation and policy which sets a number of targets, objectives and obligations which planning documents should seek to achieve;
- National legislation and policy which outlines measures to achieve many of these obligations through setting regional and local targets for public bodies to achieve and by outlining principles which planning policies and decisions needs to adhere to; and
- Local and regional policy sets out more specific local targets and local actions needed to achieve them.

Particularly important for the Local Plan are international obligations and objectives on various environmental issues such as air quality standards, climate change and biodiversity; and national and regional targets on housing affordability, flooding, development on brownfield land etc. It is the job of the Local Plan to ensure that the land use implications of meeting these targets are fully considered.

2.3 How environmental protection objectives have been taken into account

Regulations require that the SA considers how environmental protection objectives are taken into account in the development of the plan or programme. For the West Somerset Local Plan a full review of the key objectives within other plans and policy documents has been undertaken for each topic (e.g. air quality and noise, health, biodiversity, etc.). These objectives have then been used to develop an SA framework. The SA framework is then used to test the Local Plan and recommendations are made to strengthen the Local Plan. The SA framework is shown in Table 4.1.

3 The Sustainability Baseline

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 2 of the SA report – Scoping Information available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

The SA team has collected information on the current state of the environment (including any problems, issues and characteristics of the plan area) and how it is likely to change in the absence of the plan. This enables the SA team to have an accurate view of what changes the plan could give rise to within the plan area. A summary of this work is presented in Table 3.1.

NTS Table 3.1: Sustainability baseline summary	
Sustainability baseline / issues / characteristics of the area	Evolution without the plan
1. Air and noise	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution is not necessarily a significant issue in West Somerset and data shows that NO² objectives are being met. There is currently no requirement to proceed to a detailed assessment for any of the air quality pollutants in West Somerset. • Ozone levels are high in the whole of the South West including West Somerset. • There is seasonal peak hour traffic congestion in West Somerset. • More people are travelling to by car and residents of West Somerset have to travel further for work. However, the number of people working from home is also increasing. • Noise and loss of tranquillity is an issue which may worsen with the increase in air traffic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution is likely to remain an insignificant issue • Noise pollution and loss of tranquillity may worsen with increasing levels of air traffic. • Traffic congestion and delays on changeover days at Butlins will not necessarily improve as action will not be taken through the current Future Transport Plan. • In general, traffic flows on roads in West Somerset have increased over time but remain low in comparison to many areas of the County. It is likely that they will continue to increase. • People in West Somerset may continue to have to travel further by car to access employment, without any planning intervention to provide more jobs closer to where people live. • Parts of West Somerset now have access to superfast broadband and other parts are either due to be connected in 2015 (e.g. Williton) or are still being evaluated (e.g. parts of Minehead). Lack of super-fast broadband may limit the number of people working from home, although this appears to be increasing and is likely to increase in the future with greater broadband speeds becoming available.
2. Climate and energy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Somerset's CO₂ emissions have decreased from 388.7 ktonnes in 2005 to 279.8 ktonnes in 2012. However, emissions are higher per capita than the UK average. • Both average gas and electricity consumption have decreased in West Somerset over the past seven years. The average consumption of electricity was much higher than the UK as a whole. However, gas consumption was lower. • Climate change adaptation is an important issue as the climate for the next 30-40 years is now set. Climate change will have a number of effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UK climate has changed over the last 100 years with the central England temperature having risen by almost 1 degree, average sea level rising by 1mm a year and winters across the UK getting wetter and warmer (UK climate change scenarios). These trends can be expected to continue at least in the medium term. • The number of renewable energy developments and heat / power generated has been steadily increasing over the last few years although it needs to increase significantly. • The district has a relatively high carbon footprint as many areas are reliant

NTS Table 3.1: Sustainability baseline summary	
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<p>in the region including effects on temperature, sea level rises, fluvial and coastal flooding. This will particularly affect coastal areas of West Somerset and areas such as Williton.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Somerset has a greater proportion of its population in or close to 'fuel poverty' thresholds than other parts of the country. In 2012, 11.6% of households in West Somerset were reported to be fuel poor, which amounts to a total of 1,865 households. The proportion across the South West region is 9.3%. West Somerset has the capacity to generate more renewable and low carbon energy. The provision of supportive planning policies will be a key factor in increasing the generation of renewable energy. 80% of Somerset residents support the use of renewable energy. 	<p>on the private car and on bottled gas, electricity, oil and coal for fuel. This situation is likely to continue unless significant investment is made into renewable and low carbon technologies and energy efficiency of properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both average gas and electricity consumption have decreased in West Somerset over the past seven years. It is unclear how this trend may change in future years.
3. Crime	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Somerset has the lowest overall crime of all the districts in Somerset. The general trend in overall crime is downwards in West Somerset. By far the most common recorded offence in West Somerset is anti-social behaviour, followed by theft and handling, violence against the person, criminal damage and then burglary. Rates of robbery, hate crime and sexual offences are less than 100 per 100,000 people. A high % of residents in West Somerset feel safe both in the day and after dark in the District, perhaps indicating that people are less worried about crime against the person than they are about crimes such as theft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime levels in West Somerset are historically low and are likely to remain low. Anti-social behaviour appears to be more problematic in 2013/14 compared with when the baseline data was first reviewed in 2006.
4. Public infrastructure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic flows are seasonal and peak traffic flows in the summer are 30% higher than other times. Broadband infrastructure is improving but is still poor in some areas. Evidence suggests that there is a continuing interest in the provision of more allotment space in the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of measures have been proposed for the transport infrastructure in West Somerset, many of which are unlikely to go ahead. This may lead to worsening traffic management issues on the sub-standard road network. Parts of West Somerset now have access to superfast broadband other

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is demand for a variety of new leisure facilities in the District including a new 25 4-6 lane swimming pool in Minehead, Artificial Games Pitch (AGP) in the eastern part of the area and small, freely accessible, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) within villages. • The withdrawal of funding by the County Council from Youth Club provision in West Somerset from 1st April 2012 will leave a significant gap in activities for young people. 	<p>parts are either due to be connected in 2015 (e.g. Williton) or are still being evaluated (e.g. parts of Minehead).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure provision is unlikely to improve without development (and developer contributions)
5. Population and social inclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Somerset has the lowest population density in the region, which could have implications for providing services to a dispersed population. • Inward migration is the main cause of population growth, which is putting pressure on the local housing market • The area also has a high percentage of people within the older age bands (65 years and over), which could have put pressure on public services • West Somerset has the highest level of deprivation in the County • Lack of affordable housing is a key issue in the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth in West Somerset is likely to be lower than Somerset as a whole. Population density will always be low and there will always be issues around providing services. • The population of the district is ageing and will continue to age also causing issues with service provision. • Deprivation in parts of West Somerset is likely to remain a problem especially in light of the recent recession and higher youth unemployment rates. • Housing affordability will remain a significant issue in the absence of action taken in the Local Plan.
6. Soils and geology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some areas of West Somerset are classed as the best and most versatile agricultural land. • The West Somerset local planning authority (LPA) area has one site under the Geological Conservation Review (GCR), which runs along the coast from Blue Anchor to Lilstock. • West Somerset currently has very low levels of mineral activity restricted to some small scale working of building stone. • West Somerset currently has low levels of new development on previously developed land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of mineral development in West Somerset will stay low in the future. • Future development on brownfield sites is likely to be near zero due to the absence of any known sites currently fitting this description and/or likely to come forward in the lifetime of the Plan.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no sites classed as contaminated in West Somerset. 	
7. Waste	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of household waste collected per head in West Somerset appears to be declining and total waste landfilled has also decreased. However, the majority of waste is still being disposed of to landfill. • Since 2000, Somerset's recycling rate has steadily increased and total household waste has steadily fallen, despite a growing population and more households. • The amounts of municipal household waste being recycled and composted in West Somerset have increased in the last few years. • It is a matter of concern to the County Council that relatively few new recycling or treatment facilities have been granted consent. • A significant proportion of hazardous waste in Somerset is exported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems that recycling rates have reached a maximum in West Somerset and may not increase significantly in the future from their current relatively high level. • Total household waste may continue to fall. However, there are many factors influencing the amount of waste produced so this is uncertain. • Total waste being landfilled may also continue to fall, especially if other strategic waste management facilities are bought on line. However, this is highly uncertain and dependent on the County Council's future waste strategy and industry action. • In terms of future long term waste management in West Somerset, it is likely that waste from the district will be managed at a (currently unidentified) site between Bridgwater and Taunton. • It is likely that a significant proportion of hazardous waste will continue to be exported for disposal.
8. Water	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present, the rivers in the Minehead, Watchet and Williton areas are either classed as 'good' or 'moderate' ecological quality under the terms of the Water Framework Directive, however, there are a number of rivers to the east and one in the south of the district classed as poor biological quality. • Current coastal biological water quality is classed as moderate but is not predicted to improve to 'good' by 2015. • Two Coastal Change Management Areas have been defined in the plan area and development within them will be limited to temporary, tourism related development. • Bathing water is now of good quality at all beaches in West Somerset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most rivers are predicted to improve in quality by 2015 although action will be needed for those which are not predicted to improve. It is not clear how successful the actions will be in ensuring West Somerset streams meet Good Ecological Status (GES). • Leakage rates are decreasing and with actions planned by Wessex Water should continue to decrease the Wessex Water Water Management Plan. • Wessex Water predicts that there are adequate water resources available in the West Somerset area. However, this does not decrease the importance of using water sustainably. This is especially the case as Horner Water has resource issues in time of low flow. • Flooding may become more common with the effects of climate change and the planning system needs to deal with adaptation to flooding effects.

NTS Table 3.1: Sustainability baseline summary	
Sustainability baseline / issues / characteristics of the area	Evolution without the plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water efficiency (as measured through water leakage) is increasing. • There are two main areas at risk from fluvial flooding in West Somerset, Williton and Minehead. • Horner Water has resource issues in time of low flow. 	<p>Without actions and policies within the plan flooding of development sites is likely to increase.</p>
9. Cultural heritage	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is loss of historic patterns of development, plots and boundaries (historic grain) • Demolition of unlisted buildings and structures of local historic or architectural merit is a risk • There is mixed quality of architectural design and sensitivity to the historic environment for new developments • There has been erosion of registered and non-registered historic parks and gardens. • As 80% of the land use in West Somerset is agricultural, there is an increasing need to preserve known and unknown archaeological artefacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a high density of historic buildings and archaeology there is always a potential conflict between further development and cultural heritage and this will remain so • The requirements for developers to undertake archaeological surveys has meant that significant discoveries and finds have been made
10. Human health	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The West Somerset population is ageing. The problems for the area will be exacerbated by a relatively low total fertility rate amongst the indigenous population and increasing life expectancy¹. • Limiting long term illness in West Somerset is greater than the regional and national averages. • The impact of large seasonal influxes of people during the summer months can double the local population in the area, putting pressure on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increasing average age of the population will put further pressure on the limited health services that exist within the area. • The % of people who are obese in Somerset is increasing but the amount of people taking regular exercise is increasing. However, life expectancy is expected to increase and this might have implications on housing demand and demand for different types / tenure of housing. • West Somerset will remain popular with visitors and the pressure on

¹ Office for National Statistics; 2008-Based Sub-National Population Projections Table 2c: Local Authorities and Administrative Areas Within London, South East and, South West Government Office Regions (spreadsheet); Office for National Statistics; 2010

NTS Table 3.1: Sustainability baseline summary	
Sustainability baseline / issues / characteristics of the area	Evolution without the plan
<p>services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The % of people who are obese in Somerset is increasing 	<p>services during the tourism season will remain.</p>
11. Landscape	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major development of areas outside the boundaries of designated areas can have a visual impact on views and lead to light pollution. • The Quantock Hills has identified visual impacts within the AONB as a key threat to the landscape through the construction of pylons, masts and wind turbines. • New development is not always consistent with the character of the area and the local building vernacular. • The plan will need to develop a coherent approach to green infrastructure. • The Countryside Agency’s Character Areas have undergone changes that are not consistent with their character. • Somerset has a low percentage of woodland cover, below the national county average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many changes to the landscape that without the protection of the policies in the Local Plan will continue to worsen.
12. Labour market, economy and regeneration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Somerset faces some significant challenges to its economic development such as peripherality and an ageing population. • West Somerset has a lower proportion of people employed in high-skill high-wage occupations • West Somerset displays considerable seasonality in employment levels • West Somerset has a lower proportion of people with NVQ4 level skills than in neighbouring districts. • There is a lack of competitively priced available employment land/workspace, industrial and commercial properties. • The number of businesses and jobs in West Somerset has increased gradually over the last ten years although low pay remains an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the district will remain peripheral and the population will continue to age making regeneration more of a challenge than in other areas. • Without action taken in the Local Plan skill levels and employment opportunity will remain a challenge. • Some level of seasonality in employment levels is likely to remain. • The number of people who are self-employed may continue to increase. • The number of people working from home may continue to increase, however, commuting patterns are likely to continue, with most commuters travelling by car to wards within Sedgemoor and Taunton Deane. • The number of economically active people in employment in West Somerset may continue to decrease as the population ages.

NTS Table 3.1: Sustainability baseline summary	
Sustainability baseline / issues / characteristics of the area	Evolution without the plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average hourly pay may continue to lag behind the regional and national averages.
13. Biodiversity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Somerset has a large number of sites designated for their ecological value which require protection • The majority of semi-natural habitats have declined significantly in Somerset as a whole. • Monitoring effort in Somerset has not been sufficient to determine recent trends and therefore a precautionary approach must be taken to development • The Local Plan should be planning for biodiversity at a landscape level, not just the 'islands' of designated sites that are scattered across the County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the lack of specific monitoring in West Somerset it has been difficult to fully discern trends in habitats or species. • The majority of Somerset's semi-natural habitats declined significantly in extent in the last decades of the 20th century and without action in the Local Plan this is likely to worsen. Hundreds of species are known to be in population decline in the UK and without action in the Local Plan this is likely to worsen. • Somerset has a high proportion of European protected species and s41 species and a particular responsibility to conserve biodiversity. Local trends are generally downwards but strategies being developed now aim to reverse the trend. It is uncertain how successful these are likely to be. • Climate change is likely to have effects on a number of habitats and species in the future. This ranges from coastal inundation affecting marine habitats to drops in water levels affecting habitat.

4 How the Assessment was Undertaken

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 1 of the SA report – Introduction and Methodology available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the SA is to assess the environmental, social and economic effects of the plan. The rest of this section explains how this is done.

4.2 Questions used to guide the SA

A review has been undertaken of the baseline environmental, social and economic conditions of the plan area and the important objectives that the plan should be helping to achieve. This information has then been used to develop the SA framework. To carry out the assessment the Local Plan is compared against the different elements of the SA framework and effects identified. The SA framework is shown in Table 4.1.

NTS Table 4.1: SA Framework
SA objective
1. Air and noise
1a. Reduce impacts on tranquility from noise and visual intrusion. 1b. Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months).
2. Climate and energy
2a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions 2b. Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development. 2c. Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources.
3. Crime
3a. Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.
4. Public infrastructure
4a. Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas.
5. Population and social inclusion
5a. To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure which good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society
6. Soils and geology
6a. Reduce land contamination, and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity.
7. Waste
7a. To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable

NTS Table 4.1: SA Framework
SA objective
management of waste
8. Water
8a. Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water. 8b. Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding. 8c. Improve efficiency of water use.
9. Cultural heritage
9a. Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas.
10. Human health
10a. To improve the health and wellbeing of the population and improve access to health services for all.
11. Landscape
11a. Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced. 11b. Enhance the form and design of the built environment. 11c. Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning.
12. Labour market, economy and regeneration
12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.
13. Biodiversity
13a. Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels. 13b. Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species. 13c. Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district. 13d. Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.

4.3 How the assessment was carried out

The plan has been assessed using tables (called SA matrices) which help the SA team to compare different elements of the plan against the SA framework. A combination of expert judgement and analysis of baseline data has been used to judge the potential effects of the plan. Once an effect has been identified, this is then scored according to how significant the effect could be. Table 4.2 outlines how these scores are defined.

NTS Table 4.2: SA scoring		
Score	Description	Symbol
Significant positive impact	The option strongly supports the achievement of the SA Objective and has a major positive effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors	++

NTS Table 4.2: SA scoring		
Score	Description	Symbol
Minor positive impact	The option generally support the achievement of the SA Objective and has a minor positive effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors	+
Neutral	The option does not have an effect on the achievement of the SA Objective	0
Minor negative impact	The option conflicts with the achievement of the SA Objective and has a negative effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors	-
Significant negative impact	The option conflicts with the SA Objective and has a negative effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors. In addition the future baseline indicates a worsening trend in the absence of intervention	--
Uncertain	It is unclear whether there is the potential for a negative or positive effect on the SA Objective	?

The SA has been carried out at each stage of plan making in order to guide the development of the plan and ensure that the sustainability effects of the plan have been taken into account at all stages.

4.4 Difficulties encountered in the SA

One of the main difficulties encountered in the assessment is the uncertainty over whether an effect is likely to happen or not. Regulations governing SA state that effects assessment should include assessment of secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. At this high level, however, it is often not possible to tell (especially with a general policy) what the definite effects are likely to be. However, where information is available this has been included in the assessment.

5 Assessing Alternative Options

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 3a of the SA report – Assessment of Alternatives available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

5.1 Assessing alternative options

As well as assessing the effects of the Local Plan at this stage, assessments have been undertaken of alternative ways of planning for development in West Somerset. This work has been undertaken throughout the development of the Local Plan by assessing options for strategy/policy and options for development sites. Table 5.1 outlines when the assessment of alternatives was undertaken.

NTS Table 5.1: Plan stage and SA of alternative options	
Plan Stage	Sustainability Appraisal
West Somerset Local Development Framework Issues and Options. July 2010	<p>An Options Paper was produced in January 2010 which tested various different alternative strategies for the Plan. The SA team examined the sustainability effects of the issues and options put forward for consideration in this paper and provided a briefing report to the council which included recommendations as to how to develop the preferred options in a sustainable manner. Options assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision and objectives • Option 1: New development at Minehead, Watchet and Williton • Option 2: As above but also including Stogursey • Option 3: Dispersal including to larger villages • Other matters • 3 excluded options <p>All of the above were assessed by the SA.</p>
West Somerset Local Plan Preferred Strategy 2012	<p>An SA Report was produced in February 2012 which reported on the testing of the preferred strategy. ENVIRON assessed “Strategic Direction of Growth Areas” in Minehead (including Dunster Marsh), Watchet and Williton. All of the policies in the Plan were also assessed.</p>
West Somerset Local Plan Revised Preferred Strategy July 2013	<p>The amended policies of the revised strategy were assessed and results fed back to the council. This version of the Plan includes a new site at Cleeve Hill, Watchet for longer term development. Other additions include a Bat Consultation Policy, a Wildfowl Consultation Policy, an amended Policy SD1: presumption in favour of sustainable development, a new Policy NH7: Development in proximity to Hinkley Point nuclear power station and a new Policy NH10: Securing high standards of design. ENVIRON also assessed what are effectively rejected sites within Minehead. A large area to the south of the A39 was assessed as part of the Preferred Strategy in 2012. However, only parts of this area were taken forward. Therefore, this assessment was revisited in December 2014 to assess the areas of the site that have not been taken forward so the effects of the different alternatives have been made clear.</p>
West Somerset Local	The amended policies of the Publication Draft were assessed and

NTS Table 5.1: Plan stage and SA of alternative options

Plan Stage	Sustainability Appraisal
Plan Publication Draft (September, 2014)	results included in the Publication Draft SA Report which will be consulted on in early 2015. This appendix forms part of that report. The main changes to this version of the Plan is removal of Policy SC2A: Strategic development distribution, removal of Policy SC6: Mixed-use development, New Policy EC12: Minehead primary retail area and central areas for Alcombe, Watchet and Williton, new Policy CC5: Water efficiency, new Policy NH1A: areas of high archaeological potential, new Policy NH1B: Archaeological sites of local significance, removal of Policy NH7: Development in proximity to Hinkley Point nuclear power station, and new Policy GT1: Gypsies and travellers.

5.2 Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with

Table 5.2 outlines the options that were selected for strategy/policy development and the reasons they were selected. Table 5.3 outlines the same for development sites.

5.3 How their assessment has influenced the development of the plan

Table 5.4 outlines how the SA has influenced the development of the plan with regard to strategy/policy development and Table 5.5 outlines the same for development sites.

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<p>1. Spatial vision and strategic objectives for the district</p> <p>The plan set out a suggested spatial vision and strategic objectives.</p>	<p>The vision and objectives have been developed based on key issues identified through consultation, research and through government guidance.</p>
<p>2. Strategy Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy option 1: Concentrate new development at three main settlements; • Strategy option 2: Concentrate new development at four main settlements – including the upgrading of Stogursey to a ‘Policy C’ (or Local Service centre) settlement; and • Strategy option 3: Dispersal of development including allocations at the larger villages. 	<p>A combination of historic patterns of development, accessibility and, the designation of Local Planning Authority boundaries constrained the number and type of options available. Ultimately, the three selected options comprised variations of a common theme and not dissimilar to that which had occurred in the recent past. The primary focus for the bulk of future development would be directed towards the three largest settlements in West Somerset of, Minehead, Watchet and Williton with different potential supporting locations.</p>
<p>3. Excluded Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluded option 1: A strategy involving less development at the larger settlements and a much wider degree of dispersal of development including the smaller settlements (including those with few or no facilities); • Excluded option 2: A strategy involving no significant development at Minehead, with substantial development being focused elsewhere in the District closer to the M5 corridor; and • Excluded option 3: A strategy involving the concentration of the bulk of the housing requirement in a single eco-village / new settlement. 	<p>The Council also set out three excluded options. These options have been excluded because the Council consider that they would clearly fail to satisfy the relevant sustainability objectives. In order to check that conclusion is correct these options were tested by the SA team.</p>
<p>4. Key Themes</p> <p>Section 6 of the Options Paper set out key themes for the other matters that the Core Strategy will need to address and discusses the types of policies that are needed to achieve the objectives. There are 8 themes:</p> <p>Theme 6.1 Settlement Policy - Settlement Role and function hierarchy. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) An overarching development strategy • b) Policies to indicate the appropriate mix of development in order to maximise self-containment of settlements • c) There should be an Infrastructure Delivery Plan setting out the necessary 	<p>Whilst West Somerset does not contain any large settlements compared to its neighbours it does have complex and fine-grained settlement hierarchy. Responses to the Options consultation process showed an acknowledgement of the existing situation in terms of the role and function of settlements and that this was unlikely to change in the future. The options were developed around this premise and suggestions for policy coverage taken from Government planning guidance.</p>

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<p>infrastructure to inform developer contributions</p>	
<p>Theme 6.2 Transport - Making West Somerset’s communities more self-contained. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) Reduce the threshold for travel plans to require them for medium sized as well as large development • b) Require contributions from new development to improve cycling and walking infrastructure • c) Locate new developments likely to give rise to significant numbers of trips in locations which are served by a range of modes of transport. • d) Explore the opportunity offered by the West Somerset Railway to connect sites within the District to the national rail network for freight traffic. • e) Examine the potential for a commuter train service to be offered using the West Somerset Railway. • f) Any new major development to be of an appropriate mix of uses and facilities to offer the opportunity to reduce transport demand. • g) Proposals to deliver a relief road between the junction of Long Street and Fore Street in Williton, with the A39 to the west of the village as part of a traffic management and development package for the village centre. 	<p>The strategy and policies acknowledge the limited opportunities for developing alternative and more sustainable transport options and solutions to and throughout the area, particularly in relation to the road network. There is a need to maintain and enhance the existing infrastructure and services and direct development to those locations where it can do this, improve accessibility to services and facilities and/or, make other, more marginal transport services, more viable. The options were developed around this premise and suggestions for policy coverage were taken from Government planning guidance.</p>
<p>Theme 6.3 Housing - Meeting the communities’ needs for housing by providing better access and availability of housing that fits the diverse needs of people. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) Allocations for housing should be compliant with the RSS strategy • b) Policies for housing should target the strengthening of existing service centres and potentially the creation of one or more new service centres 	<p>Monitoring of residential development shows that c.80% of this has occurred in the three main settlements of Minehead, Watchet and, Williton. These are the settlements that provide the greatest range of services and facilities to the local population and the scale of past growth at these locations contributes towards maintaining sustainable patterns of living and enhancing their respective role and function. The scale of development that has been achieved in the LPA area over the period 1991 – 2009 is consistent with that identified/ projected through higher</p>

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • c) Policies to encourage the provision of a wider range of housing opportunities for the elderly emphasising the potential for independent living, but with residential or nursing care also provided for. • d) Policies to provide for an appropriate mix of land uses and house types and sizes. • e) Policies to deliver an overall 35% of housing as affordable housing to meet identified local needs • f) Rural settlements (other than identified service centres) should not have development boundaries • g) Policies to ensure that high quality design is a guiding principle of development proposals 	<p>level development plan² documents (e.g. Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review) for the same period. The options were developed around this premise and suggestions for policy coverage were taken from Government planning guidance.</p>
<p>Theme 6.4 Climate Change - Mitigating the effects of climate change. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) Require that at least 20% of energy used at all new developments should come from local renewable resources • b) Encourage the provision of combined heat and power systems in new development • c) The encouragement of the development of wood fuel production and consumption using modern efficient heating systems • d) Require new development to incorporate measures to mitigate against flood risk and manage surface water runoff through appropriate use of SUDS (sustainable drainage systems) 	<p>The options selected recognised the existing position of the various settlements, their respective role and function to their own and surrounding communities and, their potential to maximise the ability to mitigate against the threats posed by climate change in the future through possible development.</p> <p>WSC's Level 1³ and Level 2⁴ SFRA's have identified local issues in respect of flooding, now and in the future, for the main settlements, including taking account of the implications of climate change.</p> <p>The Shoreline Management Plan for the West Somerset element of the Bristol Channel⁵ has identified the areas most at risk from change in the future including taking account of the impact of climate change. These have been factored into the process of identifying potential settlements for future development and potential</p>

² Somerset County Council and Exmoor National Park Authority; Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review – Adopted, April 2000; Somerset County Council; 2001

³ Scott Wilson; West Somerset Council & Exmoor National Park Authority Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level: Final Report – March 2009; West Somerset Council; 2009

⁴ Scott Wilson; West Somerset Council Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: Final Report – October 2010; West Somerset Council; 2010.

⁵ Halcrow; North Devon and Somerset Coastal Advisory Group (NDSCAG) Shoreline Management Plan Review (SMP2): Hartland Point to Anchor Head Draft Final SMP – June 2010; North Devon and Somerset Coastal Advisory Group; 2010

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e) A policy to encourage rapid move towards zero carbon development by 2016 • f) Encouragement for rainwater harvesting • g) Making provision for new allotments to facilitate the growing of food close to the point of consumption • h) Locate new employment provision close to housing to maximise opportunities for walking and cycling • i) Require a tree planting contribution from new development as a carbon off-setting measure • j) Engage in positive management of the coastal zone in relation to the emerging Shoreline Management Plan’s proposals 	<p>future directions of growth around them at a strategic level. The options were developed taking this information into account and suggestions for policy coverage were taken from Government planning guidance.</p>
<p>Theme 6.5 Economy - Strengthening and broadening the local economy. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) A policy to support the provision of enterprise development in the rural parts of the District, where they are within or adjacent to settlements and preferably make use of vacant or underused buildings • b) A policy supporting the creation of a rural enterprise network • c) A policy supporting the development of the local wood fuel supply chain including installation and servicing of wood fuel heating systems • d) Policy support for the provision of low priced starter accommodation for businesses which have outgrown their homeworking stage • e) Encouragement for sustainable tourism development • f) Support for additional hotel accommodation within the District • g) An enabling policy for a new jetty at Minehead 	<p>WSC recognises the historic development of the local economy in relation to the distribution of the existing settlements and their respective role and function. It also recognises the limitations imposed on the growth and diversification within the local economy away from the low-paid employment which predominates the area (e.g. retail, agriculture, social-care and, tourism) caused by its relative remoteness and accessibility are a significant constraint. With the exception of the Hinkley Point proposal which is at the north-eastern extremity of the LPA area there is little prospect of new major employers locating in the area and associated large-scale inward investment. Consequently economic growth and development is expected to come from small-scale existing and future businesses employing on a micro scale (<5 employees). The high proportion of self-employment (c.30%) within the District reflects this. The policy emphasis in the emerging plan is aimed at providing and encouraging the establishment and development of these types of businesses utilising existing buildings and premises, including within residential units, in order to assist economic development in the most sustainable locations.</p>

⁶ NNB Generation Co. Ltd.; Hinkley Point C Proposed Nuclear Development: Development Consent Order Application – October 2011; op.cit.

⁷ EKOS; West Somerset Economic Strategy: Delivering a New Equilibrium – April 2009; West Somerset Council; 2009

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • h) A policy requiring the production of a regeneration based masterplan for Minehead • i) Policies supporting the regeneration and economic development of Watchet and Williton • j) A policy supporting the health of retail provision in the major centres • k) A policy encouraging the development of the local food supply chain • l) Encouragement for the provision of improved infrastructure including broadband services. 	
<p>Theme 6.6 Biodiversity Protecting and enhancing biodiversity. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) A policy to protect and enhance natural networks through developer contributions and the Nature Map • b) Policies to encourage multifunctional Green Infrastructure and the creation of / improvement of access to the countryside. • c) A policy to facilitate the implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plan objectives as part of landscaping schemes and habitat improvement schemes 	<p>The LPA area is directly and indirectly affected by the designation of important international and national nature conservation value within and around it. These effectively limit the extent of land available for development free of such constraints. The location/ proximity to such designated areas provides strong evidence and reasons for securing protection and mitigation measures via development to maintain and enhance the natural environment network throughout the area and the biodiversity within it. The options were developed taking this information into account and suggestions for policy coverage were taken from Government planning guidance.</p>
<p>Theme 6.7 Heritage - Safeguarding and enhancing local distinctiveness. To achieve these objectives, the Local Plan could have the following types of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) policies which recognise the historic character of settlements where development will be focused, and which will ensure that new development contributes positively to that character • b) policies to manage the coastal zone in conjunction with the emerging Shoreline Management Plan 	<p>WSC needs to balance protection of the historic built environment and associated assets against inhibiting economic investment as many of the identified buildings and properties are in prime commercial locations and there is limited opportunities to direct the latter elsewhere. The Local Plan recognises the close relationship of the historic built environment and the tourism industry and seeks to capitalise on those assets. Because of the wide range of properties, buildings and structures, both individually and collectively, throughout the LPA area and the different criteria that may need to be applied to each, the level of specificity required would be more suited to a separate, more detailed policy document.</p>
<p>Theme 6.8 Other important issues - Emerging Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station Proposal. This major development proposal, currently at pre-application stage, does not form part of the Regional Spatial Strategy's proposals. It is however anticipated that a proposal for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point will be submitted to the Infrastructure Planning Commission in the context of a National Policy Statement on</p>	<p>The Local Plan needs to recognise that the decommissioning of existing and building new nuclear power plants at Hinkley Point will have a significant impact on the local environment, economy and social make-up of the area over a ten year period. It is acknowledged that the proposed structures involved will have a clear visual impact on the surrounding area but, the issues concerning Hinkley Point C</p>

NTS Table 5.2: Reasons for selecting the strategy/policy development options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
Nuclear Power yet to be published. If these proposals proceed to implementation, the construction phase of the project will have a significant impact upon the Local Plan area. This would have to be managed in conjunction with the implementation of the Local Plan's proposals.	<p>will be determined by a separate process outside of the Local Plan and before any such policies come into effect.</p> <p>The policies included recognise that any subsequent development proposals associated with the proposal and existing structures that will be determined through the planning process can be subject to appropriate mitigation measures to minimise the direct and indirect impact on the surrounding area and communities.</p>

NTS Table 5.3: Reasons for selecting the site options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<p>Minehead Development</p> <p>Mixed Use Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of Policy MD2 a large area to the south of Minehead called South of the A39 (which took in the whole of the South of Minehead and an area centered on Porlock Road) and a smaller area to the north east of Seaward Way were tested. Policy MD2 also included a site for post 2022 development at Dunster Marsh. A much smaller part of the South of the A39 site was selected as two sites. The selected sites were called MD2 (South of A39) and LT1 (South of Periton Road) - for post 2026 development. Large parts of the South of the A39 site were rejected and these were retested at the Revised Preferred Strategy stage as stand-alone areas so that their effects could be compared to the selected sites in Minehead. A large area has been assessed broken down into four areas. The area centered on Porlock Road that stretches around Woodcombe (to the west of Minehead), the area centered on Periton Park Court, the area to the east and south of Alcombe and an area to the south of the sites designated in the Revised Preferred Strategy as MD2 and LT1. The long term development site at Dunster Marsh was rejected. The site to the North East of Seward Way was rejected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selection of sites has been undertaken over a number of years commencing in October 2011. Large areas of search were identified and these entire areas were tested and refined as the Local Plan and SA process progressed. The area of search for Minehead took in a large proportion of the southern, eastern and western extent of Minehead (see Map 1A in Part 3A of this report) and also the area surrounding the current Dunster Marsh settlement (see Map 1B in Part 3A of this report). This area was selected based on information from the strategy options consultation exercise, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and an assessment of planning constraints. The broad area chosen was deemed to be the area where development was possible based on the criteria of suitability, availability and deliverability as a result of the assessment made in the SHLAA. Mart Road in Minehead was chosen because it is the main employment centre in Minehead and has available and suitable undeveloped land. Allocation of Mart Road was enough to meet the need for major employment allocations in the town and therefore, no alternative sites were tested. The monitoring of Policy E/1 in the adopted Local Plan shows that there is limited appeal for B-class uses in the West Somerset LPA area. In addition, the emerging Local Plan to 2032 seeks to cater for employment generating activities as part of the

NTS Table 5.3: Reasons for selecting the site options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
<p>Major Employment Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of Policy EC2 a major employment site Mart Road, was tested and selected. No other employment sites were tested. 	<p>mixed-use development allocations for the strategic sites.</p>
<p>2. Watchet Development</p> <p>Mixed Use Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Policy WA2 two areas were tested – one to the south of the town and one to the east of the town. The area to the south of the town was selected with some small changes to the boundary. The area to the east of the town was rejected. As part of Policy LT1 in the 2013 Revised Preferred Strategy, a new site at Cleeve Hill, Watchet for longer term development was tested and has been selected. <p>Major Employment Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major employment sites have been proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selection of sites has been undertaken over a number of years commencing in October 2011. Large areas of search were identified and these entire areas were tested and refined as the Local Plan and SA process progressed. The area of search for Watchet took in large parts of the south west and the east of Watchet (see Map 3 in Part 3A of this report). This area was selected based on information from the strategy options consultation exercise, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and an assessment of planning constraints. The broad area chosen was deemed to be the area where development was possible based on the criteria of suitability, availability and deliverability as a result of the assessment made in the SHLAA. No major employment sites were tested in Watchet because major employment uses were focused on Minehead and Williton based on past land use and employment patterns.
<p>3. Williton Development</p> <p>Mixed Use Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of Policy WI2 three sites: West of the town, East of the town and North of the town were tested. The sites to the west of the town and the site to the North of the town were selected. Both had small changes to their boundaries to take into account the flooding issues on the site. The site to the east of the town was rejected. <p>Major Employment Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of Policy EC2 major employment site Roughmoor, Williton was tested and selected. No other employment sites were tested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selection of sites has been undertaken over a number of years commencing in October 2011. Large areas of search were identified and these entire areas were tested and refined as the Local Plan and SA process progressed. The area of search for Williton took in large parts of the north, west and east of Williton (see Map 4 in Part 3A of this report). This area was selected based on information from the strategy options consultation exercise, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and an assessment of planning constraints. The broad area chosen was deemed to be the area where development was possible based on the criteria of suitability, availability and deliverability as a result of the assessment made in the SHLAA. Roughmoor in Williton was chosen as a major employment site because it is the main employment centre in Williton and has available and suitable

NTS Table 5.3: Reasons for selecting the site options	
Options selected	Reason for options selected
	<p>undeveloped land. Allocation of Roughmoor was enough to meet the need for major employment allocations in the town and therefore, no alternative sites were tested. The monitoring of Policy E/1 in the adopted Local Plan shows that there is limited appeal for B-class uses in the West Somerset LPA area. In addition, the emerging Local Plan to 2032 seeks to cater for employment generating activities as part of the mixed-use development allocations for the strategic sites.</p>

NTS Table 5.4: How the SA has influenced the development of the plan: Strategy and policy	
Element of the plan	How the SA has influenced the plan making process
1. Spatial vision and strategic objectives for the district	The vision and objectives of the plan have been developed based on the key issues that have been identified through the Local Plan Consultation process. The vision and objectives of the plan have changed very little since the issues and options and the changes suggested by the SA have not been taken on board. The reason for this is that the Council wished to keep the vision short and focused on planning outcomes.
2. Strategy Options	Option 1 has been taken forward and the Local Plan has been developed around this strategy. Option 1 performed very strongly as part of the SA and it is the strategy that best maintains and strengthens the current service role of West Somerset settlements. The SA recognised that Option 1 had many sustainability benefits but also indicated areas which could be strengthened. These areas have now been developed into Local Plan policies.
3. Excluded Options	These options have been excluded because the Council considers that they would clearly fail to satisfy the relevant sustainability objectives. The SA work that was undertaken showed that this was the case.
4. Key Themes Theme 6.1 Settlement Policy - Settlement Role and function hierarchy	The three policy suggestions have been taken into account in the Local Plan. The SA suggested that the types of infrastructure required needs to be set out within the Local Plan. Policy ID1 addresses this and the Local Plan states that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared that will set out how Policy ID1 will be implemented.
Theme 6.2 Transport	The transport section of the Local Plan has been developed into a set of policies which address access to and from West Somerset, reducing reliance on the private car, maximising access to recreational facilities and planning for healthy communities. Policy SC5 is also relevant in that it addresses self-containment of settlements. Issues D and E have not been taken forward for technical/practical reasons. The Williton bypass has not been mentioned in the Local Plan Publication document - Policy WI1 states that development proposals must contribute to the improvement of traffic management in the village. The SA suggested a strengthening of walking and cycling opportunities and access to public transport by rural communities. The Publication Draft Local Plan now addresses these issues as part of Policy TR1 and CF1.
Theme 6.3 Housing	The sustainable communities section of the Local Plan has been developed into a set of policies which address settlement hierarchy, housing provision, housing types and tenures and affordable housing. A number of mixed use sites have also been included in the plan in the three main settlements. The SA recommendations have been taken on board with policies being included on gypsy and traveller pitches, flood risk and other environmental sensitivities, pollution and contaminated land. In terms of high quality design policies have been included related to water efficiency, water management, historic environment and measures to minimise carbon emissions and reduce climate change (included as part Policy NH10 – securing high standards of design). Option F has not been taken forward as part of the plan. The potential for housing to contribute to identify regeneration is included in the plan through the selection of the

NTS Table 5.4: How the SA has influenced the development of the plan: Strategy and policy	
Element of the plan	How the SA has influenced the plan making process
	mixed use development and employment sites.
Theme 6.4 Climate Change	The SA recommended that one overall policy on sustainable construction and design be developed. This has not been taken forward but a number of policies have been developed to address the issues, mainly Policy NH10 – Securing High Standards of Design, Policy CC1 Carbon Reduction – Small Scale Schemes, Policy CC2 – Flood Risk Management, Policy CC3 Coastal Change Management Area, Policy CC4 – Coastal Zone Protection, Policy CC5 – Water Efficiency and Policy CC6 – Water Management. Policy H has been extended through the inclusion of two policies on tourism which encourage sustainable transport access – Policies EC8 and EC9. The policies on sustainable design are less specific than those discussed in the Issues and Options paper, for example, the requirement for 20% renewable energy has been removed as has the need to move towards zero carbon development to 2016. The reason for this is that the Local Plan is only seeking to provide a strategic policy framework at this stage. Policy NH10 provides a design policy framework and was included in the Revised Preferred Strategy in order to make the Local Plan NPPF compliant. Work is being pursued independently of the Local Plan on a design-guide SPD which will relate to this policy. This should provide the detail on design matters including a context for design-briefs and, possibly, the master-planning of the strategic sites.
Theme 6.5 Economy	The economy section of the Local Plan has been developed into a set of policies which address widening and strengthening the local economy, greenfield employment generating development, home-based business activities, safeguarding existing employment uses, work/live developments, training and educational provision, tourism outside of settlements, gateway settlements, agriculture, Minehead Primary Retail Area and Central Areas for Alcombe, Watchet and Williton. The SA recommended that support for retail provision within villages was strengthened and this has been done through inclusion of a policy designed to safeguard existing commercial activities. The new jetty at Minehead is not included in the Publication Local Plan. Protection of environmental quality is now addressed in various policies including biodiversity, historic environment and water quality.
Theme 6.6 Biodiversity	The environmental protection section of the Local Plan has been developed into a set of policies which address historic environment, Areas of High Archaeological Potential, archaeological sites of local significance, landscape character protection, nature conservation and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, green infrastructure, protection of best and most versatile agricultural land, pollution, contaminated land and land instability, bat consultation zone, waterfowl consultation zone and securing high standards of design. The SA recommended further consideration of focal species and these are the subject of the bat and wildfowl consultation zone policies which aim specifically to protect the species that use certain internationally designated habitats. Other focal species are not addressed within the plan and the plan does not address the facilitation of local Biodiversity Action Plan objectives as part of landscape / habitat restoration schemes (which was assessed as a potential policy approach and scored well in the SA). The plan does

NTS Table 5.4: How the SA has influenced the development of the plan: Strategy and policy	
Element of the plan	How the SA has influenced the plan making process
	however address this issue in Policy NH10 which states that landscape proposals should maximise the potential to improve local biodiversity. It is felt that this would address the point about focal and BAP species adequately.
Theme 6.7 Heritage	The environmental protection section of the Local Plan has been developed into a set of policies which address historic environment, Areas of High Archaeological Potential, archaeological sites of local significance, landscape character protection, green infrastructure and securing high standards of design. The policies in the Publication Draft Local Plan do not go into the detail suggested by the SA. The reason for this is that the Local Plan is only seeking to provide a strategic policy framework at this stage. As a result of comments made by English Heritage at the Revised Preferred Strategy stage, a Heritage Asset Study has been undertaken by the Somerset Heritage Service and endorsed by English Heritage. Some minor alterations and the inclusion of two new policies, NH1A and NH1B were the result and have been incorporated into the new version of the emerging Local Plan. More detailed policies on heritage and related matters would have to await the production of a development management DPD after the emerging Local Plan is adopted. Policy CC1 addresses small scale renewable energy proposals. It does not specifically address heritage but it does state broad support for these types of proposal.
Theme 6.8 Other important issues	The Publication Draft Local Plan includes Policy EN1 – Mitigation of Impact of Hinkley Point new nuclear proposals and this addresses the concerns expressed by the SA.

NTS Table 5.5: How the SA has influenced the development of the plan: Sites	
Element of the plan	How the SA has influenced the plan making process
Minehead development	<p>Two sites within the area to the south of Minehead have been chosen which take up about a third of original MD2 (LT1 for post 2026 development and MD2 for development within the Plan period). The rest of the area has been discounted based on impacts on Woodcombe Conservation Area, poor vehicular access, remoteness from facilities and flooding issues, all issues highlighted in the SA and through consultation responses. MD2 and LT1 performed much more positively in the SA (especially with regard to flooding and access to services) and this has been taken into account in the planning decisions made.</p> <p>The area to the north east of Seaward Way has been discounted as have the sites in Dunster Marsh. This is predominantly because of effects on flooding, water retention and drainage issues and effects on biodiversity (Dunster Marsh), all effects highlighted as part of the SA and within consultation responses.</p>

NTS Table 5.5: How the SA has influenced the development of the plan: Sites	
Element of the plan	How the SA has influenced the plan making process
Watchet development	The site to the south of the town was chosen and the site to the east was discounted. Both sites performed similarly in the SA. However, the Council selected the site to the south as it was felt that it related better to Watchet town centre than the site to the east. The area of allocation has been amended slightly to exclude the north-western part of the site as it included the crest of a ridge, which if developed would have a major impact on the local landscape, whereas the development in the remaining area would be hidden from view from the south. A new site at Cleeve Hill for post 2026 development has been added at the Revised Preferred Strategy stage and has been selected. The land at Cleeve Hill was included as a strategic site at the Revised Preferred Strategy stage as it had been offered as a development location to the SHLAA Call-for-Sites in January 2013 with the prospect of the development paying for the future re-alignment of the B.3190 opposite Daws Castle. The road is in danger of falling into the sea due to coastal erosion of the cliffs in this area and this road offers a strategic alternative to the A.39 in the event of the main road being closed to traffic between Washford Cross and Carhampton due to a serious accident or, to facilitate road-works on it. The SA would support this allocation as no significant negative effects were found.
Williton development	As part of Policy WI2 the site to the West has been chosen and the two sites to the North have been chosen. The site to the East has been discounted. The area to the east was discounted because of the difficulty in accessing services and the high probability of flooding , water pollution risk and drainage challenges, all issues highlighted in the SA. The selected sites performed much more positively in the SA (especially with regard to flooding and access to services) and this has been taken into account in the planning decisions made. With regard to the site to the north of the town the site area has been amended to take account of flood risk adjoining Danesfield School and terrain (steep slope) to the north, an issue highlighted as part of the SA.

6 Significant Effects of the Publication Draft and Mitigation

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 3b of the SA report – Assessment of the Publication Draft available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

6.1 Introduction

No significant negative effects were found as a result of the plan. A number of significant positive effects were found as well as a number of uncertain effects and minor positive and negative effects.

Table 6.1 is a summary of the significant and uncertain effects of the Local Plan as identified in the SA. This table identifies the mitigation measures recommended for the potential significant and uncertain effects. Please note that mitigation and enhancement measures suggested for minor effects are identified in Annex A of the full SA report. Mitigation measures are measures suggested to prevent, reduce or offset negative or uncertain effects. Enhancement measures are measures that can enhance any positive or neutral effects identified.

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
SPATIAL VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	
The effect of the vision and strategic objectives is mainly positive by steering development in the Local Plan area in a sustainable direction. The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect.	None identified
PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development)	
<p>The policy will have a minor positive effect on many of the SA objectives through outlining a presumption in favour of sustainable development and providing a definition of what that might mean in practice. The policy will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. However, the policy will have <i>uncertain effects</i> on the following SA objectives due to an uncertainty regarding the exact issues that are covered in the policy’s definition of sustainable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1b. Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months) • 8b. Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding • 8c. Improve efficiency of water use • 10a. To improve the health and wellbeing of the population and improve access to health services for all • 11a. Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced • 11c. Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning 	The definition of sustainable development within this policy needs to be strengthened. The SA recommends that that as a minimum the headline issues that the council would expect to see within any planning application should be listed. In addition, some more detailed guidance could be provided by the council within a Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).
HINKLEY POINT AND OTHER MAJOR ENERGY GENERATING DEVELOPMENT (Policy EN1: Mitigation of impact of Hinkley Point new nuclear proposals and Policy EN2: Mitigation of impact of major energy generating proposals)	
The policies will have a minor positive effect on many of the SA objectives through contributing to the mitigation of the effects of Hinkley Point and other major energy	The policies would be strengthened if more detailed references to ensuring local employment and maximising local skills were made

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
<p>generating proposals. . The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. However, the policies have an uncertain effect on the following SA objective as no reference to local skills is made within the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas 	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES (Policy SC1: Hierarchy of settlements, Policy SC2: Housing provision, Policy SC3: Appropriate mix of housing types and tenures, Policy SC4: Affordable housing, Policy SC5 (A and B): Self-containment of settlements)	
<p>The policies seek to concentrate development in urban areas and areas with better public transport provision such as Minehead, Watchet and Williton and limit development in other settlements and the remaining countryside. This will have the effect of strengthening the local economy and service provision in larger settlements and will have consequent positive effects on many of the SA objectives. The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. This aspect of the Plan will have one significant positive effect on the following SA objective through promoting the strengthening of the Minehead economy and also strengthening Watchet and Williton as important local centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas. Policies SC1 and SC2 will have a significant positive effect. 	None identified
SETTLEMENT POLICIES MINEHEAD (Amended Policy MD1: Minehead development, Policy MD2: Key strategic development allocation at Minehead/Alcombe, Policy LT1 Post 2026 Key Strategic Development Sites – Minehead site only and Policy EC2 Major employment sites – Minehead site only)	
<p>The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. The policies give expression within Minehead to those strategic policies listed above and they will have consequent positive effects on many of the SA objectives. This is through concentrating development in Minehead through strengthening its role as a service centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation measure (Policy MD2 (South of A39)) and Policy LT1 (South of Periton Road)): A programme of archaeological field evaluation would be required prior to determination of individual planning applications. This should be required through the EIA process however if there is uncertainty as to whether this will be EIA development then a reference to this requirement could be

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
<p>The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas: The site at Mart Road will have a significant positive effect as it will be positive in increasing available workspace and access to opportunities in the town. <p>The policies will also have the following uncertain effect on the following SA objective:</p> <p>9a. Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas: MD2 and LT1 will have an uncertain effect as there is a large potential for finds in the area.</p>	<p>made within the supporting text.</p>
<p>SETTLEMENT POLICIES WATCHET (Amended Policy WA1: Watchet development, Policy WA2 Strategic development allocation at Parsonage Farm, Watchet and Policy LT1 Post 2026 Key Strategic Development Sites – Watchet site only)</p>	
<p>The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. The policies give expression within Watchet to those strategic policies listed above and they will have consequent positive effects on many of the SA objectives. This is through concentrating development in Watchet through strengthening its role as a service centre.</p> <p>The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas: Policy WA1 will help to strengthen Watchet's role as the main employment centre for the North Eastern part of West Somerset and will also help to maintain and enhance the role of the Marina and the West Somerset Railway <p>The policies will also have a number of uncertain effects on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6a. Reduce land contamination, and safeguard soil and geological quality and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation measure (Policy WA2 (South of the town)): Before development goes ahead a wider understanding is needed of the significance of developing on this area of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land and the ability to remediate the contamination on site. The requirements for this assessment should be included within the policy wording or supporting text and further detail could be provided within a development brief if this is being prepared. Mitigation measure (Policy WA2 (South of the town)): A programme of archaeological field evaluation would be required prior to determination of individual planning applications. This should be required through the EIA process however if there is uncertainty as to whether this will be EIA development then a reference to this requirement could be made within the supporting text.

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
<p>quantity: Policy WA2 (South of the town): There is possible contamination on site due to agricultural products and fuel oil.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9a. Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas: The likely effect of the site to the South of the town is uncertain. The Historic Environment Record contains some records within the strategic development area and these records show the high potential for prehistoric remains in the Watchet area. 	
SETTLEMENT POLICIES WILLITON (Policy W11: Williton development, Policy W12 Key strategic development allocations at Williton, Policy EC2 Major employment sites –Williton site only)	
<p>The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect. The policies give expression within Williton to those strategic policies listed above and they will have consequent positive effects on many of the SA objectives. This is through concentrating development in Williton through strengthening its role as a service centre.</p> <p>The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas: Policy EC2 (Roughmoor, Williton): The site will be positive in increasing available workspace and access to opportunities in the town. <p>The policies will also have an uncertain effect on the following SA objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9a. Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas: The sites in W12 will have an uncertain effect as the area shows a high potential for significant prehistoric remains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation measure (Policy W12 (West of the town)); (Policy W12 (North of the town)): A programme of archaeological field evaluation would be required prior to determination of individual planning applications. This should be required through the EIA process however if there is uncertainty as to whether this will be EIA development then a reference to this requirement could be made within the supporting text.
SETTLEMENT POLICIES OTHER (Policy SV1 Development at primary and secondary villages, Policy OC1 Open countryside development)	

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
The policies will have mainly a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through promoting small scale appropriate development that could strengthen the viability of existing businesses and services in rural areas and help address affordability issues whilst protecting the environment and character of settlements.	None identified
ECONOMY (Policy EC1 Widening and strengthening the local economy, Policy EC3 Greenfield employment generating development, Policy EC4 Home-based business activities, Policy EC5 Safeguarding existing employment uses, Policy EC6 Work/live developments, Policy EC7 Training and educational provision, Policy EC8 Tourism in settlements, Policy EC9 Tourism outside of settlements, Policy EC10 Gateway settlements, Policy EC11 Agriculture, New Policy EC12 Minehead Primary Retail Area and Central Areas for Alcombe, Watchet and Williton)	
The policies will have mainly a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through safeguarding and provision of a range of employment opportunities and skills training for local people, boosting local retail areas and facilitating public transport. The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas. Policy EC1, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC6, EC7, EC8, EC9, EC10 and EC11 will encourage development that makes the local economy stronger and more diverse whilst increasing skills, the proportion of higher paid jobs and higher value businesses. 	None identified
TRANSPORT (Policy TR1 Access to and from West Somerset, Policy TR2 Reducing reliance on the private car)	
The policies will have a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through helping to promote modal shift and reduce reliance on the private car so should reduce air and noise pollution.	None identified
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH (Policy CF1 Maximising access to recreational facilities, Policy CF2 Planning for healthy communities)	
The policies will have a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through helping to encourage design that shapes healthy communities and will help to ensure the provision and retention of health, sport, recreation and cultural facilities which are	None identified

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
likely to encourage healthy behaviour.	
CLIMATE CHANGE (Policy CC1 Carbon reduction – small scale schemes, Policy CC2 Flood risk management, Policy CC3 Coastal change management area, Policy CC4 Coastal zone protection, Policy CC5 Water efficiency, Policy CC6 Water management)	
<p>The policies will have mainly a neutral or minor positive effect through promoting carbon reduction, requiring flood risk management, water efficiency and other aspects of sustainable development.</p> <p>The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2b. Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development / 8b. Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding: Policy CC2 will have a significant positive effect through locating development in areas that would not exacerbate flooding and ensuring an assessment is carried out on the flood implications of new development / Policy CC3 will ensure that development does not occur in areas at risk of rapid coastal erosion / Policy CC6 will help to ensure that areas at cumulative risk of flooding will only be permitted provided that suitable protection is given. • 13c. Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district: Policy CC3, CC4 will have a significant positive effect on protecting areas of mudflats along the coast. Policy CC6: The policy will help to protect the water table which will have a significant positive effect in protecting wetland and meadow habitats in the district. • 13d. Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites: Policy CC3, CC4: The policies will help protect the Blue Anchor to Lilstock Coast SSSI. <p>The policies will have an uncertain effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1a. Reduce impacts on tranquility from noise and visual intrusion: Policy CC1 may have implications on air and noise dependent on what kind of renewable energy systems are developed. 	<p>Mitigation measure (Policy CC1): An air and noise assessment (including the transport implications of fuel delivery) should be carried out before the development of renewable energy schemes which could form part of an energy strategy including detail on fuel supply, transport and routes as well as the carbon savings achievable. A landscape and townscape assessment should also be carried out. The requirements for these assessments should be included within the policy wording or supporting text and further detail could be provided within a development brief if this is being prepared.</p>

NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan	
Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).	Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1b. Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months): Policy CC1 may have implications on road traffic dependent on what kind of renewable energy systems are developed. • 11a. Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced. Policy CC1 may have implications on landscape dependent on what kind of renewable energy systems are developed. • 11b. Enhance the form and design of the built environment: Policy CC1: The policy may have implications on the form of the built environment dependent on what kind of renewable energy systems are developed. 	
<p>NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT (Policy NH1 Historic environment, Policy NH1A Areas of High Archaeological Potential, NH1B Archaeological sites of local significance, Policy NH2 Landscape character protection, Policy NH3 Nature conservation and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, Policy NH4 Green infrastructure, Policy NH5 Protection of best and most versatile agricultural land, Policy NH6 Pollution, contaminated land and land instability, Policy NH8: Bat consultation zone, Policy NH9: Waterfowl consultation zone, New Policy NH10: Securing high standards of design)</p>	
<p>The policies will have a mostly minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through providing environmental protection and enhancement policies that will help strengthen development.</p> <p>The policies will have a significant positive effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1a. Reduce impacts on tranquility from noise and visual intrusion: Policy NH6 will have a significant positive effect on the SA objective by protecting current and future residents against air and noise pollution / Policy NH10 will have a significant positive effect on the SA objective through ensuring that design of development is not intrusive and fits in with local character. • 9a. Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas: Policy NH1, NH1A, NH1B and NH10 will have a significant positive effect in safeguarding and 	None identified

<p>NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan</p>	
<p>Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).</p>	<p>Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects</p>
<p>enhancing the district's cultural and built heritage and archaeology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11a. Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced: Policy NH2, NH4 and NH10 will have a significant positive effect in safeguarding and enhancing non designated areas of landscape value and ensuring developments incorporate landscape frameworks. • 11b. Enhance the form and design of the built environment: Policy NH1 will have a significant positive effect in safeguarding and enhancing the district's cultural and built heritage / Policy NH10 will have a significant positive effect in ensuring developments contribute to the distinctive local character of the area and makes a positive contribution to the local environment. • 13a. Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels: Policy NH3 will have a significant positive effect through requiring applicants to not generate adverse impacts on biodiversity and ensure a net gain where possible, Policy NH10 policy will have a significant positive effect on ensuring developments incorporate landscape frameworks which seek to improve local biodiversity. • 13b. Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species: Policy NH3 will have a significant positive effect through the policy's focus on connectivity and resilience of habitats which will have an indirect significant positive effect on focal species, Policy NH8 will have a significant positive effect on bat populations through requiring a test of significance to be carried out. This policy has been added as a response to the findings of the HRA and will have a significant positive effect / Policy NH9 will have a significant positive effect on waterfowl populations through requiring a test of significance to be carried out. This policy has been added as a response to the findings of the HRA and will have a significant positive effect. • 13c. Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district: Policy NH3 will have a significant positive effect through the policy's focus on connectivity and resilience of habitats will have an indirect significant positive effect on BAP habitats. 	

<p>NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan</p>	
<p>Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).</p>	<p>Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13d. Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites: Policy NH3 will have a significant positive effect through the policy's focus on connectivity and resilience of habitats will have an indirect significant positive effect on designated and no designated sites. The policy now also includes additional safeguards in relation to Nature 2000 sites, Policy NH10: The policy will have a significant positive effect on ensuring developments incorporate landscape frameworks which seek to improve local biodiversity. 	
<p>GYPSES AND TRAVELLERS (Policy GT1 Gypsies and travellers)</p>	
<p>The policy will have mostly a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through seeking to provide gypsy and traveller pitches to meet a local need.</p> <p>The policy will have an uncertain effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Reduce impacts on tranquility from noise and visual intrusion: The development of gypsy and traveller pitches can cause noise and disturbance issues to local communities. Therefore, the policy could have a negative effect dependent on where the pitches are located. As these locations are not known the effect has been assessed as uncertain. 3a. Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime: Gypsy and traveller sites can increase the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in local communities. Therefore, the effect of the policy could be negative dependent on where the pitches are located. As these locations are not known the effect has been assessed as uncertain. 7a. To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste: The development of gypsy and traveller pitches can cause concerns about waste generation and management. Therefore, the policy could have a negative effect dependent on where the pitches are located and what facilities are put in place. As this is not known the effect has been assessed as uncertain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation measure (Policy GT1): Before a site is allocated as a gypsy or traveller site an assessment should be carried out on the environmental and social effects likely to arise from the site in comparison to other available sites which should include the consideration of the provision of adequate waste management facilities. The requirements for this assessment should be included within the policy wording or supporting text and further detail could be provided within a development brief if this is being prepared.

<p>NTS Table 6.1: Results of the SA for each aspect of the Local Plan</p>	
<p>Potential significant / uncertain effect identified (significant positive effects are highlighted in green. Please note that no significant negative effects have been identified).</p>	<p>Mitigation measures identified for significant and uncertain effects</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES (Policy ID1 Infrastructure delivery)</p>	
<p>The policy will have mostly a minor positive or neutral effect on the SA objectives through provision of infrastructure plans to meet local needs.</p> <p>The policy will have an significant positive effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4a. Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas / 5a. To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure which good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society: The policy will have a significant positive effect in ensuring that new development provides a wide range of services to the community. • 11c. Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning: The policy will have a significant positive effect in ensuring that new development provides a wide range of services (including green infrastructure) to the community. This will be important in reducing the recreational pressure on Exmoor that may result from development in West Somerset. <p>The policy will have an uncertain effect on the following SA objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1b. Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months) / 2a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions: The policy will ensure that adequate transport facilities are available to support development and this will help to reduce the effect of traffic from new development. If public transport is provided this will help facilitate modal shift and a reduction in car use and will have a minor positive effect. However, the policy does not specifically mention public transport, cycling and walking so the effect is uncertain. 	<p>The policy should be more specific in addressing the provision of public transport, cycling and walking where appropriate.</p>

6.2 Cumulative effects assessment

Regulations governing SA require an assessment of cumulative effects. Cumulative effects arise, for instance, where several developments each have insignificant effects but together have a significant effect; or where the effects of different elements of the plan will have a combined effect. A separate cumulative effects assessment has been undertaken following the assessment of the individual policies. The cumulative effects assessment has considered how the different aspects of the plan could cause cumulative effects. The assessment has also considered how the effects of other projects, plans and programmes could combine with the effects of the Local Plan. The results of the cumulative effects assessment were as follows:

- In terms of the effects in combination with other plans and pending development projects, the assessment addressed the Somerset Future Transport Plan, the Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station development, Somerset Waste and Mineral Local Development Frameworks and the redevelopment of the East Wharf at Watchet. The assessment found no cumulative effects in association with these other plans / projects;
- In terms of the cumulative effects of the different aspects of the Local Plan the assessment found that the sites in the Minehead area could have a potential cumulative significant positive effect on reducing the need to travel and greenhouse gas emissions.
- In terms of the cumulative effects of the sites in in Williton / Watchet the assessment identified a significant positive effect in relation to reducing the need to travel and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Potential significant negative cumulative effects on landscape in Minehead and flooding in Williton have been mitigated by changes to the plan and are therefore, now considered to be neutral.

7 Monitoring

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 3b of the SA report – Assessment of the Publication Draft available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

7.1 Introduction

Regulations governing SA state that the significant effects of the plan should be monitored. This is so that any unexpected effects can be identified and action taken to reduce / eliminate these effects. A SA monitoring framework has been outlined in the SA report which will be finalised once the mitigation suggested within this SA report has been considered. This will enable the monitoring of the negative and uncertain effects of the plan.

Some of the key areas which will be covered by the monitoring framework are:

- Monitoring of the effects of Policy SD1 should examine how developments that are granted permission contribute to sustainability. The results of this monitoring should be used to strengthen the policy in the future;
- Where the sustainability appraisal has identified a risk that there will be a significant negative impact then there needs to be monitoring to ensure that the potential impacts can be addressed as early as possible; and
- The success of Policy ID1 in providing services (including green infrastructure) should be monitored.

8 Next Steps

For a full explanation of this part of the SA see Part 1 of the SA report – Introduction and Methodology available at the following website:

<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan-to-2032/Sustainability-Appraisal>

After the Local Plan Publication Draft has been consulted on, it will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for Public Examination as a Submission Local Plan. It is unlikely that significant changes will be made between the Publication and Submission versions but any changes made will be subject to SA if significant.

The independent Public Examination will test the “soundness” of the Local Plan and the Council may need to make some changes based on the Inspector’s recommendations. The Local Plan is then finalised and adopted. Once the plan is adopted, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) adoption statement will need to be published in accordance with the SEA Regulations. These regulations state that as soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of the plan a statement should be produced and published setting out how environmental considerations and opinions expressed through consultation have been taken into account in the planning process.