



West Somerset Local  
Development Framework:  
Core Strategy Options Paper

Sustainability Appraisal  
Options Assessment

Prepared for:

**West Somerset Council**

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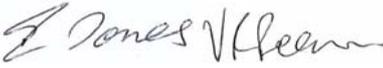
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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The preparation of the West Somerset Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy is being subject to an integrated sustainability appraisal (SA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA) in line with the requirements of:

- Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which requires a environmental assessment to be carried out on certain plans and programmes prepared by public authorities that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment); and
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) (which requires sustainability appraisal (SA) of all emerging Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents).

The sustainability appraisal is being carried out by ENVIRON using a team of consultants experienced in SA and SEA of local authority spatial planning documents.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal

The purpose of the sustainability appraisal is to promote sustainable development by integrating sustainability considerations into the plan making process. This is done through a number of stages:

- **Completed stages:** The production of an SA scoping report (originally produced in July 2006 and updated in May 2009), which examined the sustainability issues in West Somerset. The issues identified in the scoping report were used to produce a sustainability appraisal framework against which the plan could be measured;
- **This stage:** The production of a briefing paper to the Council (this report) which outlines the results of the sustainability appraisal of the LDF Core Strategy Options Paper (January 2010). The SA team has examined the sustainability effects of the issues and options put forward for consideration and this report provides recommendations to the Council as to how to develop the preferred options in a sustainable manner; and
- **The next steps:** The appraisal of the preferred options and the production of an SA report. This will be the formal SA report under the terms of the SEA Regulations and the Planning Act as referenced above. The results of the preferred options appraisal will be used by the Council to develop the pre-submission and the final submission draft of the plan.

## 1.3 This Report

The purpose of SA is to integrate sustainability and environmental considerations into plan making. In order to do this, it is necessary for plan makers to be aware of the implications of their decisions as early as possible in the planning process. Assessing issues and options

helps to ensure that sustainability considerations are integrated into plan making at the earliest stages. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to outline the sustainability effects of the issues and options in order to guide the plan makers as they write the preferred options document.

## 2 The West Somerset LDF Core Strategy

Spatial planning in West Somerset is currently guided by the Local Plan, which sets the framework for development within the district. Exmoor National Park lies outside the administrative boundary covered by the West Somerset Local Plan and spatial planning in Exmoor is guided by the Exmoor National Park Local Plan. The most recent version of the West Somerset Local Plan was adopted in April 2006.

The Government has introduced comprehensive changes to the development planning system via the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Under the terms of this Act, West Somerset Council is obliged to replace the adopted Local Plan with a new-style plan, to be known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF consists of a number of Local Development Documents (LDDs) including:

- Core Strategy: this will set out the vision, objectives and policies for spatial land use planning in West Somerset.
- Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD): This will set out the sites which have been selected to accommodate housing and other development. The process for producing this document will start later in the LDF process; and
- Planning Obligations SPD.

The Core Strategy is the first document to be progressed for the LDF and an Options Paper was published for consultation in 2010. The Options Paper set out a number of key issues that the LDF will need to tackle and a number of options for how to take forward these issues. More detail on the content of the Options Paper is given in Section 3 of this report.

## 3 Methodology of the Options Assessment Process

### 3.1 Introduction

Sustainability appraisal is being carried out as an integral part of the LDF Core Strategy preparation and has a number of set stages. The stages that have been carried out so far are shown in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: SA Stages</b>	
<b>DPD Stage</b>	<b>Purpose of the SA Stage</b>
<b>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</b>	
A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives.	To document how the plan is affected by outside factors and suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed.
A2: Collecting baseline information.	To provide an evidence base for sustainability issues, effects prediction and monitoring.
A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems.	To help focus the SA and streamline the subsequent stages, including baseline information analysis, setting of the SA Framework, prediction of effects and monitoring.
A4: Developing the SA framework.	To provide a means by which the sustainability of the plan can be appraised.
A5: Producing scoping report and consulting on the scope of the SA.	To consult with statutory bodies with social, environmental, or economic responsibilities to ensure the appraisal covers the key sustainability issues.
<b>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects (this stage)</b>	
B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework.	To ensure that the overall objectives of the DPD are in accordance with sustainability principles and provide a suitable framework for developing options.
B2: Developing the DPD options.	To assist in the development and refinement of the options, by identifying potential sustainability effects of options.

The issues identified in the scoping report were used to produce a SA framework against which the plan could be measured. This is shown in Table 2.

<b>Table 2: SA Framework</b>	
<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions. Will the plan lead to...</b>
<b>1. Air and noise</b>	
1a. Reduce impacts on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion.	Potential changes in areas currently identified as tranquil areas?
1b. Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months).	A reduction in the number of private motor vehicle trips and / or a reduction in the number of existing traffic congestion hotspots?  Potentially incompatible land use with relation to noise and air quality for local residents?
<b>2. Climate and energy</b>	
2a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	A change in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per person?
2b. Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development.	A change in the amount of energy used per person through promotion of energy efficient materials use, design and construction and environmental standards e.g. Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM)?
2c. Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources.	A change in numbers of renewable energy projects?  Better adaptation of development to the effects of climate change?
<b>3. Crime</b>	
3a. Reduce anti social behaviour and fear of crime.	A reduction in fear of crime and the level of anti social behaviour?
<b>4. Public infrastructure</b>	
4a. Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas.	Improved access to services and facilities (including open space, recreation and sports facilities, cultural and educational facilities)?
<b>5. Population and social inclusion</b>	
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 development and maintenance of a balanced and sustainable population structure within the District?  Meeting the need for affordable housing across the District and particularly in the areas where the need is greatest?  Flexibility in the use of homes, e.g. by the use of lifetimes homes standard etc?  Reduced deprivation across the district?
<b>6. Soils and geology</b>	
6a. Reduce land contamination, and safeguard	The remediation of contaminated sites?

<b>Table 2: SA Framework</b>	
<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions. Will the plan lead to...</b>
soil and geological quality and quantity.	<p>Levels of development on brownfield sites that are above the national target of 60%?</p> <p>Development that protects soil processes and functions and sites valued for their geological characteristics?</p>
<b>7. Waste</b>	
7a. To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste.	<p>A reduction in the amount of waste generated by development and land use change?</p> <p>Encouragement for development to use re-cycled materials and make provision for recycling / composting in all new development?</p>
<b>8. Water</b>	
<p>8a. Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water.</p> <p>8b. Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding.</p> <p>8c. Improve efficiency of water use.</p>	<p>Development where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available or where suitable arrangements are made for their provision?</p> <p>A reduction in per capita water consumption or help to reduce the demand for water through measures such as water efficient design (e.g. rainwater recycling / grey water reuse and BREEAM / Code for Sustainable Homes standards)?</p> <p>Development which avoids areas of high and medium flood risk and adheres to coastal policy?</p> <p>Development likely to affect the status of groundwater and surface water?</p> <p>An increase in the use of SUDS?</p>
<b>9. Cultural heritage</b>	
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.	<p>Development that affects listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens?</p> <p>Development being steered to where it can be accommodated in less sensitive areas?</p> <p>Distinctive development that is well related to the natural environment and characteristic scale, form materials and detailing of the settlement and contributes to a sense of place?</p> <p>The enhancement (and re-use) of the archaeological resource and other aspects of heritage, such as, parks and open spaces, and areas with a particular historical or cultural</p>

<b>Table 2: SA Framework</b>	
<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions. Will the plan lead to...</b>
	association?
<b>10. Human health</b>	
10a. To improve the health and well being of the population and improve access to health services for all.	Healthier lifestyles? Improved access to healthcare?
<b>11. Landscape</b>	
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.	Encourage the use of Town Design Statements, Village Design Statements, Parish Plans, Conservation Area Appraisal, Concept Statements, and Master Plans to raise the standard of design in new development?  Encourage development which considers the existing character, form and pattern of the landscape, buildings and settlements?  Encourage development which incorporates green infrastructure, woodland into the design e.g. green corridors, linking open space etc?
<b>12. Labour market, economy and regeneration</b>	
12a. Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.	Improved access to skills and training to encourage young people to remain in the district?  Increased wage rates?  An increase the District's self sufficiency in terms of employment?  Diversification of employment opportunities?  An increase in available employment land/workspace, industrial and commercial properties?
<b>13. Biodiversity</b>	
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.	Avoidance of net loss, damage to, or fragmentation of designated wildlife sites and the qualifying habitats and species?  Avoidance of loss of 'Favourable Conservation Status' of species afforded protection at a European level?  Fragmentation of habitat networks?  Opportunities for people to come into contact with robust wildlife places whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of these sites?

<b>Table 2: SA Framework</b>	
<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions. Will the plan lead to...</b>
	<p>A maintenance and increase of biodiversity and the variety of habitats?</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of conditions for focal species (with recognition of the fact that the SEA will also take account of species assemblages associated with key habitats for which there is an Action Plan)?</p> <p>Development which includes the integration of ecological conditions?</p>

### 3.2 Assessing the Options

As ODPM guidance<sup>1</sup> outlines, during this stage the effects of the strategic options must be assessed in broad terms. The aim of this assessment is to assist in the selection of the preferred options. Once the preferred options have been formulated they will be assessed in more detail. The Options Paper puts forward a mix of different types of issues and options, as follows:

#### 1. Spatial vision and strategic objectives for the district

#### 2. Strategy Options

- 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.

#### 3. Excluded Options

In an appendix (Appendix 1) the Council has 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 need to be tested by the SA team. These excluded options are:

- 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);

<sup>1</sup> ODPM et al, 2005: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The Stationary Office

- 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 RSS requirement of 2,500 dwellings in a single eco-village / new settlement.

#### 4. Key Themes

Section 6 of the Options Paper sets out key themes for the other matters that the Core Strategy will need to address and discusses 'options' for the types of policies that the Core Strategy could contain to deal with the themes. There are 8 themes (settlement role and function hierarchy, transport, housing, climate change, economy, biodiversity, heritage and other key issues (emerging Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station proposal)) and each has a range of policy option suggestions (2-10 options). Please note that some of the options are not mutually exclusive and some of the policy options are one line in length and are not fully developed.

The approach to the SA is slightly different for the strategic and excluded options and the key themes and this is described in more detail below.

#### 3.2.1 Assessing the spatial vision and strategic objectives, strategic and excluded options

The strategic options and the excluded options have been assessed in the following appraisal matrices:

- Matrix 1: Spatial vision and strategic objectives;
- Matrix 2: Strategy options 1-3; and
- Matrix 3: Excluded options 1-3.

These matrices have been designed to allow comparison between the options but also allow readers to see what the individual performance of each option is likely to be.

As part of the SA it is necessary to outline which of the effects are likely to be significant. To do this in a clear and transparent way a set of significance criteria has been defined for the assessment and every impact has been scored accordingly. The significance criteria that have been used are set out in Table 3.

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	++
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	+

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Symbol</b>
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	?

### 3.2.2 Assessing the key themes

It has not been possible at this stage of the development of the policy options to assess each key theme against the SA Framework due to insufficient information presented within the Options Paper. Therefore, for each key theme, a sustainability commentary has been provided. The commentary has been written through undertaking the following steps:

1. Identification of the key SA Objectives of relevance to the policy area;
2. Identifying what the policies will need to address by referring to the key issues and objectives identified in the Options Paper and sustainability issues; and
3. Commenting on the options listed for each theme identifying any potential sustainability effects and/or omissions.

## 4 Results of the Options Assessment Process

### 4.1 Assumptions made during the Assessment

Sustainability appraisal relies on expert judgement, which is guided by knowledge of the likely impacts of the plan, the baseline data available and responses and information provided by consultees and other stakeholders. The assessment has been carried out and reported using a matrix enabling an expert, judgement-led qualitative assessment to be made in most cases. A 'precautionary approach' is taken, especially with qualitative judgements and mitigation is suggested if there is any doubt as to the effect of the plan.

### 4.2 Summary of the Results and Recommendations

The full results of the SA of the options are shown in Appendices A to D.

#### 1. Summary Findings of the Appraisal of the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

The spatial vision generally performs well against the SA objectives. The vision performs particularly well in relation to reducing the need to travel, encouraging and maintaining a balanced population structure and protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The vision has a neutral performance with regard to ensuring equitable access to facilities and services for all sectors of the community and incorporating green infrastructure into spatial planning. However, it makes no provision for reducing crime and fear of crime, reducing land contamination and protecting soil resources, reducing waste and promoting recycling, improving the health and well-being of the population, improving water quality and protecting cultural heritage and landscape. Therefore, its potential impact on these areas is currently uncertain.

The strategic objectives also perform well against the SA objectives. The objectives perform particularly well in relation to protecting cultural heritage, conserving and enhancing landscape and protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The objectives have a neutral performance with regard to reducing anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. However, they make no provision for reducing noise and visual intrusion, improving public infrastructure, reducing land contamination and protecting soil resources, reducing waste and promoting recycling, improving the health and well-being of the population, improving water quality and incorporating green infrastructure into spatial planning.

#### Recommendations

- The strategic objective concerning reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the District should be expanded to state methods of emissions reduction, e.g. through greater energy efficiency and greater generation of power from renewable sources;
- The strategic objectives should be expanded to include reference to avoiding noise pollution and reducing impacts on tranquillity;
- The fourth bullet point of the strategic objectives could be expanded to include the design of new development adapting to climate change;

- The vision and strategic objectives could be improved by reference to increasing energy efficiency and generation and use of renewable energy;
- The performance of the vision and the strategic objectives would be improved if they referred to waste reduction and sustainable waste management;
- The performance of the vision and the strategic objectives would be improved if they referred to improving water quality;
- The strategic objectives could include an additional bullet point encouraging sustainable construction and/or water efficiency in new developments;
- The strategic objectives could include an additional bullet point to improve the health and well-being of residents; and
- The strategic objectives and vision would be improved if they referred to improving the districts green infrastructure resource.

## 2. Summary Findings of the Appraisal of the Strategy Options

Strategy Option 1 focuses on strengthening the local economy of Minehead and promoting Watchet and Williton as important local centres, which is where around half of the population of West Somerset is based. As such, it performs well in terms of reducing the need to travel, reducing anti-social behaviour and fear of crime and improving sustainable economic activity within West Somerset. It also makes provision for SUDS measures and green infrastructure to be included in all new development. However, its performance in relation to many of the SA objectives is uncertain as it does not make provision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy generation, reducing land contamination, reducing waste generation and promoting recycling, improving water quality, protecting cultural heritage assets, protecting biodiversity and nature conservation sites and conserving and enhancing landscape features.

Strategy Option 2 focuses on strengthening the local economy of Minehead and promoting Watchet, Williton and Stogursey as important local centres, the latter centre assisting with the predicted increase in traffic caused by the proposed Hinkley Point nuclear power station expansion. As such, it performs well in terms of reducing noise and visual intrusion, reducing the need to travel, reducing anti-social behaviour and fear of crime and improving sustainable economic activity within West Somerset. It also makes provision for SUDS measures and green infrastructure to be included in all new development. However, its performance in relation to many of the SA objectives is uncertain as it also does not make provision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy generation, reducing land contamination, reducing waste generation and promoting recycling, improving water quality, protecting cultural heritage assets, protecting biodiversity and nature conservation sites and conserving and enhancing landscape features.

Strategy Option 3 focuses on strengthening the local economy of Minehead, promoting Watchet, Williton and Stogursey as important local centres and promoting new development in other larger villages across West Somerset. As such, it performs well in terms of ensuring equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community (including those in rural areas), developing and maintaining a balanced and

sustainable population structure, improving access to health services for all and improving sustainable economic activity within West Somerset. It also makes provision for SUDS measures and green infrastructure to be included in all new development. However, its performance in relation to many of the SA objectives is uncertain as it may increase the need to travel and it does not make provision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, encouraging energy efficiency, reducing land contamination, reducing waste generation and promoting recycling, improving water quality, protecting cultural heritage assets, protecting biodiversity and nature conservation sites and conserving and enhancing landscape features.

## Recommendations

- The Strategy Options should promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation in new development;
- The Strategy Options should present measures to address the flood risk in Minehead and Watchet;
- The Strategy Options should seek to protect and enhance distinctive landscapes through good design of new development, particularly Strategy Options 2 and 3, which may provide for new development in the vicinity of Quantock Hills AONB;
- The Strategy Options should seek to protect and conserve archaeological assets; and
- The Strategy Options should seek to protect and enhance biodiversity and nature conservation sites.

### 3. Summary Findings of the Appraisal of the Excluded Strategy Options

Excluded Option 1 proposes to disperse the proposed new development across West Somerset, with less development in the larger settlements and some within the smaller settlements, including those with few or no facilities. As a result, it performs badly in terms of reducing the need to travel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is also likely to involve development on greenfield, undeveloped land and, therefore, will not contribute to reducing land contamination, safeguarding soil resources, protecting biodiversity or increasing recycling provision. It also may have a negative impact on landscape features and it is unlikely to promote or encourage sustainable economic activity in West Somerset. If designed well, it may help to raise the standard of design in West Somerset, and it may be able to incorporate efficiency measures for water and energy use. However, this is unclear at this stage.

Excluded Option 2 proposes no new development at Minehead and substantial new development in the east of the District, in proximity to the M5 corridor. As such, it performs particularly badly in terms of improving sustainable economic activity in West Somerset, reducing the need to travel and reducing noise and visual intrusion. It is also likely to involve development on greenfield, undeveloped land and, therefore, will not contribute to reducing land contamination, safeguarding soil resources, protecting biodiversity or increasing recycling provision. It is also unlikely to improve access to health services and ensure viable access to services and facilities for all. It is uncertain whether the new development would include climate change adaptation measures or increase efficiencies in water or energy use.

Excluded Option 3 proposes to concentrate the new development to create a new settlement or eco-town, of approximately 2,500 dwellings. However, this would not be large enough to support new service provision or to be a self-contained settlement. Therefore, this option performs badly in terms of improving sustainable economic activity within West Somerset and enabling regeneration of key areas, reducing the need to travel, ensuring viable access to services and facilities and improving access to health services. It is also likely to involve development on greenfield, undeveloped land and, therefore, will not contribute to conserving and enhancing landscape features, reducing land contamination, safeguarding soil resources, protecting biodiversity or increasing recycling provision. If designed well, it may raise the standard of design in West Somerset, and it is also likely to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency and water use.

#### Recommendations

- It should be considered whether any of the Excluded Options may help to address existing flood risk in West Somerset; and
- It should be considered whether any of the Excluded Options may help to protect existing cultural heritage features.

### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Assessment of the Key Themes

### **Theme 6.1 Settlement Policy - Settlement Role and function hierarchy**

The policy options for Settlement Policy are not mutually exclusive. They could all result in positive effects with regards to the relevant SA Objective and should all be included in the Core Strategy.

The options for the overarching spatial development strategy set out in Section 5 have been appraised separately and recommendations have been put forward in relation to the Spatial Development Strategy within Matrix 1 (see above).

The types of infrastructure required to support development (or the types of infrastructure for which contributions will be sought) will need to be set out within the Core Strategy.

### **Theme 6.2 Transport - Making West Somerset's communities more self contained**

Policy options 'd' and 'e' involve investigating additional uses of the West Somerset Railway for freight and passenger commuter services. The investigations would need to consider noise, vibration and tranquillity impacts on sensitive receptors and whether the additional uses of the railway could impact on tourism use.

Policy option 'g' proposes a relief road on the edges of Williton which could result in a number of potential negative environmental effects. Such a development would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and core policy wording could suggest the issues that would need to be addressed within the EIA.

Policy option 'b' should be amended to require all developments to maximise walking and cycling through the design of the development and/or through contributions as appropriate.

The options do not address the need to improve access to rural communities by public transport. The options could also make the connection between creating a network of cycling and walking routes serving the main settlements of the district and, at the same time, enhancing the green infrastructure network. Longer distance footpaths and cycleways between settlements could also encourage walking and cycling amongst tourists and these should also be encouraged within the Core Policies in association with the Local Transport Plan.

### **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**

The following have been omitted and these should be addressed within the core policies:

- The potential for housing to contribute to identified regeneration;
- The location of housing with regard to flood risk and other environmental sensitivities;
- Provision for gypsies and travellers;
- Encouraging the reuse of brownfield sites before the development of Greenfield sites; and

- Although the policy options include option 'g' ensuring high quality design, this should be expanded to include sustainable design, safety, complementing and/or enhancing the surrounding built environment, including historic areas and buildings and design standards.

Most of the policy options would result in positive effects although it is identified that policy option 'f' could result in negative environmental effects. It is recommended that justification for the inclusion of option 'f' is needed and explanation is needed as to why an options of adjusting the settlement boundaries of some villages has not been proposed.

#### **Theme 6.4 Climate Change - Mitigating the effects of climate change**

All of the policy options proposed would result in positive effects with regards to the SA Objectives and they should all be considered for inclusion in the Core Policies. There are some potential negative effects but these may be mitigable and therefore it is considered that these are unlikely to give sufficient reason to reject a particular policy option. Core Policies will need to address the need to mitigate any potential negative effects associated with these proposed policy options. This theme should cover both contributions towards climate change and adaptation to climate change. Policy option 'h' should be extended to ensure that new housing developments and tourism developments are within walking and cycling distance of basic services, such as a shop. A Core Policy which sets out sustainable construction and design requirements and which refers to recognised standards is recommended.

#### **Theme 6.5 Economy - Strengthening and broadening the local economy**

The policy options are not mutually exclusive and there would not appear to be any options which should not be taken forward for sustainability reasons. However, a clearer justification is needed for the proposed new jetty at Minehead and without this it is unclear what the specific benefits could be with relation to sustainability effects. The policy options proposed provide a good coverage and address most of the issues identified. A number of recommendations are made by the SA team as follows:

- There is no policy option which specifically supports retail provision within villages which is identified within the key issues and this should be addressed within the Core Policies.
- The Core Policies should ensure that economic development does not adversely affect the environmental quality, including biodiversity, historic environment and water quality of the district.
- If policy option 'c' is taken forward, policy wording will be needed to ensure that a balance is achieved between the economic viability of wood supply businesses with biodiversity and carbon capture functions that trees provide.

#### **Theme 6.6 Biodiversity Protecting and enhancing biodiversity**

Policy options 'a' and 'b' are similar and could be combined into one policy. The inclusion of developer contributions would help to secure biodiversity improvements through new

developments. Policy option 'c' in particular would result in improvements to habitats within the district.

There is no mention of focal species within the policy options and although these might benefit from the achievement of BAP objectives (policy option 'c') they are of local importance and should ideally be mentioned within the Core Policies. Specific core policy wording may be required in relation to the protection of European designated sites depending on the results of Habitats Regulations Assessment work on the Core Strategy which is being undertaken as the plan develops. Specific policy wording may be needed to avoid adverse effects on European designated sites.

### **Theme 7.6 Heritage - Safeguarding and enhancing local distinctiveness**

This theme might be better expanded to include distinctiveness and landscape as well as heritage as the issues that are raised under this heading relate to local distinctiveness and landscape as well as heritage.

The policy options could be expanded to include the need for new developments to reflect the local architectural vernacular, materials, scale and form in areas which are not conservation areas and the need for developments to reflect historic patterns of development such as plots and boundaries, where possible.

Policy wording will be needed in order to ensure the protection and enhancement of all of the features mentioned in SA Objective 9a, in particular because archaeology and unknown archaeology are not addressed by the proposed policy options.

It is recommended that any core policies which relate to the conservation of historic buildings and conservation areas contain some flexibility to allow small scale renewable and energy efficiency improvements subject to visual impact and consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer.

### **Theme 6.8 Other important issues - Emerging Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station Proposal**

The construction and operation of a new nuclear power station near to the existing Hinkley B installation will result in significant negative effects on the environment and the community. Such effects would relate to most of the environmental SA Objectives such as waste, water quality, air quality, traffic, noise and visual, soils and biodiversity. Community impacts could also relate to traffic and the impact on the health of residents particularly arising from perceived risk associated with proximity to such a facility. A new power station could also affect the image of the area and there is a particular risk with relation to the tourism industry. This could occur both during construction and operation. The site of the new power station will be on the coast and therefore sufficient flood risk assessment and mitigation for the lifetime of the facility will need to be required at the planning application stage.

However, there is the potential for positive effects such as job creation during the construction and operational stages and the facility would generate low carbon electricity.

Core policies will need to set requirements in order to minimise negative impacts to the district and to compensate for any impacts which cannot be mitigated.

## 5 Conclusions and Next Steps

This report presents the findings of the appraisal of the options set out within the Options Paper (January 2010). The next stage of the LDF Core Strategy will be the development of a preferred strategy. The purpose of the appraisal is to help inform the selection of this preferred strategy and these findings will now be taken on board in the development of this strategy.

The appraisal of the preferred option will provide information on mitigating any identified effects and opportunities for enhancement where relevant.

## **Appendix A**

### **Results of the Appraisal of the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives**

<b>Key</b>	<b>--</b>	Significant negative impact	<b>-</b>	Minor negative impact	<b>+</b>	Minor positive impact	<b>++</b>	Significant positive impact	<b>0</b>	Neutral	<b>?</b>	Uncertain
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**Table 1: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives**

SEA objectives	Impact of the option		Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	Spatial Vision	Strategic Objectives		
<b>1. Air and noise</b>				
<b>1a:</b> Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion	+	?	<p>Noise and loss of tranquillity is an issue which may worsen with the increase in air traffic.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the suitability of brownfield sites next to industrial sites for housing development as they could be impacted by the ongoing industrial activities.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, through its aim to increase provision of new housing specifically in areas that will help to secure a reduction in transport demand. In addition, its aim to ensure that, by 2026, more of the District's food supply will be produced locally is likely to have a positive impact on the SA objective, through reducing traffic volume.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are uncertain as there is no provision made for minimising noise or reducing impacts on tranquillity. As noise and tranquillity may worsen in the future, these would appear to be omissions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the strategic objectives should be expanded to include reference to avoiding noise pollution and reducing impacts on tranquillity.</p>
<b>1b:</b> Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with	++	+	<p>There is seasonal peak hour traffic congestion in West Somerset, particularly on the A358 / A39 on changeover days at</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective, through its aim to increase provision of new housing specifically in areas that will help to secure a reduction in transport demand. In addition, its aim</p>

<b>Table 1: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives</b>				
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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months)			<p>Butlins in Minehead.</p> <p>Air pollution is not necessarily a significant issue in West Somerset and data shows that NO<sub>2</sub> objectives for 2010 are likely to be met. Monitoring is ongoing.</p>	<p>to ensure that, by 2026, more of the District's food supply will be produced locally is likely to have a significant positive impact on the SA objective, through reducing food miles.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, through increasing self-containment with the District's main settlements.</p>
<b>2. Climate and energy</b>				
<b>2a:</b> Reduce greenhouse gas emissions	+	+	<p>West Somerset's emissions increased between 2003 and 2006 from 379 ktonnes in 2003 to 385 ktonnes in 2006 and are higher per capita than the South West and the UK.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aims as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to enable more people to work close to their homes;</li> <li>• to diversify the tourism industry with a wider range of sustainable enterprises;</li> <li>• developing new housing in locations which will help to secure a reduction in transport demand;</li> <li>• to increase the low carbon economy locally by 2026; and</li> <li>• to produce more of the District's food supply locally by 2026.</li> </ul> <p>These aims will all help to reduce travel and emissions to air.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through making a significant</p>

SEA objectives	Impact of the option		Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	Spatial Vision	Strategic Objectives		
				<p>reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the District.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The strategic objective concerning reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the District should be expanded to state methods of emissions reduction, e.g. through greater energy efficiency and greater generation of power from renewable sources;</p>
<p><b>2b:</b> Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development</p>	+	+	<p>West Somerset is not sufficiently engaged with climate change adaptation forums within the region. Future adaptation strategies will need to be developed to prepare for the changes to come.</p> <p>Climate change will have a number of effects 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> <p>Climate change adaptation is an important issue as the climate for the next 30-40 years has been predicted to change. Effects on physical infrastructure, health, energy demands and demands for outdoor recreation all need consideration.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to positively manage flood risk in accommodating new development.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through successfully managing flood risk in implementing new development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the fourth bullet point of the strategic objectives could be expanded to include the design of new development adapting to climate change.</p>

<b>Table 1: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives</b>				
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the option</b>		<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>2c:</b> Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources	?	?	<p>In West Somerset the average consumption of electricity was much higher than both in the South West and England as a whole (based on 2006 data). However, gas consumption was lower.</p> <p>West Somerset has a small number of projects generating renewable electricity and heat but more needs to be done to help achieve the 2010 sub regional target for Somerset, which is to produce 359-412 GWh of its electricity from renewable energy by 2010 (equivalent to supplying 89,750-103,000 homes).</p>	<p>The spatial vision could have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to achieve a marked increase in low carbon economy locally by 2026. However, there is no mention of promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy specifically, so it does not achieve a positive impact and is uncertain.</p> <p>The strategic objectives could have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through aiming to make a significant reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the District, however, there is no specific mention of encouraging energy efficiency or renewable energy generation, therefore, it is not clear how this is to be achieved.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the vision and strategic objectives could be improved by reference to increasing energy efficiency and generation and use of renewable energy.</p>
<b>3. Crime</b>				
<b>3a:</b> Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime	?	○	<p>West Somerset has the lowest overall crime of all the districts in Somerset. The general trend in overall crime is down in West Somerset (although there was an increase in 2006/07).</p> <p>Criminal damage and other theft offences</p>	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for reducing anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive effect in relation to this SA objective through creating an aspiring, enterprising and entrepreneurial culture and through developing the quality of the</p>

<b>Table 1: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives</b>				
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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
			<p>are the most common forms of crime in West Somerset accounting for 21% of crime each.</p> <p>Audit Commission data shows that 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.</p> <p>The Police emergency response rates are improving, despite much of West Somerset being in rural areas.</p> <p>There is a concern about motor vehicle theft in West Somerset as the theft of motor vehicles increased by 31% in 2006/07.</p>	<p>tourism offer. There is no specific inclusion of measures to reduce fear of crime, however, the baseline information shows that anti-social behaviour and fear of crime are not common in West Somerset.</p>
<b>4. Public Infrastructure</b>				
<b>4a:</b> Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including	+	?	<p>There is a lack of social activities available to people with disabilities.</p> <p>An issue in West Somerset is the viability of rural services and facilities.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to enhance the villages of Minehead, Watchet, Williton, Brushford and Dulverton into centres of a thriving and varied local economy, by 2026. There is no mention of specific services, such as public transport, however, this is not considered</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
those in rural areas				<p>appropriate to the spatial vision.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact on this SA objective through strengthening the role and function of the District's main settlements and through increasing self-containment in the District's main settlements. However, no specific reference is made to increasing access to services for those living in rural areas. Therefore, the impact of the strategic objectives is currently uncertain.</p>
<b>5. Population and social inclusion</b>				
<p><b>5a:</b> To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society.</p>	++	+	<p>West Somerset has the lowest population density in the region, which could have implications for providing services to a dispersed population.</p> <p>Inward migration is the main cause of population growth, which is putting pressure on the local housing market, particularly as the district has a large proportion of second home owners.</p> <p>The area also has a high percentage of people within the older age bands (65 years and over), which may put pressure on health care services and affect the available local workforce for employers.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its dual aims to both enhance the villages of Minehead, Watchet, Williton, Brushford and Dulverton into centres of a thriving and varied local economy, and to increase the amount of affordable housing by 2026. These aims will enable people to work close to their homes and will increase the amount of affordable housing, and will also help to achieve a balanced population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact on this SA objective through making a step change in the provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs.</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
			<p>West Somerset has pockets of deprivation. The 2007 IMD scores found the worst affected wards were: Quantock Vale, Minehead, Williton, Quarme and Dulverton wards. Data also shows that West Somerset has the highest level of deprivation compared to the rest of Somerset.</p> <p>Lack of affordable housing is a key issue in the district and average house prices are some of the highest in the county. The low level of provision of affordable housing in recent years is a cause of continuing concern for the council.</p>	
<b>6. Soils and geology</b>				
<b>6a:</b> Reduce land contamination and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity	?	?	<p>Some areas of West Somerset are classed as the best and most versatile agricultural land. The high quality agricultural land should be protected.</p> <p>West Somerset has two sites registered under the Geological Conservation Review (GCR); Blue Anchor to the Listock Coast and Glenthorne.</p>	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for reducing contamination and safeguarding soil resources.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for reducing contamination and safeguarding soil resources.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> as high quality agricultural land is found within</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
			<p>West Somerset currently has very low levels of mineral activity.</p> <p>West Somerset currently has low levels of new development on previously developed land.</p> <p>The 2008/09 Annual Monitoring Report indicates that 67.5% of new dwellings were completed on previously developed land and 32.5% of new dwellings were completed at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare coming close to the government target of 100%. Consultees at the Scoping Consultation Workshop have indicated that there may be concern that high density development may be inappropriate for West Somerset.</p>	<p>the district, the strategic objectives should mention protecting soils, in particular, high quality agricultural land.</p>
<b>7. Waste</b>				
<b>7a:</b> To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of	?	?	<p>Waste recycled and composted in West Somerset is increasing but will need to increase more to meet the national target of at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020.</p> <p>The amount of household waste collected</p>	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for waste reduction and sustainable waste management.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for waste reduction and sustainable waste management.</p>

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<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the option</b>		<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
waste			<p>per head in West Somerset appears to be declining.</p> <p>The majority of commercial waste is still being disposed of in landfills.</p> <p>A significant proportion of hazardous waste in Somerset is exported.</p> <p>There is a limited landfill capacity within Somerset, which is expected to run out 3-4 years after the end of the current Somerset Waste Local Plan period in 2011.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation:</b> The performance of the vision and the strategic objectives would be improved if they referred to waste reduction and sustainable waste management.</p>
<b>8. Water</b>				
8a: Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water	?	?	<p>Under the terms of the Water Framework Directive, most of the West Somerset streams do not meet Good Ecological Status (GES) and as such action will be required to ensure GES is met by 2015;</p> <p>Bathing water is of good quality apart from at Blue Anchor beach.</p>	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for improving water quality.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for improving water quality.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The performance of the vision and the strategic objectives would be improved if they referred to improving water quality.</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>8b:</b> Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding.	+	+	There are two main areas at risk from fluvial flooding in West Somerset, Williton and Minehead. Flooding may become more common with the effects of climate change and the planning system needs to deal with adaptation to flooding effects.	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to positively manage flood risk in accommodating new development.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact on reducing flood risk through successfully managing flood in implementing new developments.</p>
<b>8c:</b> Improve efficiency of water use	?	?	Water efficiency (as measured through water leakage) is increasing.	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for improving the efficiency of water use.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for improving the efficiency of water use.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The strategic objectives could include an additional bullet point encouraging sustainable construction and/or water efficiency in new developments.</p>
<b>9. Cultural Heritage</b>				
<b>9a:</b> Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites,	?	++	As 80% of the land use in West Somerset is agricultural, there is an increasing need to preserve the known and unknown archaeological baseline of the area	The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for protection of heritage and archaeological features.

SEA objectives	Impact of the option		Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	Spatial Vision	Strategic Objectives		
monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas.			<p>There has been a rise in the level of detailed archaeological assessments and larger scale archaeological excavations as development control mitigation with the rise in 'brownfield' developments. Financial implications for development costs.</p> <p>Within West Somerset, historic patterns of development, plots and boundaries (historic grain) are being lost i.e. loss of gardens accompanying larger historic houses and loss of backland burgage plots in the historic core of settlements.</p> <p>Demolition of structures of local historic or architectural merit is an issue in West Somerset. Also, loss of gardens, other curtilage areas and boundary features important to the character of historic buildings.</p> <p>There is a concern regarding loss of local architectural distinctiveness, with the diminished use and reference to traditional local materials and architectural detailing.</p>	<p>However, the strategic objectives are likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through both conserving and enhancing the character of historic settlements, buildings and landscapes and ensuring and that new development contributes to the area's heritage in a positive way.</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>10. Human health</b>				
<b>10a:</b> To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all.	?	?	<p>West Somerset has an ageing population, the problems of which will be exacerbated in the future by a low total fertility rate and an increasing life expectancy.</p> <p>Limiting long term illness in West Somerset is greater than the regional and national averages.</p> <p>The impact of large seasonal influxes of people during the summer months can double the local population in the area, putting pressure on services.</p> <p>In Somerset 34.7% of adults are overweight and 13.5% are obese.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to enhance the villages of Minehead, Watchet, Williton, Brushford and Dulverton into centres of a thriving and varied local economy, which would include the provision of better access to public transport and health services. However, there is no provision made for improvements to recreational access routes and, therefore, the impact of the vision on this SA objective is uncertain.</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for improving access to healthcare facilities or improving recreational or sports facilities. However, the objectives include increasing self-containment of settlements which could encourage more walking and cycling.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the strategic objectives could include an additional bullet point to improve the health and well-being of residents.</p>
<b>11. Landscape</b>				
<b>11a:</b> Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and	?	++	<p>Major development of areas outside the boundaries of designated areas can have a visual impact on views and lead to light pollution.</p>	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for landscape conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>However, the strategic objectives are likely to have a significant</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
features within them, are conserved and enhanced.			<p>Visual impacts within the Quantock Hills AONB have been identified as a key threat to the landscape through the construction of pylons, masts and wind turbines.</p> <p>The Countryside Agency's Character Areas have undergone changes that are not consistent with their character. The main cause of these changes is due to the use of more intensive land management practices, leading to loss of hedgerows, woodlands and orchards, and increased field size.</p>	positive impact in relation to this SA objective through both conserving and enhancing the character of historic settlements, buildings and landscapes and ensuring and that new development contributes to the area's heritage in a positive way.
<b>11b:</b> Enhance the form and design of the built environment	?	++	New development is not always consistent with the character of the area and the local building vernacular.	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for enhancing the form and design of the built environment.</p> <p>However, the strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through both enhancing the character of historic settlements and buildings and ensuring and that new development contributes to the area's heritage in a positive way.</p>
<b>11c:</b> Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into	○	?	Somerset has a low percentage of woodland cover, below the national county average.	The spatial vision may have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to strengthen biodiversity by 2026. It does not provide for any specific measures to encourage green infrastructure.

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SEA objectives	Impact of the option		Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	Spatial Vision	Strategic Objectives		
spatial planning				<p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for provision of green infrastructure in spatial planning.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the strategic objectives and vision would be improved if they referred to improving the districts green infrastructure resource.</p>
<b>12. Labour market, economy and regeneration</b>				
<p><b>12a:</b> Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.</p>	++	++	<p>The economic activity rate of West Somerset is below both the regional and national levels.</p> <p>The number of people claiming work related benefits increased between 2005 and 2007.</p> <p>A higher % of people in West Somerset have no qualifications and a smaller number are educated to level 4-5.</p> <p>Lack of a good transport system, coupled with distance from higher education institutions means it is difficult for people to access opportunities to develop their skills.</p> <p>West Somerset has experienced a net</p>	<p>The spatial strategy is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to enhance the villages of Minehead, Watchet, Williton, Brushford and Dulverton into centres of a thriving and varied local economy, by 2026, enabling more people to work close to their homes. The vision also includes improving skills and diversifying the tourism sector into a wider range of more sustainable enterprises.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through creating an aspiring, enterprising and entrepreneurial culture within West Somerset and providing affordable housing to meet local needs. These objectives will increase economic activity and enable the regeneration of key areas.</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
			<p>loss in the number of jobs over time; the district is also a net exporter of labour, with residents travelling outside the district for work.</p> <p>West Somerset has a higher percentage of people working from home compared to Somerset and England.</p> <p>There is a lack of available employment land/workspace, industrial and commercial properties.</p>	
<b>13. Biodiversity</b>				
<b>13a:</b> Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels	++	++	<p>Many important species are found in the wider countryside. Therefore, the value of habitats not designated and habitat networks needs consideration and protection.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to strengthen biodiversity by 2026.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective through protecting and enhancing biodiversity throughout the District.</p>
<b>13b:</b> Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species	+	+	<p>The majority of semi-natural habitats have declined significantly in Somerset as a whole.</p>	<p>The spatial vision is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through its aim to strengthen biodiversity by 2026. Specific population of focal species are not mentioned, however, this is not considered appropriate to the spatial vision.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are likely to have a positive impact in</p>

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	<b>Spatial Vision</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
				relation to this SA objective through protecting and enhancing biodiversity throughout the District, however, specific species and locations are not given and this is not considered appropriate for the strategic objectives.
<b>13c:</b> Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district	?	?	West Somerset has a large number of sites designated for their ecological value which require protection, and the cross boundary effects on Exmoor National Park are likely to be important.	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for increasing the land area of UK BAP habitats within the district. However, BAP habitats are considered to be too specific to mention within the vision and it would be expected that this is addressed through the appropriate policy on the natural environment</p> <p>The potential effects of the strategic objectives in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for increasing the land area of UK BAP habitats within the district. However, BAP habitats are considered to be too specific to mention within the strategic objectives and it would be expected that this is addressed through the appropriate policy on the natural environment.</p>
<b>13d:</b> Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.	?	?	Some of the designated sites in West Somerset are in an unfavourable condition, due mostly to inappropriate management although some contribution to condition may be a result of recreational and tourist pressures on sites.	<p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for maintaining and improving the conservation status of nature conservation sites. However, this is considered to be too much detail to be included within the vision.</p> <p>The potential effects of the spatial vision in relation to this SA objective are currently uncertain as there is no provision made for</p>

SEA objectives	Impact of the option		Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including, if appropriate, nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	Spatial Vision	Strategic Objectives		
			<p>West Somerset has three internationally designated sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods SAC;</li> <li>• Exmoor Heaths SAC; and</li> <li>• Severn Estuary SPA, candidate SAC, Ramsar.</li> </ul> <p>West Somerset also contains 11 SSSI's.</p> <p>Natural Nature Reserves in West Somerset are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkcombe Woods NNR; and</li> <li>• Tarr Steps Woodland NNR.</li> </ul> <p>West Somerset also has a total of 564 Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	<p>maintaining and improving the conservation status of nature conservation sites. However, this is considered to be too much detail to be included within the strategic objectives.</p>

## **Appendix B**

### **Results of the Appraisal of the Strategy Options**

<b>Key</b>	<b>--</b>	Significant negative impact	<b>-</b>	Minor negative impact	<b>+</b>	Minor positive impact	<b>++</b>	Significant positive impact	<b>0</b>	Neutral	<b>?</b>	Uncertain
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<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>1. Air and noise</b>					
<b>1a:</b> Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion	<b>?</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Noise and loss of tranquillity is an issue which may worsen with the increase in air traffic.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the suitability of brownfield sites next to industrial sites for housing development as they could be impacted by the ongoing industrial activities.</p>	<p>Strategy Option 1 includes for the enhancement of public transport provision in Minehead and, to a lesser extent, in Watchet and Williton, which may contribute to reducing traffic volumes overall, however, there are no specific measures aiming to reduce noise and visual intrusion, therefore, the potential impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Strategy Option 1 should be expanded to include reference to avoiding noise pollution and reducing impacts on tranquillity.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 makes the same provision as Strategy Option 1 with regard to Minehead, Watchet and Williton. However, it also includes for the expansion of Stogursey and its existing facilities, which is designed to mitigate against noise and visual intrusion from Hinkley Point nuclear power station. Therefore, this option is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 makes the same provision as Strategy Option 2 with regard to Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Stogursey and also includes for the enhancement of public transport provision</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
					around a range of larger villages with populations over 500. Therefore, this option is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective.
<b>1b:</b> Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months)	+	+	○	<p>There is seasonal peak hour traffic congestion in West Somerset, particularly on the A358 / A39 on changeover days at Butlins in Minehead.</p> <p>Air pollution is not necessarily a significant issue in West Somerset and data shows that NO<sub>2</sub> objectives for 2010 are likely to be met. Monitoring is ongoing.</p>	<p>Strategy Option 1 aims to reduce the need to travel through strengthening the local economy in Minehead so that the level of service provision is sufficient to deter longer distance commuting. Watchet and Willilton would also be strengthened as important local service centres. Therefore, there would a positive impact in relation to this SA objective in the areas surrounding Minehead, Watchet and Willilton.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 is also likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective through strengthening the local economy and enhancing public transport provision in Minehead, Watchet, Willilton and Stogursey.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 aims to strengthen the local economy and enhance public transport provision in Minehead, Watchet, Willilton, Stogursey and a range of larger villages in West Somerset. However, the allocation of housing development within larger villages may mean that the need to travel increases, therefore, this potential impact in relation to this SA objective is neutral.</p>
<b>2. Climate and energy</b>					
<b>2a:</b> Reduce greenhouse gas	?	?	?	West Somerset's emissions increased between 2003 and 2006 from 379 ktonnes	Strategy Option 1 includes for the enhancement of public transport provision in Minehead and, to a lesser extent, in Watchet and

SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
emissions				in 2003 to 385 ktonnes in 2006 and are higher per capita than the South West and the UK.	<p>Williton, which may contribute to reducing traffic volumes and emissions. However, there is no specific measure for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, so the impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 also includes for the enhancement of public transport provision, however, makes no direct reference to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the potential impact is uncertain.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 also includes for the enhancement of public transport provision, however, makes no direct reference to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the potential impact is uncertain.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> all of the Strategy Options should be expanded to encourage reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, specifying methods for how these are to be reduced.</p>
<b>2b:</b> Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development	?	?	?	<p>West Somerset is not sufficiently engaged with climate change adaptation forums within the region. Future adaptation strategies will need to be developed to prepare for the changes to come.</p> <p>Climate change will have a number of effects in the region including effects on temperature, sea level rises, fluvial and</p>	<p>Strategy Option 1 would require policies promoting Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) for managing surface water run-off and providing green infrastructure, which would have a positive impact. However, as detailed below, Minehead and Williton are situated within areas at risk of fluvial flooding and this strategy option does not specify how that flood risk is to be managed. Therefore, the potential impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.</p>

SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
				<p>coastal flooding. This will particularly affect coastal areas of West Somerset and areas such as Williton.</p> <p>Climate change adaptation is an important issue as the climate for the next 30-40 years has been predicted to change. Effects on physical infrastructure, health, energy demands and demands for outdoor recreation all need consideration.</p>	<p>Strategy Option 2 would also require policies which would include effective SUDS and green infrastructure provision, however, it would also allocate new development primarily within Minehead and, to a lesser extent, in Watchet, Williton and Stogursey. As detailed below, Minehead and Williton are situated within areas at risk of fluvial flooding and this strategy option does not specify how that flood risk is to be managed. Therefore, the potential impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 would also require policies which would include effective SUDS and green infrastructure provision, however, it would allocate new development primarily within Minehead and does not specify how flood risk will be managed. Therefore, the potential impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> all the Strategy Options should be expanded to encourage inclusion of climate change adaptation measures in the design of new development.</p>
<b>2c.</b> Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources	?	?	?	<p>In West Somerset the average consumption of electricity was much higher than both in the South West and England as a whole (based on 2006 data). However, gas consumption was lower.</p> <p>West Somerset has a small number of projects generating renewable electricity</p>	<p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 2 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 3 in relation to this SA</p>

Table 2: Strategy Options					
SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
				and heat but more needs to be done to help achieve the 2010 sub regional target for Somerset, which is to produce 359-412 GWh of its electricity from renewable energy by 2010. (equivalent to supplying 89,750-103,000 homes).	objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.  <b>Recommendation:</b> all the Strategy Options should be expanded to promote increasing energy efficiency and generation and use of renewable energy in new development.
<b>3. Crime</b>					
<b>3a:</b> Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime	+	+	+	<p>West Somerset has the lowest overall crime of all the districts in Somerset. The general trend in overall crime is down in West Somerset (although there was an increase in 2006/07).</p> <p>Criminal damage and other theft offences are the most common forms of crime in West Somerset accounting for 21% of crime each.</p> <p>Audit Commission data shows that 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.</p> <p>The Police emergency response rates are</p>	<p>Strategy Option 1 would be likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, particularly in Minehead, Watchet and Williton, where the economy would be strengthened and service provision enhanced.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 would be likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, particularly in Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Stogursey, where the economy would be strengthened and service provision enhanced.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 would also be likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, across West Somerset, through the strengthening of the economy and the enhancement of service provision.</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>improving, despite much of West Somerset being in rural areas.</p> <p>There is a concern about motor vehicle theft in West Somerset as the theft of motor vehicles increased by 31% in 2006/07.</p>	
<b>4. Public Infrastructure</b>					
<b>4a:</b> Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas	+	+	++	<p>There is a lack of social activities available to people with disabilities.</p> <p>The viability of rural services and facilities is an issue in West Somerset.</p>	<p>Overall, Strategy Option 1 is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, particularly within Minehead, Watchet and Wilton, where public transport improvements are proposed. The potential impact within rural areas is less clear, however, public transport services are likely to be improved.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 is also likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective, within Minehead, Watchet, Wilton and Stogursey, where public transport improvements are proposed. The potential impact within rural areas is less clear, however, public transport services are likely to be improved.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective, as public transport improvements are proposed across West Somerset.</p>
<b>5. Population and social inclusion</b>					
<b>5a:</b> To develop and maintain a balanced	○	○	+	West Somerset has the lowest population density in the region, which could have	Strategy Option 1 is likely to have a neutral impact in relation to this SA objective - some affordable housing is proposed within

SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society.				<p>implications for providing services to a dispersed population.</p> <p>Inward migration is the main cause of population growth, which is putting pressure on the local housing market, particularly as the district has a large proportion of second home owners.</p> <p>The only settlement defined as a town in West Somerset is Minehead which accommodates approximately 12,000 or one third of the district's population. All other settlements in the district have a population of less than 4,000.</p> <p>The area also has a high percentage of people within the older age bands (65 years and over), which could have put pressure on health care services and affect the available local workforce for employers.</p> <p>West Somerset has pockets of deprivation. The 2007 IMD scores found the worst affected wards were: Quantock Vale, Minehead, Williton, Quarme and Dulverton wards. Data also shows that West Somerset has the highest level of</p>	<p>rural exceptions sites, however, this will be a limited amount. The new development proposed at Minehead, Watchet and Williton will help to maintain a balanced population structure and address the shortage within the local housing market, however this is concentrated into the northern area of West Somerset.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 is also likely to have neutral impact in relation to this SA objective, for the same reasons as strategy option 1. Limited affordable housing is proposed and new development will be confined to Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Stogursey, which are in the northern area of West Somerset.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as new development and public transport improvements are proposed across West Somerset , with affordable housing proposed for the smaller villages.</p>

Table 2: Strategy Options					
SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
				<p>deprivation compared to the rest of Somerset.</p> <p>Lack of affordable housing is a key issue in the district. Average house prices are some of the highest in the county. The low level of provision of affordable housing in recent years is a cause of continuing concern.</p>	
<b>6. Soils and geology</b>					
<p><b>6a:</b> Reduce land contamination and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity</p>	?	?	?	<p>classed as the best and most versatile agricultural land. The high quality agricultural land should be protected.</p> <p>West Somerset has two sites registered under the Geological Conservation Review (GCR); Blue Anchor to the Listock Coast and Glenthorne.</p> <p>West Somerset currently has very low levels of mineral activity.</p> <p>West Somerset currently has low levels of new development on previously developed land.</p> <p>The 2008/09 Annual Monitoring Report</p>	<p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 2 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 3 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> as high quality agricultural land is found within the district, the Strategy Options should mention protecting soils, in particular, high quality agricultural land.</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				indicates that 67.5% of new dwellings were completed on previously developed land and 32.5% of new dwellings were completed at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare coming close to the government target of 100%. Consultees at the Scoping Consultation Workshop have indicated that there may be concern that high density development may be inappropriate for West Somerset.	
<b>7. Waste</b>					
<b>7a:</b> To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste	?	?	?	<p>Waste recycled and composted in West Somerset is increasing but will need to increase more to meet the national target of at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020.</p> <p>The amount of household waste collected per head in West Somerset appears to be declining.</p> <p>The majority of commercial waste is still being disposed of in landfills.</p> <p>A significant proportion of hazardous waste in Somerset is exported.</p>	<p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce waste and encourage recycling.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 2 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce waste and encourage recycling.</p> <p>The potential impact of Strategy Option 3 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain, as there are no measures included to reduce waste and encourage recycling.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> all three Strategy Options could be improved if they referred to waste reduction and sustainable waste management.</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				There is a limited landfill capacity within Somerset, which is expected to run out 3-4 years after the end of the current Somerset Waste Local Plan period in 2011.	
<b>8. Water</b>					
<b>8a:</b> Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water	+	+	+	Under the terms of the Water Framework Directive, most of the West Somerset streams do not meet Good Ecological Status (GES) and as such action will be required to ensure GES is met by 2015;  Bathing water is of good quality apart from at Blue Anchor beach.	Strategy Option 1 is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it would require policies which would include effective SUDS for managing surface water run-off from new development, therefore, contributing to maintaining water quality.  Strategy Options 2 and 3 are also likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as they would also require policies which would include effective SUDS and, therefore, contribute to maintaining water quality.
<b>8b:</b> Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding.	?	?	?	There are two main areas at risk from fluvial flooding in West Somerset, Williton and Minehead. Flooding may become more common with the effects of climate change and the planning system needs to deal with adaptation to flooding effects.	Strategy Options 1, 2 and 3 all do not include measures to mitigate against the flood risk within Minehead and Williton, therefore, their potential impact in relation to this SA objective is uncertain.  <b>Recommendation:</b> as large areas of flood risk are found within the District, the Strategy Options should include reference to reducing flood risk in new development, particularly in Minehead and Watchet.
<b>8c:</b> Improve	?	?	?	Water efficiency (as measured through	The potential impacts of Strategy Options 1, 2 and 3 in relation to

Table 2: Strategy Options					
SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
efficiency of water use				water leakage) is increasing.	<p>this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to improve the efficiency of water use.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by reference to improving efficiency of water use.</p>
<b>9. Cultural Heritage</b>					
<p><b>9a:</b> Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas.</p>	?	?	?	<p>As 80% of the land use in West Somerset is agricultural, there is an increasing need to preserve the known and unknown archaeological baseline of the area.</p> <p>There has been a rise in the level of detailed archaeological assessments and larger scale archaeological excavations as development control mitigation with the rise in 'brownfield' developments. Financial implications for development costs.</p> <p>Within West Somerset, historic patterns of development, plots and boundaries (historic grain) are being lost i.e. loss of gardens accompanying larger historic houses and loss of backland burgage plots in the historic core of settlements.</p> <p>Demolition of structures of local historic or</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to protect archaeology and cultural heritage features.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by reference to protecting archaeology and cultural heritage.</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>architectural merit is an issue in West Somerset. Also, loss of gardens, other curtilage areas and boundary features important to the character of historic buildings.</p> <p>There is a concern regarding loss of local architectural distinctiveness, with the diminished use and reference to traditional local materials and architectural detailing.</p>	
<b>10. Human health</b>					
<b>10a:</b> To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all.	○	○	+	<p>West Somerset has an ageing population, the problems of which will be exacerbated in the future by a low total fertility rate and an increasing life expectancy.</p> <p>Limiting long term illness in West Somerset is greater than the regional and national averages.</p> <p>The impact of large seasonal influxes of people during the summer months can double the local population in the area, putting pressure on services.</p> <p>In Somerset 34.7% of adults are overweight</p>	<p>Access to services within Minehead, Watchet and Williton would be improved by Strategy Option 1, with enhanced walking and cycling provision proposed, however, it is unlikely that this would apply to the rest of West Somerset, particularly the rural area. Therefore, a potential neutral effect is identified here.</p> <p>Access to services within Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Stogursey would be improved by Strategy Option 2, with enhanced walking and cycling provision proposed, however, it is uncertain whether this would apply to the rest of West Somerset, particularly the rural area. Therefore, a neutral impact is identified here.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 is likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as public transport improvements would be</p>

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				and 13.5% are obese.	implemented across West Somerset, improving the access to health services for all. In addition, provision for walking and cycling would be enhanced.
<b>11. Landscape</b>					
<b>11a:</b> Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced.	?	?	?	<p>Major development of areas outside the boundaries of designated areas can have a visual impact on views and lead to light pollution.</p> <p>Visual impacts within the Quantock Hills AONB have been identified as a key threat to the landscape through the construction of pylons, masts and wind turbines.</p> <p>The Countryside Agency's Character Areas have undergone changes that are not consistent with their character. The main cause of these changes is due to the use of more intensive land management practices, leading to loss of hedgerows, woodlands and orchards, and increased field size.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to protect and enhance distinctive landscapes and features.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options should seek to protect and enhance distinctive landscapes through good design of new development, particularly Strategy Options 2 and 3, which may provide for new development in the vicinity of Quantock Hills AONB;</p>
<b>11b:</b> Enhance the form and design of the built environment	?	?	?	New development is not always consistent with the character of the area and the local building vernacular.	The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to enhance the form and design of the built environment.

<b>Table 2: Strategy Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Strategy Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
					<b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by encouraging new development that is consistent with the character of the local area.
<b>11c:</b> Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning	+	+	+	Somerset has a low percentage of woodland cover, below the national county average.	Strategy Options 1, 2 and 3 are all likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as they would all require policies which enhance green infrastructure provision.
<b>12. Labour market, economy and regeneration</b>					
<b>12a:</b> Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.	++	++	++	<p>The economic activity rate of West Somerset is below both the regional and national levels.</p> <p>The number of people claiming work related benefits increased between 2005 and 2007.</p> <p>A higher % of people in West Somerset have no qualifications and a smaller number are educated to level 4-5.</p> <p>Lack of a good transport system, coupled with distance from higher education institutions means it is difficult for people to access opportunities to develop their skills.</p>	<p>Strategy Option 1 is likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it promotes the strengthening of the Minehead economy and also strengthening Watchet and Williton as important local centres. This would include economic regeneration and public transport improvements and would reduce the need for people to commute outside the area for employment, shopping and entertainment trips.</p> <p>Strategy Option 2 is also likely to have a significant positive impact in relation to this SA objective for the same reasons as above. In relation to Stogursey, the strategy option seeks to expand the village and its existing facilities to accommodate the traffic impact from Hinkley Point power station expansion, and would therefore contribute to sustainable economic activity.</p> <p>Strategy Option 3 is also likely to have a significant positive impact</p>

Table 2: Strategy Options					
SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
				<p>West Somerset has experienced a net loss in the number of jobs over time; the district is also a net exporter of labour, with residents travelling outside the district for work.</p> <p>West Somerset has a higher percentage of people working from home compared to Somerset and England.</p> <p>There is a lack of available employment land/workspace, industrial and commercial properties.</p>	<p>in relation to this SA objective as it would aim to strengthen the Minehead economy in particular and would also strengthen Watchet, Williton, Storgursey and the larger villages as important local centres.</p>
<b>13. Biodiversity</b>					
<b>13a:</b> Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels	?	?	?	<p>Many important species are found in the wider countryside. Therefore, the value of habitats not designated and habitat networks needs consideration and protection.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to protect and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options should include measures to protect and enhance biodiversity.</p>
<b>13b:</b> Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species	?	?	?	<p>The majority of semi-natural habitats have declined significantly in Somerset as a whole.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to restore and enhance populations of focal species.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by</p>

Table 2: Strategy Options					
SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
					including measures to restore and enhance populations of focal species, where relevant.
<b>13c:</b> Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district	?	?	?	West Somerset has a large number of sites designated for their ecological value which require protection, and the cross boundary effects on Exmoor National Park are likely to be important.	The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to increase the land area of UK BAP habitats.  <b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by including measures to promote the increase of the land area of UK BAP habitats.
<b>13d:</b> Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.	?	?	?	Some of the designated sites in West Somerset are in an unfavourable condition, due mostly to inappropriate management although some contribution to condition may be a result of recreational and tourist pressures on sites.  West Somerset has three internationally designated sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods SAC;</li><li>• Exmoor Heaths SAC; and</li><li>• Severn Estuary SPA, candidate SAC, Ramsar.</li></ul> West Somerset also contains 11 SSSI's.	The potential impacts of all three Strategy Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as none of them include measures to maintain and improve the conservation status of nature conservation sites.  <b>Recommendation:</b> the Strategy Options could be improved by encouraging new development to be sensitively sited, in relation to designated sites.

SEA objectives	Impact of the Strategy Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
	1	2	3		
				<p>Natural Nature Reserves in West Somerset are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkcombe Woods NNR; and</li> <li>• Tarr Steps Woodland NNR.</li> </ul> <p>West Somerset also has a total of 564 Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	

## **Appendix C**

### **Results of the Appraisal of the Excluded Options**

<b>Key</b>	<b>--</b>	Significant negative impact	<b>-</b>	Minor negative impact	<b>+</b>	Minor positive impact	<b>++</b>	Significant positive impact	<b>O</b>	Neutral	<b>?</b>	Uncertain
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<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>1. Air and noise</b>					
<b>1a:</b> Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion	-	--	?	<p>Noise and loss of tranquillity is an issue which may worsen with the increase in air traffic.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the suitability of brownfield sites next to industrial sites for housing development as they could be impacted by the ongoing industrial activities.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 involves less development at the larger settlements and so is likely to result in a much greater degree of private car use and, therefore, have a negative impact on reducing noise and visual intrusion.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 involves development being focussed within smaller settlements close to the M5 corridor. It would, therefore, increase noise and visual intrusion in these settlements and a significant negative impact is predicted.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 involves concentrating all new development in a single eco village or new settlement. It is uncertain what impact this may have in relation to this SA objective, as the nature of the impact would be dependent on the location of the new settlement.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Excluded Option 3 could be strengthened by including measures to reduce noise pollution and impacts on tranquillity.</p>
<b>1b:</b> Reduce the need to travel and	--	--	-	There is seasonal peak hour traffic congestion in West Somerset, particularly	Excluded Option 1 involves less development at the larger settlements and so is likely to result in a much greater degree of

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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months)				<p>on the A358 / A39 on changeover days at Butlins in Minehead.</p> <p>Air pollution is not necessarily a significant issue in West Somerset and data shows that NO<sub>2</sub> objectives for 2010 are likely to be met. Monitoring is ongoing.</p>	<p>private car use and, therefore, have a significant negative impact on reducing the need to travel.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would provide new development primarily for people working outside the District, therefore, it would have a significant negative impact on reducing the need to travel.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would be unlikely to result in modal shift as a new settlement would not be serviced by any existing public transport modes and a new village of 2,500 dwellings would be of insufficient size to support new service provision. Therefore, a potential negative impact is identified.</p>
<b>2. Climate and energy</b>					
<b>2a:</b> Reduce greenhouse gas emissions	--	--	+	<p>West Somerset's emissions increased between 2003 and 2006 from 379 ktonnes in 2003 to 385 ktonnes in 2006 and are higher per capita than the South West and the UK.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 involves is likely to result in a much greater degree of private car use and, therefore, is likely to have a significant negative impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 is also likely to result in a greater degree of private car use and, therefore, is likely to have a significant negative impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would likely have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it provides for building an eco-village. Therefore, it is likely that this would incorporate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p>

SEA objectives	Impact of the Excluded Options			Baseline information	Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)
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<b>2b:</b> Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development	?	?	?	<p>West Somerset is not sufficiently engaged with climate change adaptation forums within the region. Future adaptation strategies will need to be developed to prepare for the changes to come.</p> <p>Climate change will have a number of effects 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> <p>Climate change adaptation is an important issue as the climate for the next 30-40 years has been predicted to change. Effects on physical infrastructure, health, energy demands and demands for outdoor recreation all need consideration.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective is uncertain as there are no references to climate change adaptation measures which may be included in any new development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be strengthened by encouraging the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and specifying methods for how these are to be reduced</p>
<b>2c.</b> Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources	?	?	+	<p>In West Somerset the average consumption of electricity was much higher than both in the South West and England as a whole (based on 2006 data). However, gas consumption was lower.</p> <p>West Somerset has a small number of</p>	<p>The potential impact of Excluded Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain as there is no reference to the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy generation in new development.</p> <p>The potential impact of Excluded Option 2 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain as there is no reference to the promotion of</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>projects generating renewable electricity and heat but more needs to be done to help achieve the 2010 sub regional target for Somerset, which is to produce 359-412 GWh of its electricity from renewable energy by 2010 (equivalent to supplying 89,750-103,000 homes).</p>	<p>energy efficiency and renewable energy generation in new development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be strengthened by promoting an increase energy efficiency and generation and use of renewable energy in new development in West Somerset.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would likely have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it provides for building an eco-village. Therefore, it is likely that this would incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.</p>
<b>3. Crime</b>					
<b>3a:</b> Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime	?	?	○	<p>West Somerset has the lowest overall crime of all the districts in Somerset. The general trend in overall crime is down in West Somerset (although there was an increase in 2006/07).</p> <p>Criminal damage and other theft offences are the most common forms of crime in West Somerset accounting for 21% of crime each.</p> <p>Audit Commission data shows that a high % of residents in West Somerset feel safe both in the day and after dark in the District,</p>	<p>It is uncertain whether Excluded Option 1 would help to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime, as the development proposed is widely dispersed across West Somerset.</p> <p>It is uncertain whether Excluded Option 2 would help to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime, as development is proposed within smaller settlements close to the M5 corridor, and it is likely that greater fear of crime exists in the larger settlements of Minehead and Watchet.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Excluded Options 1 and 2 could be strengthened by including measures to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would likely have a neutral impact in relation to</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>perhaps indicating that people are less worried about crime against the person than they are about crimes such as theft.</p> <p>The Police emergency response rates are improving, despite much of West Somerset being in rural areas.</p> <p>There is a concern about motor vehicle theft in West Somerset as the theft of motor vehicles increased by 31% in 2006/07.</p>	<p>this SA objective, as it would neither reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime in existing settlements, nor would it be likely to increase these in any new settlement.</p>
<b>4. Public Infrastructure</b>					
<b>4a:</b> Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas	?	-	-	<p>There is a lack of social activities available to people with disabilities.</p> <p>The viability of rural services and facilities is an issue in West Somerset.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 involves a wide degree of dispersal of development across West Somerset, including public transport improvements. However, it would reduce the potential for supporting alternative modes of transport for journeys made by inhabitants and, therefore, it is uncertain whether all sectors of the community would experience better access to services and facilities.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Excluded Option 1 could be strengthened by including commitments to provide public transport improvements to key areas of need across West Somerset.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would be likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as development would be</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
					<p>concentrated close to the M5 corridor and, therefore, would not be of benefit to the largest population areas in West Somerset.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would be likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as a new village of 2,500 dwellings would be of insufficient size to support new service provision.</p>
<b>5. Population and social inclusion</b>					
<p><b>5a:</b> To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society.</p>	○	○	○	<p>West Somerset has the lowest population density in the region, which could have implications for providing services to a dispersed population.</p> <p>Inward migration is the main cause of population growth, which is putting pressure on the local housing market, particularly as the district has a large proportion of second home owners.</p> <p>The area also has a high percentage of people within the older age bands (65 years and over), which could have put pressure on health care services and affect the available local workforce for employers.</p> <p>West Somerset has pockets of deprivation. The 2007 IMD scores found the worst</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 would likely have a neutral impact in relation to this SA objective, as it would be likely to increase the level of affordable housing provision, however, it involves a wide degree of dispersal of development across West Somerset and would reduce the potential for supporting alternative modes of transport and may not help to reduce deprivation.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would likely have a neutral impact in relation to this SA objective, as it would be likely to increase the level of affordable housing provision and help to maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure, however, development would be concentrated close to the M5 corridor and, therefore, would not be of benefit to the largest population areas in West Somerset.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would likely have a neutral impact in relation to this SA objective, as it would be likely to increase the level of affordable housing provision, however, a new village of 2,500 dwellings would be of insufficient size to support new service provision.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
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				<p>affected wards were: Quantock Vale, Minehead, Williton, Quarme and Dulverton wards. Data also shows that West Somerset has the highest level of deprivation compared to the rest of Somerset.</p> <p>Lack of affordable housing is a key issue in the district. Average house prices are some of the highest in the county. The low level of provision of affordable housing in recent years is a cause of continuing concern.</p>	
<b>6. Soils and geology</b>					
<b>6a:</b> Reduce land contamination and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity	-	-	-	<p>Some areas of West Somerset are classed as the best and most versatile agricultural land. The high quality agricultural land should be protected.</p> <p>West Somerset has two sites registered under the Geological Conservation Review (GCR); Blue Anchor to the Listock Coast and Glenthorne.</p> <p>West Somerset currently has very low levels of mineral activity.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 would be unlikely to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources as it involves less development at the larger settlements, where there would be the highest potential for remediation to be required, and more dispersal of development among the smaller settlements, which is more likely to involve development on greenfield land. Therefore, a potential negative impact is identified.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would also be unlikely to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources as it would involve development within smaller settlements close to the M5 corridor, which is more likely to involve development on greenfield land.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>West Somerset currently has low levels of new development on previously developed land.</p> <p>The 2008/09 Annual Monitoring Report indicates that 67.5% of new dwellings were completed on previously developed land and 32.5% of new dwellings were completed at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare coming close to the government target of 100%. Consultees at the Scoping Consultation Workshop have indicated that there may be concern that high density development may be inappropriate for West Somerset.</p>	<p>Therefore, a potential negative impact is identified.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would also be unlikely to reduce land contamination and safeguard soil resources as it would involve development of a new settlement, which would likely be on greenfield land. Therefore, a potential negative impact is identified.</p>
<b>7. Waste</b>					
<b>7a:</b> To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste	-	-	○	<p>Waste recycled and composted in West Somerset is increasing but will need to increase more to meet the national target of at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020.</p> <p>The amount of household waste collected per head in West Somerset appears to be declining.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 would be unlikely to help reduce waste generation and increase recycling as servicing and infrastructure costs would be higher for this option and, therefore, it is unlikely that recycling provision would be so viable.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would also be unlikely to encourage waste reduction and recycling as development is proposed away from the main population centre of Minehead, where waste management servicing and infrastructure would be centred.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>The majority of commercial waste is still being disposed of in landfills.</p> <p>A significant proportion of hazardous waste in Somerset is exported.</p> <p>There is a limited landfill capacity within Somerset, which is expected to run out 3-4 years after the end of the current Somerset Waste Local Plan period in 2011.</p>	<p>Therefore, a negative impact is identified.</p> <p>A neutral impact is identified in relation to Excluded Option 3 as this option involves the construction of a new eco-village, which would be likely to incorporate waste reduction and recycling measures. However, there would be no existing waste management servicing and infrastructure.</p>
<b>8. Water</b>					
<b>8a:</b> Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water	?	?	?	<p>Under the terms of the Water Framework Directive, most of the West Somerset streams do not meet Good Ecological Status (GES) and as such action will be required to ensure GES is met by 2015;</p> <p>Bathing water is of good quality apart from at Blue Anchor beach.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for maintaining and improving water quality.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The performance of the Excluded Options would be improved if they referred to improving water quality.</p>
<b>8b:</b> Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding.	?	?	?	<p>There are two main areas at risk from fluvial flooding in West Somerset, Williton and Minehead. Flooding may become more common with the effects of climate change and the planning system needs to deal with adaptation to flooding effects.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for reducing flood risk.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> as large areas of flood risk are found within the District, the Excluded Options should include reference to</p>

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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
					reducing flood risk in new development, particularly in Minehead and Watchet.
<b>8c:</b> Improve efficiency of water use	?	?	+	Water efficiency (as measured through water leakage) is increasing.	<p>The potential impacts of Excluded Options 1 and 2 are uncertain in relation to this SA objective, as these options do not include any provision for improving efficiency of water use.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be improved by reference to improving efficiency of water use.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would be likely to have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it provides for building an eco-village. Therefore, it is likely that this would incorporate efficiency of water use.</p>
<b>9. Cultural Heritage</b>					
<b>9a:</b> Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and	?	?	?	<p>As 80% of the land use in West Somerset is agricultural, there is an increasing need to preserve the known and unknown archaeological baseline of the area</p> <p>There has been a rise in the level of detailed archaeological assessments and larger scale archaeological excavations as development control mitigation with the rise in 'brownfield' developments. Financial implications for development costs.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for protecting archaeological and cultural heritage assets.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be improved by reference to protecting archaeology and cultural heritage.</p>

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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
conservation areas.				<p>Within West Somerset, historic patterns of development, plots and boundaries (historic grain) are being lost i.e. loss of gardens accompanying larger historic houses and loss of backland burgage plots in the historic core of settlements.</p> <p>Demolition of structures of local historic or architectural merit is an issue in West Somerset. Also, loss of gardens, other curtilage areas and boundary features important to the character of historic buildings.</p> <p>There is a concern regarding loss of local architectural distinctiveness, with the diminished use and reference to traditional local materials and architectural detailing.</p>	
<b>10. Human health</b>					
<b>10a:</b> To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for	?	-	-	<p>West Somerset has an ageing population, the problems of which will be exacerbated in the future by a low total fertility rate and an increasing life expectancy.</p> <p>Limiting long term illness in West Somerset is greater than the regional and national</p>	<p>The potential impact of Excluded Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain as it involves a wide degree of dispersal of development across West Somerset and would reduce the potential for supporting alternative modes of transport. Therefore, the population of West Somerset may not experience better access to health services. There is also no mention of improved</p>

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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
all.				<p>averages.</p> <p>The impact of large seasonal influxes of people during the summer months can double the local population in the area, putting pressure on services.</p> <p>In Somerset 34.7% of adults are overweight and 13.5% are obese.</p>	<p>walking and cycling routes.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be strengthened by including commitments to provide public transport improvements to key areas of need across West Somerset, and by providing improvements to walking and cycling networks.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 would be likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as development would be concentrated close to the M5 corridor and, therefore, would not be of benefit to the largest population areas in West Somerset. There is also no reference to improving walking and cycling networks</p> <p>It is unlikely that the development of a new eco-village, as proposed under Excluded Option 3, would include the provision of healthcare facilities, therefore, a negative impact is predicted with regard to improving access to healthcare facilities.</p>
<b>11. Landscape</b>					
<b>11a:</b> Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced.	?	-	-	<p>Major development of areas outside the boundaries of designated areas can have a visual impact on views and lead to light pollution.</p> <p>Visual impacts within the Quantock Hills AONB have been identified as a key threat</p>	<p>The potential impact of Excluded Option 1 in relation to this SA objective is uncertain as it does not include any provision for conserving and enhancing the landscape.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Excluded Option 1 should seek to protect and enhance distinctive landscapes through good design of new development.</p>

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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>to the landscape through the construction of pylons, masts and wind turbines.</p> <p>The Countryside Agency's Character Areas have undergone changes that are not consistent with their character. The main cause of these changes is due to the use of more intensive land management practices, leading to loss of hedgerows, woodlands and orchards, and increased field size.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 2 would be likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as development would be concentrated within smaller settlements close to the M5 corridor and, therefore, would be unlikely to contribute to conserving and enhancing the landscape.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would be likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as it would involve the construction of a new village which would likely be on greenfield land.</p>
<b>11b:</b> Enhance the form and design of the built environment	?	?	+	<p>New development is not always consistent with the character of the area and the local building vernacular.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of Excluded Options 1 and 2 in relation to this SA objective are uncertain as they do not include any provision for enhancing the form and design of the built environment.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Excluded Options 1 and 2 could be improved by encouraging new development that is consistent with the character of the local area</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 would likely have a positive impact in relation to this SA objective as it involves the creation of a new eco-village, which would likely raise the standard of design in West Somerset.</p>
<b>11c:</b> Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into	?	?	?	<p>Somerset has a low percentage of woodland cover, below the national county average.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for the incorporation of green infrastructure into planning.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
spatial planning					<b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options would be improved if they referred to improving the District’s green infrastructure resource.
<b>12. Labour market, economy and regeneration</b>					
<b>12a:</b> Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.	-	--	--	<p>The economic activity rate of West Somerset is below both the regional and national levels.</p> <p>The number of people claiming work related benefits increased between 2005 and 2007.</p> <p>A higher % of people in West Somerset have no qualifications and a smaller number are educated to level 4-5.</p> <p>Lack of a good transport system, coupled with distance from higher education institutions means it is difficult for people to access opportunities to develop their skills.</p> <p>West Somerset has experienced a net loss in the number of jobs over time; the district is also a net exporter of labour, with residents travelling outside the district for work.</p>	<p>Excluded Option 1 is likely to have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective as it would disperse development across West Somerset, including within smaller settlements, which would generate more private car use and not help to regenerate key areas through increased economic activity.</p> <p>Excluded Option 2 is likely to have a significant negative impact in relation to this SA objective as it would concentrate development within smaller settlements close to the M5 corridor and would, therefore, be principally designed for people working outside the District. Therefore, it would not improve sustainable economic activity in West Somerset and would not contribute to regenerating key areas in West Somerset.</p> <p>Excluded Option 3 is likely to have a significant negative impact in relation to this SA objective as it would involve the creation of a new village of insufficient size to be self-contained or to have its own service facilities. Therefore, it would not improve sustainable economic activity in West Somerset and would not contribute to regenerating key areas in West Somerset.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
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	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<p>West Somerset has a higher percentage of people working from home compared to Somerset and England.</p> <p>There is a lack of available employment land/workspace, industrial and commercial properties.</p>	
<b>13. Biodiversity</b>					
<b>13a:</b> Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels	-	-	-	<p>Many important species are found in the wider countryside. Therefore, the value of habitats not designated and habitat networks needs consideration and protection.</p>	<p>It is likely that all three Excluded Options would have a negative impact in relation to this SA objective, as all three options would be likely to involve new development on greenfield land and no provision is made for biodiversity protection and enhancement.</p>
<b>13b:</b> Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species	?	?	?	<p>The majority of semi-natural habitats have declined significantly in Somerset as a whole.</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for maintaining restoring and enhancing population of focal species.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be improved by including measures to restore and enhance populations of focal species, where relevant.</p>
<b>13c:</b> Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action	?	?	?	<p>West Somerset has a large number of sites designated for their ecological value which require protection, and the cross boundary</p>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for increasing the land area of UK BAP</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
Plan habitats within the district				effects on Exmoor National Park are likely to be important.	habitats.  <b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be improved by including measures to promote the increase of the land area of UK BAP habitats.
<b>13d:</b> Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.	?	?	?	<p>Some of the designated sites in West Somerset are in an unfavourable condition, due mostly to inappropriate management although some contribution to condition may be a result of recreational and tourist pressures on sites.</p> <p>West Somerset has three internationally designated sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods SAC;</li> <li>• Exmoor Heaths SAC; and</li> <li>• Severn Estuary SPA, candidate SAC, Ramsar.</li> </ul> <p>West Somerset also contains 11 SSSI's.</p> <p>Natural Nature Reserves in West Somerset are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkcombe Woods NNR; and</li> </ul>	<p>The potential impacts of all three Excluded Options in relation to this SA objective are uncertain, as the excluded options do not include any provision for maintaining and improving the conservation status of nature conservation sites.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the Excluded Options could be improved by encouraging new development to be sensitively sited, in relation to designated sites.</p>

<b>Table 3: Excluded Options</b>					
<b>SEA objectives</b>	<b>Impact of the Excluded Options</b>			<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Commentary and comparison of options (including if appropriate nature and spatial extent of potential impacts, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility)</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tarr Steps Woodland NNR.</li> </ul> <p>West Somerset also has a total of 564 Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	

## **Appendix D**

### **Results of the Appraisal of the Key Themes**

## Theme 6.1 Settlement Policy - Settlement Role and function hierarchy

Key SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 4a: Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas;</li> <li>• 5a: To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10a: To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all;</li> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced; and</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.</li> </ul>
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The appraisal of options set out in Section 5 of the Options Paper (option 'a') identifies the potential negative effects and the benefits of the three different spatial strategies proposed. And these are not dealt with any further in this commentary.

By setting out the appropriate mix of development for each settlement (option 'b'), the Core Policies should be able to maximise self containment and reduce the need to travel by car (SA Objective 1b) and to ensure access to viable facilities within these settlements (SA Objectives 4a and 4b). These policies may not necessarily ensure the equitable access to facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas. Any shortfalls in facilities and services as a result of new development should be contributed to by developers and this is addressed in policy option 'c'. The types of infrastructure required to support development (or the types of infrastructure for which contributions will be sought) will need to be set out within the Core Strategy.

By including Core Policies which identify the location and volume of development for each settlement (options 'a' and 'b' together), negative impacts on the landscape can be minimised by avoiding development in inappropriate locations (SA Objective 11a) and regeneration in certain areas can also be encouraged (SA Objective 12a).

### Conclusions and recommendations

The policy options for Settlement Policy are not mutually exclusive. They could all result in positive effects with regards to the relevant SA Objective and should all be included in the Core Strategy.

The options for the overarching spatial development strategy set out in Section 5 have been appraised separately and recommendations have been put forward in relation to the Spatial Development Strategy within Matrix 1 and Section 4.2.

The types of infrastructure required to support development (or the types of infrastructure for which contributions will be sought) will need to be set out within the Core Strategy.

## Theme 6.2 Transport - Making West Somerset's communities more self contained

Key SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion;</li> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 2a: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;</li> <li>• 4a: Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas;</li> <li>• 5a: To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society;</li> <li>• 9a: Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> <li>• 11c: Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning;</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas;</li> <li>• 13a: Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels;</li> <li>• 13b: Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species; and</li> <li>• 13d: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.</li> </ul>
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Options 'a' to 'f' are not mutually exclusive and could all bring about positive effects if they were included within the Core Policies and they particularly support the achievement of SA Objectives 1b, 2a, 4a, 5a, 11c, and 12a. Options 'd' and 'e' involve investigating additional uses of the West Somerset Railway for freight and passenger commuter services. The investigations would need to consider noise, vibration and tranquillity impacts on sensitive receptors and whether the additional uses of the railway could impact on tourism use.

Option 'g' proposes a relief road on the edges of Williton which could result in a number of potential negative environmental effects such as introducing noise, vibration and light pollution into a previously tranquil area; potential effects on biodiversity through loss of habitat; and potential effects on bats, including barbastelle bats which a local focal species and an interest feature of the Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods SAC including loss of supporting habitats, interruption of commuting routes and disturbance through light pollution. Such a relief road could also result in landscape and visual negative effects. However, a relief road could also bring about positive effects such as a reduction in congestion in Williton, particularly during peak times and summer months; an improvement in road safety in Williton and an improved setting for historic buildings within the town by reducing traffic volumes. The relief road could also enable other types of development in Williton.

The Core Policies need to ensure that they encourage walking and cycling access in all developments (except where safety matters might overrule this, for example, an isolated development) and therefore there is an option missing from those proposed and option 'b' should be amended to require all developments to maximise walking and cycling through the design of the development and/or through contributions as appropriate.

The options do not address the need to improve access to rural communities by public transport. The options could also make the connection between creating a network of cycling and walking routes serving the main settlements of the district and, at the same time, enhancing the green infrastructure network. Longer distance footpaths and cycleways between settlements could also encourage walking and cycling amongst tourists and these should also be encouraged within the Core Policies in association with the Local Transport Plan.

### Conclusions and recommendations

Policy options 'd' and 'e' involve investigating additional uses of the West Somerset Railway for freight and passenger commuter services. The investigations would need to consider noise, vibration and tranquillity impacts on sensitive receptors and whether the additional uses of the railway could impact on tourism use.

Policy option 'g' proposes a relief road on the edges of Williton which could result in a number of potential negative environmental effects. Such a development would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and core policy wording could suggest the issues that would need to be addressed within the EIA.

Policy option 'b' should be amended to require all developments to maximise walking and cycling through the design of the development and/or through contributions as appropriate.

The options do not address the need to improve access to rural communities by public transport. The options could also make the connection between creating a network of cycling and walking routes serving the main settlements of the district and, at the same time, enhancing the green infrastructure network. Longer distance footpaths and cycleways between settlements could also encourage walking and cycling amongst tourists and these should also be encouraged within the Core Policies (or is the LTP a better place for this?).

### 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

Key SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion;</li> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 2a: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8b: Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding;</li> <li>• 8c: Improve efficiency of water use;</li> <li>• 9a: Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2b: Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development;</li> <li>• 2c: Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources</li> <li>• 3a: Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime;</li> <li>• 4a: Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the community including those in rural areas;</li> <li>• 5a: To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services, facilities and homes for all sectors of the society;</li> <li>• 6a: Reduce land contamination and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity;</li> <li>• 7a: To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste;</li> <li>• 8a: Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water;</li> </ul>	<p>buildings and conservation areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10a: To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all;</li> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> <li>• 11b: Enhance the form and design of the built environment;</li> <li>• 11c: Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning;</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas;</li> <li>• 13a: Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels;</li> <li>• 13b: Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species; and</li> <li>• 13d: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.</li> </ul>
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All of the SA Objectives are considered to be relevant apart from two relating to noise and vibration and increasing the area of BAP habitats.

The policy options should deal with how many new homes are to be delivered in the plan period, how many of them will be affordable homes, the location of the new homes and the sizes and tenures of the new homes. The location of homes will relate to access to services and facilities, potential to contribute to identified regeneration, risk of flooding, reuse of brownfield sites and environmental sensitivities. The policy options need to deal with the provision of homes suitable for older residents and accommodation or sites for gypsies and travellers. The policy options should also deal with key design issues relating to housing such as sustainable design (including flood risk, green infrastructure, energy efficiency, water efficiency, walking, cycling and public transport access, waste and materials), safety, complementing and/or enhancing the surrounding built environment, including historic areas and buildings and standards such as lifetime homes and Code for Sustainable Homes.

The policy options do not cover all of these issues. The following have been omitted and these should be addressed within the core policies:

- The potential for housing to contribute to identified regeneration;

- The location of housing with regard to flood risk and other environmental sensitivities;
- Provision for gypsies and travellers;
- Encouraging the reuse of brownfield sites before the development of Greenfield sites; and
- Although the policy options include option 'g' ensuring high quality design, this should be expanded to include sustainable design, safety, complementing and/or enhancing the surrounding built environment, including historic areas and buildings and design standards.

The omission of policy options with regards to these issues could therefore result in negative effects with regards to SA Objectives 2a, 2b, 2c, 3a, 6a, 7a, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9a, 11a, 11c, 12a, 13a, 13b and 13d.

Policy option 'b' will result in positive effects with regards to encouraging walking, cycling and providing access to public transport (SA objective 1b). It would also result in positive effects with regards to providing access to services and facilities (SA Objective 4a). However, this option does not address access to services and facilities in the more rural parts of the district.

Policy options 'c', 'd' and 'e' would result in positive effects with regards to the provision of homes for all sectors of society (SA Objective 5a).

Policy option 'f' could result in negative environmental effects through the expansion of the built environment into the countryside around rural settlements. Such effects could relate to landscape and visual, biodiversity, focal species and nature conservation sites, soils, archaeology and water quality.

Policy option 'g' would have positive effects with regards to enhancing the form and design and development (SA Objective 11b).

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

The following have been omitted and these should be addressed within the core policies:

- The potential for housing to contribute to identified regeneration;
- The location of housing with regard to flood risk and other environmental sensitivities;
- Provision for gypsies and travellers;
- Encouraging the reuse of brownfield sites before the development of Greenfield sites; and
- Although the policy options include option 'g' ensuring high quality design, this should be expanded to include sustainable design, safety, complementing and/or enhancing the surrounding built environment, including historic areas and buildings and design standards.

Most of the policy options would result in positive effects although it is identified that policy option 'f' could result in negative environmental effects. It is recommended that justification

for the inclusion of option 'f' is needed and explanation is needed as to why an options of adjusting the settlement boundaries of some villages has not been proposed.

### Theme 6.4 Climate Change - Mitigating the effects of climate change

SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion;</li> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 2a: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;</li> <li>• 2b: Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development;</li> <li>• 2c: Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources;</li> <li>• 7a: To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste;</li> <li>• 8b: Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding;</li> <li>• 8c: Improve efficiency of water use;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10a: To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all;</li> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> <li>• 11c: Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning;</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas;</li> <li>• 13a: Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels;</li> <li>• 13b: Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species; and</li> <li>• 13d: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.</li> </ul>
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The policy options for the issues of contributing to climate change and adapting to the effects of climate change will need to deal with greenhouse gas emissions and therefore energy use and generation, vehicular transport, carbon sinks, flood risk, design of new developments to ensure they will be fit for purpose in the future (in light of climate change), water efficiency and green infrastructure.

Policy options 'a' to 'c' all promote renewable and low carbon energy generation and use in new development (SA Objectives 2a and 2c) . Option 'c' could encourage use of renewable energy in existing homes and other buildings. Options 'b' and 'e' encourage energy efficiency. Encouraging renewable and low carbon energy schemes within the district could help support this sector and create new jobs. However, policy options which promote renewable energy could also result in potential negative effects with regards to visual and noise effects, landscape, biodiversity, focal species and nature conservation sites, depending on the types of technology proposed (SA Objectives 1a, 11a, 13a, 13b, and 13d).

Option 'e' may also help to minimise water use and reduce waste generation by ensuring that new developments are resource efficient (SA Objectives 8c and 7a). Option 'f' would also result in positive effects with regards to water efficiency (SA Objective 8c).

Options 'd' and 'j' would result in positive effects with regard to reducing flood risk (SA Objective 8b) and option 'f' would also help to manage surface water flows.

Options 'h' and 'g' would reduce greenhouse gas emission from vehicular transport by locating employment and housing within walking and cycling distance and by reducing food miles (SA Objective 1b). Policy option 'h' should be extended to ensure that new housing developments and tourism developments are within walking and cycling distance of basic services, such as a shop.

Option 'g' could also have positive effects with regards to healthy lifestyles (SA Objective 10a) and biodiversity (SA Objective 13a).

Option 'l' would help to mitigate for the districts contribution to climate change by increasing the ability of the land to absorb carbon. It would also result in positive effects by increasing green infrastructure (SA Objective 11c).

### Conclusions and recommendations:

All of the policy options proposed would result in positive effects with regards to the SA Objectives and they should all be considered for inclusion in the Core Policies. There are some potential negative effects but these may be mitigable and therefore it is considered that these are unlikely to give sufficient reason to reject a particular policy option. Core Policies will need to address the need to mitigate any potential negative effects associated with these proposed policy options. This theme should cover both contributions towards climate change and adaptation to climate change. Policy option 'h' should be extended to ensure that new housing developments and tourism developments are within walking and cycling distance of basic services, such as a shop. A Core Policy which sets out sustainable construction and design requirements and which refers to recognised standards is recommended.

### Theme 6.5 Economy - Strengthening and broadening the local economy

SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 2a: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>• 2c: Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources;</li> <li>• 4a: Ensure equitable access to viable facilities and services for all sectors of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8c: Improve efficiency of water use;</li> <li>• 9a: Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed buildings and conservation areas; and</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.</li> </ul>
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<p>community including those in rural areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7a: To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste;</li> </ul>	
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The policy options for this theme should deal with the encouragement of certain sectors, which are sustainable in terms of job creation, environmental and social impacts, stability and which complement the existing economy, such as tourism. The policy options should also address improving skills within the district and should support the higher than average (Somerset and England) number of people working from home and the provision of infrastructure to allow remote working in order to avoid the need to commute to work. Encouragement of the local food sector will also help to reduce food miles and is in line with the regional encouragement of the food sector. The policy options should also provide suitable premises and land for economic development, including business start-up units and they should support areas identified as in need of regeneration.

Policy options 'a', 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f', 'h', 'i', 'j', 'k' and 'l' all support the achievement of SA Objective 12a. Policy options 'b' and 'd' especially would support the existing local economy which contains a higher than average (Somerset and England) number of people working from home.

Policy option 'a' may help to increase access to employment within the more rural parts of the district (SA Objective 4a). However, there is no policy option which specifically supports retail provision within villages which is identified within the key issues. Policy option 'j' supports SA Objective 4a with regards to major centres.

Policy option 'a' encourages use of vacant and underused buildings which would avoid the need to build new facilities and would result in positive effects with regards to a number of environmental SA Objectives, such in relation to landscape, biodiversity, soils, and waste and materials use.

Policy option 'c' would support SA Objectives 2a and 2c.

Policy option 'e' supports the development of additional hotel accommodation within the district. The Core Policies will need to guide the location of such development to sustainable locations so as not to encourage visitors to use their cars for all journeys and to ensure that such developments do not result in landscape and visual effects, other impacts on local communities such as noise and

Policy option 'g' proposes a new jetty at Minehead. This could have potential negative effects on coastal water quality and biodiversity (including the Severn Estuary cSAC, SPA and Ramsar site) during construction. No reasoning is provided for the proposal for a new jetty and therefore it is unclear what the benefits would be. It is assumed that these might be to allow greater access by foot to Minehead for boating visitors.

Policy options 'k' and 'l' will help reduce distances travelled and the need to travel and will therefore result in positive effects with regards to SA Objective 1b.

If policy option 'c' is taken forward, policy wording will be needed to ensure that a balance is achieved between the economic viability of wood supply businesses with biodiversity and carbon capture functions that trees provide.

### Conclusions and recommendations

The policy options are not mutually exclusive and there would not appear to be any options which should not be taken forward for sustainability reasons. However, a clearer justification is needed for the proposed new jetty at Minehead and without this it is unclear what the specific benefits could be with relation to sustainability effects. The policy options proposed provide a good coverage and address most of the issues identified. A number of recommendations are made by the SA team as follows:

- There is no policy option which specifically supports retail provision within villages which is identified within the key issues and this should be addressed within the Core Policies;
- The Core Policies should ensure that economic development does not adversely affect the environmental quality, including biodiversity, historic environment and water quality of the district; and
- If policy option 'c' is taken forward, policy wording will be needed to ensure that a balance is achieved between the economic viability of wood supply businesses with biodiversity and carbon capture functions that trees provide.

### Theme 6.6 Biodiversity - Protecting and enhancing biodiversity

SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 8b: Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding;</li> <li>• 10a: To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all;</li> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11c: Ensure provision is made to incorporate green infrastructure into spatial planning;</li> <li>• 13a: Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels;</li> <li>• 13b: Maintain, restore and enhance populations of focal species;</li> <li>• 13c: Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district; and</li> <li>• 13d: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.</li> </ul>
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The policy options will specifically need to address all of the elements of SA Objectives 13a to 13d identified above. Specific core policy wording may be required in relation to the protection of European designated sites depending on the results of Habitats Regulations

Assessment work on the Core Strategy which is being undertaken as the plan develops. Specific policy wording may be needed to avoid adverse effects on European designated sites.

Proposed policy option 'a' supports the achievement of all of the SA Objectives 13a to 13d and it has particular potential to support SA Objective 13c. Policy option 'b' also has the potential to support SA Objective 13c and would also support the achievement of SA Objectives 1b,8b, 10a and 11a through providing a multi-function greenspace which could be used for walking, cycling and other recreation, surface water management and should also enhance the landscape.

Policy option 'c' would result in positive effects with regards to SA Objectives 13a to 13d.

None of the policy options mention the protection of focal species.

### Conclusions and recommendations

Policy options 'a' and 'b' are similar and could be combined into one policy. The inclusion of developer contributions would help to secure biodiversity improvements through new developments. Policy option 'c' in particular would result in improvements to habitats within the district. There is no mention of focal species within the policy options and although these might benefit from the achievement of BAP objectives (policy option 'c') they are of local importance and should ideally be mentioned within the Core Policies. Specific core policy wording may be required in relation to the protection of European designated sites depending on the results of Habitats Regulations Assessment work on the Core Strategy which is being undertaken as the plan develops. Specific policy wording may be needed to avoid adverse effects on European designated sites.

### Theme 7.6 Heritage - Safeguarding and enhancing local distinctiveness

SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion;</li> <li>• 2b: Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development;</li> <li>• 2c: Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources;</li> <li>• 8b: Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding;</li> <li>• 9a: Protect the fabric of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments and structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, maritime and coastal heritage, listed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> <li>• 11b: Enhance the form and design of the built environment; and</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas.</li> </ul>
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buildings and conservation areas;	
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The policy options with regards to heritage should cover the protection of heritage assets both known and unknown and including the setting of assets as well as physical integrity.

Policy option 'a' would result in positive effects with regards to SA Objective 9a but not with regards to the protection of designated and undesignated archaeological sites and potentially monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and Gardens and maritime and coastal heritage. Policy wording will be needed in order to ensure the protection and enhancement of all of the features mentioned in SA Objective 9a, in particular because archaeology and unknown archaeology are not addressed by the proposed policy options.

Policy option 'a' could also result in positive effects with regards to SA Objectives 1a, 11a, 11b and 12b.

Policy Option 'b' relates to protecting landscapes including the coastline and therefore would result in positive effects with regards to SA Objective 11a. The policy options could be expanded to include the need for new developments to reflect the local architectural vernacular, materials, scale and form in areas which are not conservation areas and the need for developments to reflect historic patterns of development such as plots and boundaries, where possible.

There could be potential conflicts between core policies relating to the conservation of historic buildings and conservation areas and SA Objectives 2b and 2c, for example, because small scale renewable technologies could be visually instructive in a conservation area or because the installation of energy efficiency measures within a listed building could be restricted. It is therefore recommended that any core policies which relate to the conservation of historic buildings and conservation areas contain some flexibility to allow small scale renewable and energy efficiency improvements subject to visual impact and consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

This theme might be better expanded to include distinctiveness and landscape as well as heritage as the issues that are raised under this heading relate to local distinctiveness and landscape as well as heritage.

The policy options could be expanded to include the need for new developments to reflect the local architectural vernacular, materials, scale and form in areas which are not conservation areas and the need for developments to reflect historic patterns of development such as plots and boundaries, where possible.

Policy wording will be needed in order to ensure the protection and enhancement of all of the features mentioned in SA Objective 9a, in particular because archaeology and unknown archaeology are not addressed by the proposed policy options.

It is recommended that any core policies which relate to the conservation of historic buildings and conservation areas contain some flexibility to allow small scale renewable and

energy efficiency improvements subject to visual impact and consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer.

### **Theme 6.8 Other important issues - Emerging Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station Proposal**

SA Objectives of relevance are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Reduce impact on tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion;</li> <li>• 1b: Reduce the need to travel and facilitate modal shift (particularly with regard to reducing the impact of traffic during the peak summer months);</li> <li>• 2a: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;</li> <li>• 2b: Improve adaptation for unavoidable climate change including consideration of the location of development;</li> <li>• 2c: Increase energy efficiency and the amount of energy generated from renewable sources</li> <li>• 6a: Reduce land contamination and safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity;</li> <li>• 7a: To reduce waste generation and disposal, increase recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste;</li> <li>• 8a: Maintain and improve the quality of ground/river/coastal water;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8b: Reduce risk of flooding including coastal flooding;</li> <li>• 10a: To improve health and well-being of the population and improve access to health services for all;</li> <li>• 11a: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and features within them, are conserved and enhanced;</li> <li>• 11b: Enhance the form and design of the built environment;</li> <li>• 12a: Improve sustainable economic activity within West Somerset enabling regeneration of key areas;</li> <li>• 13a: Protect and enhance biodiversity at all levels;</li> <li>• 13c: Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the district; and</li> <li>• 13d: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected designated and non-designated nature conservation sites.</li> </ul>
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The construction and operation of a new nuclear power station near to the existing Hinkley B installation will result in significant negative effects on the environment and the community. Such effects would relate to most of the environmental SA Objectives such as waste, water quality, air quality, traffic, noise and visual, soils and biodiversity. Community impacts could also relate to traffic and the impact on the health of residents particularly arising from perceived risk associated with proximity to such a facility. A new power station could also affect the image of the area and there is a particular risk with relation to the tourism industry. This could occur both during construction and operation. The site of the new power station will be on the coast and therefore sufficient flood risk assessment and mitigation for the lifetime of the facility will need to be required at the planning application stage.

However, there is the potential for positive effects such as job creation during the construction and operational stages and the facility would generate low carbon electricity.

Core policies will need to set requirements in order to minimise negative impacts to the district and to compensate for any impacts which cannot be mitigated.