

Local Plan Review SA/SEA Non-technical summary

1. Background

The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report (“the SA/SEA”) is to ensure that sustainability issues are considered during the preparation and adoption of the Local Plan Review (LPR). The SA is an iterative process and it identifies the likely significant effects of the Local Plan and the extent to which implementation of the policies it contains will achieve social, environmental and economic sustainability objectives. This ensures that the SA results and consultation responses can feed into and influence the production of the Local Plan.

The Local Plan Review, when adopted will replace the existing saved West Berkshire District Local Plan (Saved Policies), the Core Strategy and the Housing Site Allocations (HSA) DPD setting out new policies to manage development in West Berkshire.

The SA/SEA has been produced by the Council for the Local Plan Review. A version of the SA/SEA has been published alongside the Reg 18 consultations (Emerging draft consultation December 2020 and Local Plan Review Scoping Report consultation February 2018). Comments received through the consultations have been taken into account, and where appropriate the SA/SEA has been updated to take these changes into account.

2. Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal

The Local Plan Review is subject to SA/SEA to ensure the environmental, social and environmental effects of the plan are in line with sustainable development objectives. The SA/SEA provides an integrated, ongoing assessment of the likely significant effects of the Local Plan as it is being prepared. It provides a means of translating sustainability objectives for the area into sustainable planning policies and should reflect global, national, regional and local sustainability problems and issues. The process involves a series of stages by which the content of the emerging plan is appraised against a series of sustainability objectives. The SA/SEA is fully integrated into the preparation of the Local Plan.

The SA/SEA must also incorporate the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (commonly referred to as the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations’)¹ and paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)².

3. Summary of the SA/SEA Process

The first stage of the SA/SEA process is the production of the Scoping Report. This is where the scope and overall level of detail of the SA/SEA is set out. The Scoping

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made>

² National Planning Policy Framework 2021: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Report sets out the sustainability objectives which are then used to assess the options of the Local Plan. The sustainability objectives are derived from the review of other plans and programmes, analysis of the baseline data and of the specific environmental issues and opportunities identified in West Berkshire.

The next stage of the SA/SEA process is where the options are developed and refined and the effects of the options are assessed. The options are tested against the SA/SEA objectives to predict and evaluate the effects of the policies/sites set out in the Local Plan. Mitigation measures are identified where necessary and recommendations to changes to the options are made. Any significant changes and revised options are then reassessed, and monitoring processes are set out in the Report.

As part of the process of selecting the proposed submission sites and policies, the likely significant effects of each option are evaluated. The effects of each of the options are then tested against the SA/SEA objectives and the results are set out in the SA/SEA report. The aim of the appraisal is to identify any significant conflicts or combined effects between the options and the SA/SEA objectives.

The SA/SEA report contains the following:

- Outline of contents, the methodology and description of the SA/SEA process and the specific SA/SEA tasks undertaken;
- A review of other plans and programmes and their relationship to the Local Plan Review;
- A description of the environmental and sustainability context (known as the baseline information);
- A summary of the key sustainability issues;
- The SA/SEA framework which sets out the SA/SEA objectives for assessing the Local Plan Review;
- A review of the site and policy options considered;
- A review of the Emerging Draft Local Plan Review;

The SA/SEA report has been produced in tandem with the Local Plan Review.

4. Statement dealing with the difference which the SA process has made

The SA/SEA Report and the preparation of the Local Plan Review have been carried out concurrently to ensure that the findings from the SA/SEA process have informed the emerging Local Plan.

In February 2018 the Council published its Scoping Report for the Local Plan Review. This set out the reasons for the review and the key issues that the Local Plan Review would cover. The SA/SEA Scoping report was published at the same time for comment. Comments received as part of the consultation were taken into account in the development of the Emerging Draft Local Plan Review.

In November 2018 the Council published a consultation paper setting out the vision for the Local Plan Review, details of the proposed revision of the spatial areas, the methodology for reviewing the settlement hierarchy, the criteria for the settlement

boundary review and an update of the assessment of the existing Local Plan policies.

In December 2020 the Council published its Emerging Draft Local Plan Review, setting out the policies and sites the council considered to be the most appropriate strategy to take forward. The SA/SEA process was used to help identify the sites and policy options to be taken forward as 'preferred options' and all the proposed policies were also subject to SA/SEA. The Local Plan Review and the SA/SEA were updated following this consultation taking into account the comments received as part of the consultation. Where changes have been made to the Local Plan, the SA/SEA has been updated to reflect these changes. Modifications made to the policies or sites since the emerging draft consultation have been reassessed.

The SA/SEA is an iterative process and so the comments received from the consultation on the Emerging Draft have been taken into account and where changes have been made to the Local Plan Review the SA/SEA has been reviewed in light of these changes.

The format of the SA/SEA has been updated since the Emerging Draft was published, in order to provide more details on how decision making has taken place.

A summary of the SA/SEA can be found below.

5. Summary of likely significant effects of the Local Plan Review

The summary of the SA/SEA findings have been divided up into five sections

- The Development Strategy
- The Environment and Surroundings
- Delivering Housing
- Fostering Economic Growth and Supporting Local Communities
- Development Management Policies

Full details can be found in the SA/SEA Report (section 5), with the full assessments in the appendices (Policies Options – Appendix 4, Strategic policies – Appendix 5, Development Management policies – Appendix 6, Site policies – Appendix 7, Site Assessments and SA/SEA – Appendix 8).

5.1. *The Development Strategy*

The Spatial Strategy

The Development Strategy considers the overall spatial strategy for the Local Plan Reviews. The review, which included SA/SEA of the reasonable alternatives determined that a reviewed **spatial strategy** with only three spatial areas would now be the most appropriate strategy for the district.

The **spatial distribution** of development was then considered, with five options being reviewed as part of the SA/SEA. The option to focus on Thatcham, with allocation of a new strategic site, was considered to be the most appropriate. Of the given strategic site(s) considered in Thatcham, only one (North East Thatcham) was considered to be suitable for development.

The final **Spatial Strategy policy (SP1)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. The policy directs development to the most sustainable locations of the district as well as resulting in a number of knock-on social and environmental sustainability impacts as a result of this direction.

The Settlement Hierarchy

The LPR has reviewed the settlement hierarchy of the district. Ultimately three changes (or options) to the settlement hierarchy were considered. It was determined that the best option would be to remove Aldermaston from the settlement hierarchy due to the reduced status of the village since the original settlement hierarchy was produced.

The final **settlement hierarchy policy (SP3)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. The policy directs development towards the most sustainable locations of the district. It will help to deliver positive social sustainability impacts through delivering housing to meet location needs, ensuring access to community services and facilities as well as providing opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.

The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Given the importance of the AONB in West Berkshire the decision to retain a specific AONB policy was considered the preferred option. The **North Wessex Downs AONB policy (SP2)** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, although there is likely to be a significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability as a result of the protection the policy gives to the AONB.

Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE)

There are two AWE bases in West Berkshire, which provide a distinct set of challenges and planning restrictions. As a result a specific AWE policy has been developed. The **Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Policy (SP4)** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, but there is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as the policy seeks to protect human health in the event of an emergency occurring at AWE.

5.2. The Environment and Surroundings

Responding to Climate Change

A new Climate Change policy has been developed in response to the declaration of the Climate Emergency in 2019. The **Responding to Climate Change Policy (SP5)** is likely to have an overall positive/neutral impact on sustainability. There are a number of significantly positive environmental sustainability impacts as a result of the policy including protecting Green Infrastructure (GI) and biodiversity to help combat climate change.

Flood Risk

Flooding is a key issue in West Berkshire and therefore, the inclusion of a flood risk policy in the LPR is critical. **The Flood Risk Policy (SP6)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on all elements of sustainability in relation to flood risk and quality of life and the environment in the future.

Design Quality

The LPR includes a policy that sets out design principles for development. This policy is based on the original Design principles policy of the current Local Plan. The **Design Quality policy (SP7)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability, with significantly positive impacts on social and economic sustainability in relation to climate change, health, safety and wellbeing as well as the character and distinctiveness of the environment.

Landscape Character

The review of the current Landscape Character policy stated that the policy was still robust, subject to some minor changes. Comments from the Council's Heritage team requested that the policy for Landscape and Heritage be separate to allow for more details to be included in the Heritage policy.

The **Landscape Character policy (SP8)** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive environmental sustainability impacts are likely in relation to landscape character, biodiversity and GI.

Historic Environment

A new Historic Environment policy has been developed, based on the Landscaped Character and Historic Environment policy of the current Local Plan and at the request of the Council's Heritage team.

The **Historic Environment Policy (SP9)** is likely to have an overall natural impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability in relation to protection of the historic environment.

Green Infrastructure

Following changes to national policy around Green infrastructure (GI) a new policy was developed for the LPR. The **Green Infrastructure policy (SP10)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental and social sustainability in relation to biodiversity, landscape and flood risk benefits.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Following changes to national policy to require a 10% net gain in biodiversity an updated Biodiversity and Geodiversity policy has been developed. The **Biodiversity and Geodiversity policy (SP11)** is likely to have an overall natural impact on sustainability, but significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability though the protection of biodiversity and the knock-in effects this has on greenhouse gas emissions, landscape character and GI.

5.3. Delivering Housing

Approach to Housing Delivery

Local housing need (LHN) is calculated using a formula set out in the NPPF. However, this then needs to be translated into a housing figure for the plan. Three options were considered for the housing figure to be included in the LPR. The option chosen was for the LHN + a buffer figure of 5%, giving a housing requirement of 9,146 over the plan period.

The **Approach to Housing Delivery Policy (SP12)** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts are likely in relation to social sustainability as the policy seeks to ensure adequate housing is provided to meet local needs.

5.3.1. Site Allocations

Strategic Site Allocations

The Core Strategy included two strategic sites, one of which is nearing completion (Newbury Racecourse). The other site (**Sandleford Park**), while part of the site has outline planning permission (granted on appeal in 2022) has not yet commenced development. The LPR considered the options for reallocating the site and determined that it would be most appropriate to retain the policy for the allocation in the plan, subject to some updates.

The **Sandleford Strategic Allocation (SP16)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive or significantly positive impacts on social sustainability as the policy will help to deliver new housing to meet local needs. While there are some uncertain sustainability impacts mitigation measures should ensure no negative sustainability impacts occur. The site is greenfield and underlain by sand and gravel, so there are some potentially negative environmental impacts which will need to be mitigated.

A new strategic site is proposed for allocation at North East Thatcham. The North **East Thatcham policy (SP17)** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A number of significantly positive impacts have been identified in relation to social sustainability as the site will deliver houses to help to meet local housing needs. While the site is greenfield, and therefore, likely to have a negative impact on environmental sustainability, mitigation measures should ensure no overall negative impacts as a result of the development of the site.

Non-Strategic Site Allocations

The remaining housing figure of the LPR is to be made up of smaller sites, these are a mix of sites allocated in the Housing Site Allocations DPD and new sites to be allocated through the LPR.

The **Housing Site Allocations DPD** included a number of site allocated for housing, not all of which have come forward for development. Where sites are still considered likely to come forward these have been carried forward into the LPR. Each site has a site policy developed to set out the requirements for the site, these have been reviewed and carried forward into the LPR, with any amendments necessary. Each site was subject to SA/SEA as part of the site selection process for the Housing Site Allocations DPD. The SA/SEAs have been reviewed and updated to ensure they are still relevant.

Policy **RSA1 Land north of Newbury College, Monk Lane, Newbury** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability

impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA2 Land at Bath Road, Speen** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA3 Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA4 Land off Greenham Road and New Road, South East Newbury** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA5 Land at Lower Way Farm** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA6 Stonehams Farm, Tilehurst** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA7 72 Purley Rise, Purley-on-Thames** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA8 Land adjacent to Bath Road and Dorking Way, Calcot** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local

services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA9 Land between A340 and The Green, Theale** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA12 Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA14 Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need, particularly the racehorse industry as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA15 Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape, heritage and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA18 Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A significantly positive sustainability impact has been identified in relation to flood risk on the site. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need, particularly the racehorse industry as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA20 Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need, particularly the racehorse industry as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive

environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and impacts of climate change.

Policy **RSA21 Land to the South East of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A significantly positive sustainability impact has been identified in relation to flood risk on the site. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need, particularly the racehorse industry as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and impacts of climate change.

Neighbourhood Plans

There are nine designated Neighbourhood Areas in the district, with two having adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans are able to allocate sites to help meet the local housing need, however, it is not compulsory for plans to include allocations. The adopted Stratfield Mortimer NDP includes allocate of 110 dwellings, while the adopted plan for Compton does not include any allocations due to a large site already allocated through the Housing Site Allocations . Hungerford and Lambourn Parish Councils are intending to include allocations in their NDPs and have been allocated 55 dwellings and 25 dwellings respectively. Housing allocations in the remaining Parishes (Cold Ash, Burghfield, Tilehurst and Hermitage) are considered as part of the LPR.

New Allocations

A number of new sites are also required to meet the housing requirement. The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment sets out the sites that have been submitted to the council for consideration for allocation in the LPR. The HELAA makes a preliminary assessment of the potential and suitability of the sites, but does not make recommendations as to which sites should be allocated, this is done through the site selection process, as set out in the site selection methodology.

A total of 249 sites were considered for residential use or mixed use in the HELAA (December 2020). 165 sites were ruled out as “not considered developable within the next 15 years”. Sites were also ruled out as reasonable alternatives for a number of other reasons including, being within a designated Neighbourhood Area where the NDP will allocate sites, inside the settlement boundary, sites outside the settlement hierarchy.

A total of 16 sites have been taken forward as reasonable alternatives for allocation, these sites have been subject to SA/SEA to assist with the decision making process on which sites should go forward for allocation within the LPR.

The outcomes of the Emerging Draft consultation (Dec 2020), along with further technical work have been used to refine the site assessments and inform the recommendation of sites for allocation within the Local Plan Review.

In the **Newbury and Thatcham** Spatial area no new allocations are proposed. In **Newbury** no sites are considered suitable for allocation, except at a strategic scale where significant access improvements could be provided and this does not fit with

the overall spatial strategy for the LPR. No other sites are considered for allocation in **Thatcham** due to the proposed allocation of the strategic site at North East Thatcham. No new sites are proposed for allocation in **Cold Ash**, as none of the sites proposed, outside the settlement boundary, are considered suitable for development at this time.

New allocations are proposed in the **Eastern Area**. No new sites were proposed for inclusion in the HELAA in **Calcot or Purley-on-Thames**. One site was considered for allocation in **Tilehurst**, but politically there are significant concerns regarding access to the site, which is shared with the Reading IKEA store, meaning that it is not to be allocated. Two sites are proposed for allocation in **Theale**.

Policy RSA10 Whitehart Meadow, Theale is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Significantly positive impacts have been identified in relation to flood risk on the site, and for the range of dwellings types and size. Positive environmental sustainability impacts are likely in relation to climate change impacts, biodiversity, landscape and the historic environment.

Policy RSA11 Former Sewage Treatment Works, Theale is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Significantly positive impacts have been identified in relation to flood risk on the site, and for the range of dwellings types and size. Positive environmental sustainability impacts are likely in relation to climate change impacts, biodiversity, landscape and the historic environment.

Due to the presence of the DEPZ for AWE no sites are considered appropriate for allocation in **Burghfield**. **Stratfield Mortimer** has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, which allocated 110 dwellings to 2026, therefore, at this stage no new allocations are proposed. A single site is proposed for allocation in **Woolhampton**. Policy **RSA13 Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage and impacts of climate change.

New sites are proposed for allocation in the **North Wessex Downs AONB**. One new site is proposed for allocation in **Bradfield Southend**. Policy **RSA16 Land north of Southend Road, Bradfield Southend** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will provide the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape, heritage and impacts of climate change.

A new site is proposed for allocation in **Chieveley**. Policy **RSA17 Land at Chieveley Glebe, Chieveley** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will provide the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape, heritage and impacts of climate change.

No new sites are proposed for allocation in **Compton**. Compton is a designated Neighbourhood Area with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites, as a site for 140 dwellings was allocated in the Housing Site Allocations DPD and is proposed to be carried forward in the LPR, as a result it is not considered appropriate for further allocations within Compton in this plan period.

A new site is proposed for allocation in **Great Shefford**. Policy **RSA19 Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A significantly positive sustainability impact has been identified in relation to flood risk on the site. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will deliver new housing to help meet the local housing need, particularly the racehorse industry as well as providing the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and impacts of climate change.

An additional site is proposed for allocation in **Hermitage**. Policy **RSA22 Land adjacent to Station Road, Hermitage** is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Positive social sustainability impacts are likely as the site seeks to set out the requirements for new houses on the site, as well as requirements for good access routes to local services and facilities. Impacts on environmental sustainability are likely to be positive as the policy sets out the measures required to provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts as well as providing biodiversity, landscape and heritage benefits. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Hungerford is in a designated Neighbourhood Area and the parish council are anticipating to allocate sites through the NDP. As a result no new sites have been proposed for allocation, but the parish council have been asked to allocate land for 55 dwellings.

One new site is proposed for allocation in **Kintbury**. Policy **RSA23 Land adjoining The Haven, Kintbury** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive impacts on social sustainability as the site will provide the new homes with good access to local services and facilities. There are likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape, heritage and impacts of climate change.

Lambourn is in a designated Neighbourhood Area and the parish council are anticipating to allocate sites through the NDP. As a result no new sites have been proposed for allocation but the parish council have been asked to allocate land for 25 dwellings.

No suitable sites were included in the HELAA in **Pangbourne**, so no new allocations are proposed.

Gypsies and Travellers

Two sites were included in the Housing Site Allocations DPD. These sites have not yet been delivered and so they will be rolled forward into the LPR. Policy **RSA24 New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability in terms of accessibility to community facilities for those using the site. There are also likely to be a number of positive environmental sustainability impacts in relation to soils and water quality. Policy **RSA25 Long Copse Farm, Enborne** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability in terms of accessibility to community facilities for those using the site. There are also likely to be a number of positive environmental sustainability impacts in relation to soils and water quality.

5.3.2. Housing Type and Mix

This policy is based upon the updated Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Evidence. **Policy SP18 Housing Type and Mix** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as the policy seeks to provide a range of housing types and mix to support local needs.

5.3.3. Affordable Housing

This policy has been based upon the updated Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Evidence following updates to national policy. Policy **SP19 Affordable housing** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability through the provision of affordable housing across the district. Positive environmental sustainability impacts are also identified as the affordable homes will need to be built to zero carbon standards.

5.4. *Fostering Economic Growth and Supporting Local Communities*

Strategic Approach to Employment Land

Updated policies are included in the LPR for the approach to employment land and town centres.

Policy **SP20 Strategic approach to employment land** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive impacts have been identified in relation to economic sustainability, with positive impacts on environmental sustainability as the policy promotes use of PDL over greenfield sites.

Employment Allocations

Of the 42 sites submitted for consideration in the HELAA 16 were considered reasonable alternatives for allocation, with six being taken forward for allocation.

Policy **SP21 Sites Allocated for Employment Land** lists the sites to be allocated. The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive impacts are identified on economic sustainability as the policy seeks to allocate sites for employment uses and safety guard existing employment areas. Positive sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to environmental

sustainability as the allocations make best use of PDL where this is available. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Each site that has been allocated has a specific site policy. Each policy has been subject to SA/SEA.

Policy **ESA1 Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape, heritage, soil and water quality as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Policy **ESA2 Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape and heritage as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety and the promotion of sustainable travel. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Policy **ESA3 Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape and heritage as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Policy **ESA4 Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape, heritage, soil and water quality as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Policy **ESA5 Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment

uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape and heritage as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Policy **ESA6 Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane, Padworth** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive economic sustainability impacts in relation to the allocation of land for employment uses. There are also likely to be significantly positive environmental impacts in relation to climate change reliance. Positive environmental sustainability impacts have also been identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape, heritage, soil and water quality as well as in relation to mineral resources. There are also positive social sustainability impacts in relation to road safety. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Town Centres

The Town Centre policies of the current Local Plan area still considered, in principle, to be appropriate, but additional evidence from the Western Berkshire Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment (2016) and changes in the planning system have resulted in the policy being updated. Policy **SP22 Town and District Centres** is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. A significantly positive impact is likely in relation to economic sustainability as the policy seeks to protect the viability and vitality of the District's centres. There is also likely to be a positive impact on economic sustainability through supporting businesses in the District's centres. Positive impacts have also been identified in relation to environmental sustainability and social sustainability as the policy seeks to protect local character and the historic environment as well as protecting local services and facilities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

Transport

The transport policies of the current Local Plan are still considered, in principle, to be appropriate. They have been updated to ensure that they comply with current national policy and local evidence. Policy **SP23 Transport** is likely to have a positive impact on all sustainability objectives as it seeks to promote and encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport over car use. A number of indirectly positive environmental impacts have also been identified, which relate to benefits that a reduction in car use would have that are not directly related to the policy. No negative impacts have been identified as a result of this policy.

Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery

The principles of the current Local Plan infrastructure policy are still considered to be appropriate. **Policy SP24 Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery** is likely to have an overall positive impact on all elements of sustainability. A number of significantly positive impacts are predicted particularly in relation to social sustainability through the provision of infrastructure to support new developments and local communities. There are also a number of unknown impacts as the policy does not specifically deal with those areas, but may have an indirectly positive impact as a result of the aims of the policy to deliver infrastructure to support development. No negative impacts have been identified.

5.5. Development Management Policies

Development Management policies have been developed to help to manage developments taking place in the district, while many of the elements are covered by national policy the local context is seen as being important to the implementation in the local area.

DM1 Development in the Countryside

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. A number of positive or significantly positive sustainability impacts have been identified, particularly in relation to environmental sustainability in relation to landscape and heritage, but also for economic sustainability in relation to the redevelopment of existing land and development where there is a local need. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM2 Separation of Settlements around Newbury and Thatcham

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability as the policy seeks to retain green gaps between the settlements of Newbury and Thatcham to retain their separate identities. This will result in positive impacts for landscape character and biodiversity. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM3 Health and Wellbeing

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. A number of positive impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the policy seeks to promote and support health and wellbeing. There are likely to be neutral impacts on economic and environmental sustainability as a result of the policy. However in combination with other policies in the plan, there could be a positive impact on all elements of sustainability.

DM4 Building Sustainable Homes and Businesses

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive environmental sustainability impacts as a result of the policy's requirements for energy efficiency and climate change mitigation. There are also a number of positive environmental sustainability impacts as a result of the policy requiring consideration of the natural environment in relation to air and soil quality and noise. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM5 Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, with a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seeks to ensure no environmental nuisance or pollution occurs as a result of development. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM6 Water Quality

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, with significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to water quality and habitat creation. This could also result in positive impacts for social sustainability through the creation of GI. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM7 Water Resources and Waste Water

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, however there will be significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability associated with ensuring adequate water supplies and reducing water consumption. There are also likely to be positive impacts on environmental and social sustainability associated with the benefits for climate change impacts as a result of the policy. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM8 Air Quality

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability, however, it is likely to have significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to managing air pollution and impacts on biodiversity. A number of the neutral impacts would be likely to have a positive impact when indirect impacts of the policy are considered, such as reducing the need to travel which would reduce air pollution levels benefits human health and biodiversity. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM9 Conservation Areas

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development in Conservation Areas, which will help to protect, conserve or enhance landscape character and the built and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM10 Listed Buildings

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development/redevelopment of listed buildings, which will help to protect, conserve or enhance the built and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM11 Non-designated heritage assets

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development/redevelopment that might affect non-designated heritage assets, which will help to protect, conserve or enhance the built and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM12 Registered Parks and Gardens

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development/redevelopment that might affect registered parks and gardens, which will help to protect, conserve or enhance the historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM13 Registered Battlefields

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development/redevelopment that might affect the registered battlefield, which will

help to protect, conserve or enhance and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM14 Assets of Archaeological Importance

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive environmental impacts are likely as the policy seeks to manage development/redevelopment that might affect assets of archaeological importance, which will help to protect, conserve or enhance and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM15 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be significantly positive impacts on environmental sustainability as a result of the policy seeking to protect and enhance trees, woodland and hedgerows. There are also a number of indirectly positive impacts on environmental sustainability as a result of the benefits trees, woodlands and hedgerows can bring in relation to climate change, soil and water quality. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM16 First Homes Exception Schemes

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. A significantly positive impact on social sustainability is likely as the policy seeks to deliver affordable housing for first time buyers with a local connection. There are also likely to be a positive impact on economic sustainability as new development on the edge of towns and villages can help to support viability and vitality of the local centre. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM17 Rural Exception Housing

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. The policy will have a significantly positive impact on social and economic sustainability as it will deliver affordable housing in rural areas. There are a number of unknown sustainability impacts as the impacts would depend on the location of any proposals coming forward. Mitigation measures would be vital to ensure that there would be no negative impacts.

DM18 Self and Custom Build

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. The policy will have a positive impact on social and economic sustainability as it will deliver specialist housing. There are a number of unknown sustainability impacts as the impacts would depend on the location of any proposals coming forward. Mitigation measures would be vital to ensure that there would be no negative impacts. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM19 Specialised Housing

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. The policy will have a positive impact on social and economic sustainability as it will deliver specialist housing. There are a number of unknown sustainability impacts as the impacts would depend on the location of any proposals coming forward. Mitigation measures would be vital to ensure that there would be no negative impacts. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM20 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling showpeople

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are positive impacts in relation to social sustainability as the policy provides the framework to provide specific locations for plots/pitches for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. This results in positive impacts in relation to provision of specialist housing, and improving access to community services and facilities. There are also positive impacts on environmental sustainability identified in relation to the provisions in the policy wording for the natural, built and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM21 Retention of Mobile Home Parks

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a positive social sustainability impact as the policy looks to safeguard mobile home parks except where affordable housing schemes are proposed. No negative impacts are identified.

DM22 Residential use of Space above Non-Residential Units

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability through the reuse of vacant spaces above existing units. This will also have a significantly positive impact on economic sustainability as it seeks to support town and village centre viability and vitality. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM23 Housing Related to Rural Workers

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Significantly positive impacts on economic and social sustainability are likely as the policy sets out where development will be allowed to support workers in rural businesses. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM24 Conversion and/or Re-use of Existing Redundant and Disused Buildings in the Countryside to Residential Use

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy will result in the redevelopment of previously development land. There is a likely positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy seeks to provide the context for the redevelopment of existing redundant buildings in the countryside. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM25 Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside

The policy is likely to have an overall natural impact on sustainability. A significantly positive environmental sustainability impact is likely as the policy seeks to make use of PDL through the redevelopment of existing dwellings. There are likely positive environmental impacts as the policy also seeks to protect the natural and historic environment. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM26 Extension of residential curtilages

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are positive impacts identified in relation to environmental sustainability in relation to protection of the landscape and biodiversity. There is also a likely positive impact on

social sustainability as the policy requires proposals to protect road safety. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM27 sub-division of existing dwellings in the countryside

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy will be making best use of previously developed land. There are also positive environmental sustainability impacts identified in relation to protection of the countryside and heritage assets. There are positive social sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to ensure accessibility services and facilities, while providing a context for additional dwellings to be provided to meet local housing needs.

DM28 Residential Extensions

The policy will have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy aims to protect the special qualities of the AONB as well as local character outside the AONB. There are also likely to be positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect trees and biodiversity and heritage assets as well as making best use of PDL. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM29 Residential Annexes

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy relates to PDL. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM30 Residential Space Standards

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a positive impact on social sustainability in relation not healthy lifestyles as the policy will ensure that new dwellings provide adequate space.

DM31 Residential Amenity

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts on environmental and social sustainability have been identified in relation to pollution management and requirements for adequate amenity space to be provided. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM32 Designated Employment Areas

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on economic sustainability as the policy seeks to protect employment land. There is likely to be a positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy seeks development within existing employment areas which would be development on PDL.

DM33 Development within AWE

The policy is likely to have a neutral impact on sustainability. Two positive impacts on environmental and economic sustainability have been identified in relation to use of PDL and making effective and efficient use of employment land. No other sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM34 Retail Parks

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to economic sustainability as the policy seeks to protect the viability and vitality of town centres as well as making best use of existing land. No other sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM35 Supporting a prosperous Rural Economy

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on economic sustainability as the policy seeks to support the rural economy. There are also likely positive environmental sustainability impacts as a result of the policy's requirements for protection of the landscape character and heritage assets. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM36 Farm Diversification

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy seeks to protect the natural, built and historic environment as well as pollution that could result from proposed development. There is also a likely positive impact on economic sustainability as the policy supports farm diversification in certain circumstances.

DM37 Equestrian and Horseracing Industry

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely to be positive economic sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to support the equestrian/horseracing industry. There are also positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy seeks to protect biodiversity, landscape character and the historic environment as well as ensure there is no pollution resulting from the development that could impact on noise, air or water quality. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM38 Development on Existing Educational and Institutional Sites in the Countryside

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There are likely positive impacts on social and economic sustainability associated with supporting development required to meet the needs and operational requirements of the educational or institutional site. There are also likely positive environmental sustainability impacts as the policy requires consideration of the landscape character and heritage assets. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM39 Local Community Facilities

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as the policy seeks to safeguard existing community facilities and sets out the criteria for new community facilities. There is also a likely positive impact in relation to environmental sustainability as the policy seeks to ensure development are accessible to the community it services. There is also a positive social and economic sustainability impact as the policy seeks to support the viability and vitality of town and village centres.

DM40 Public Open Space

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on environmental and social sustainability as the policy promotes good quality open space which will promote healthy lifestyles and provide biodiversity benefits. There is likely to be a positive environmental impact in relation to climate change as the GI provided by the policy can act as a sink for GHGs. No negative impacts have been identified.

DM41 Digital Infrastructure

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on all elements of sustainability as a result of improve access to IT facilities. There are also positive impacts identified in relating to environmental sustainability as the policy allowed for less travel through improved digital access. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM42 Transport Infrastructure

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. A significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability is likely as the policy seeks to promote alternative modes of travel such as walking, cycling, public transport and use of alternative fuels. There are also likely positive impacts on environmental sustainability in relating to a reduction of pollution due to the promotion of sustainable travel modes. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM43 Theale rail-road transfer site

The policy is likely to have a neutral impact on sustainability. A significantly positive impact on economic and environmental sustainability has been identified in relation to minerals consumption as the site is primarily used for the transportation of minerals. The other significantly positive impact identified is in relation to the use of the rail network to move good and resources around, rather than the road network. No other sustainability impacts have been identified.

DM44 Parking

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seeks to provide parking for new development in the context of reducing the pollution from vehicle travel. As the update of EV charging points is unknown, there is an unknown impact on sustainability. Where there is a good update of the EV points there will be a positive impact on climate change.

DM45 Travel Planning

The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. The policy is likely to have a positive impact on environmental sustainability as the policy seeks to promote sustainable travel which will have environmental benefits on air and water quality, as well as reducing climate change impacts. No negative impacts have been identified.

In accordance with the NPPF the sequential test for flood risk (Para 161) and the Exceptional Circumstances for major development in the AONB (Para 177) have been carried out³.

6. Conclusion

As a result of the SA/SEA work undertaken during the development of the Local Plan Review the most appropriate strategy has been taken forward into the Proposed Submission version of the Plan.

The Proposed Submission Local Plan Review is considered to represent the most suitable approach, from the options assessed, in order to achieve the sustainability objectives of the plan. Successful implementation of the Local Plan, and adequate mitigation of the potential negative effects identified will result in neutral, or in many cases positive sustainability impacts and sustainable development.

³ National Planning Policy Framework 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf