

Somerset Council

MENDIP LOCAL PLAN PART II LIMITED UPDATE

Sustainability Appraisal Report

February 2024

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Appendix 1: Site Assessment Template attached

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Appendix 2a - Mendip towns

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1 Purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.1 The process of plan making relies upon the choices between different options for the development and use of land through the planning system. The requirement to produce a Sustainability Appraisal under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) seeks to ensure that the decision making process takes into account the key objectives of sustainable development. These objectives are:
 - Social progress which meets the needs of everyone
 - Effective protection of the environment
 - Prudent use of natural resources
 - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy. The role of the Sustainability Appraisal is to assess the extent to which the emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. In doing so, it will provide an opportunity to consider ways in which the plan or strategy can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions as well as a means of identifying and addressing any adverse effects that policies and proposals might have.
- 1.3 The overall aim of the Sustainability Appraisal process is to help ensure that the Local Plan makes an effective contribution to the pursuit of sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”¹
- 1.4 This report sets out the methodology used to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal.

2 Relationship to Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.1 The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires an Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes prepared by public authorities that are likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The process is referred to as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and covers relevant plans and programmes whose preparation began after July 2004. All parts of the Local Plan must therefore be subject to this assessment.
- 2.2 Through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) a Sustainability Appraisal must be carried out for all parts of a Local Plan and supplementary planning documents. Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, although similar, are different processes. Strategic Environmental Assessment focuses solely on environmental effects whereas Sustainability Appraisal covers environmental, social and economic considerations. This Sustainability Appraisal Report addresses the requirements of the Sustainability Appraisal and

¹ Brandt Report

Strategic Environmental Assessment processes simultaneously by giving full consideration to environmental issues as well as social and economic concerns. The Scoping Report and Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Local Plan Update together meet the need of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive by setting out the significant effects on the environment of implementing the draft plan update and those alternatives considered.

Table 1: Summary of the requirements of the SEA Directive and where these have been addressed in this SA Report (Based on Figure 12, SA Guidance, ODPM 2005)

SEA Directive Requirements	Where covered in SA Report
Outline of contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and the relationship with other relevant plans	Local Plan Part II Limited Update Background (Section 3 below)
Relevant current state of environment and likely trends without implementation of the plan	Area Characteristics and Baseline Information (Scoping Report Appendix B)
Likely significant effects of plan on environmental characteristics	Options Appraisal: Sites (Section 6 below)
Existing environmental issues relevant to plan, including, in particular, those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance	Area characteristics and Baseline Information (Local Plan Part II Limited Update SA Scoping Report Section 4 and Appendix B)
Environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account	Review of relevant PPPs (Local Plan Part II Limited Update SA Scoping Report, Section 3)
The likely significant effects on environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term effects on the environment of implementing the plan	Local Plan Part II Limited Update SA (Appendix 2a and 2b)
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling required information	Local Plan Part II Limited Update SA (Section 6)
Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring	Monitoring Framework (Section 8 below)

A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above heading	See consultation report
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3 Local Plan Part II Limited Update - Background

3.1 Following a Judicial Review, five housing allocations totalling just over 505 dwellings were removed from the Mendip Local Plan Part II in December 2022. The Council is required to review and re-assess these sites and other available land district wide.

3.2 The Court Order requires the Council to:

- Review and reconsider allocations to meet the former Mendip District wide requirement for an additional 505 dwellings in accordance with LPP1 Core Policies 1 and 2 and the Judgment of the Court; and
- In light of the review, prepare and publish modifications to LPP2 which allocate sites to meet the additional requirement

3.3 The Council is clear that 'modifications' as set out in the Order should be interpreted as undertaking a 'partial' update of the adopted Mendip Local Plan Part II. The update will identify additional site allocations with the capacity to meet 505 dwellings and will be strictly limited to this exercise. The review will not revisit any other issues in relation to other LPP2 policies.

3.4 The scope of the review exercise was confirmed in the Somerset Local Development Scheme (LDS) agreed at Executive on 4 October 2023. The LDS also includes the timescales to produce a Somerset-wide Development Plan Document.

3.5 The draft LDS confirms:

- LPP2 will be partially updated to allocate specific sites sufficient to accommodate 505 additional dwellings needed in the former Mendip District (Area East) as a whole by 2029; and
- These allocations will be made in accordance with LPP1 policies CP1 and CP2

3.6 The Court Judgement found that the SEA was flawed in its approach to reasonable alternatives in that the decision to confine the location of reasonable alternatives to the north/north east of the district was based on a misinterpretation of LPP1. The SEA is now required to consider reasonable alternatives to provide for 505 homes across the geographical area of the former Mendip District.

3.7 The rest of LPP2 was unaffected by the Court Order, and none of the grounds of challenge relate to the methodology employed to carry out the earlier SAs (other than that relating to the geographical scope of the 505 exercise).

3.8 HRA has been carried out for proposed allocations and can be found here [SCC - Public - 3.1 LU Habitat Regulations Assessment v4 Jan24.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com/SCC - Public - 3.1 LU Habitat Regulations Assessment v4 Jan24.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com))

4 Appraisal Methodology

Sustainability Appraisal Framework and Approach

4.1 Given the narrow scope of this update and limited time period to 2029, the council do not consider a full revision of the SA to be necessary or justified. The council is not undertaking a full local plan review or revising its adopted strategy. The approach to SA must also reflect the expedited timescale imposed by the High Court Order which requires reasonable alternative site options to be identified at Regulation 18.

4.2 Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken to test the spatial strategy options used to inform the preparation of Local Plan Part I. The findings of the SA identified the impacts of the 4 options. This analysis underpins the LPP1 spatial strategy and informed the development of strategic policies CP1 and CP2. These options were as follows;

OPTION 1A: Providing new housing where population and household growth trends indicate that demand is expected to arise

OPTION 1B: Providing new housing at the towns to reflect population and household growth trends and in the rural area to reflect local needs

OPTION 2A: Providing new housing where new jobs are expected to be created.

OPTION 2B: Providing new housing where new jobs are expected to be created but adjusted so that the number of homes and number of jobs in each place is equalised

OPTION 3A: Providing new housing where the need for affordable housing is expected to arise

OPTION 3B: Providing new housing where the need for affordable housing is expected to arise but restriction of the rural component to meet local needs only

OPTION 4: Directing housing to maximise the use of brownfield land (and already committed sites) in each town with the remaining development expected from greenfield sites based on the conclusions of other options in this analysis.

4.3 As part of the LPP1 Examination, the Inspector recommended modifications including new paragraph 4.7 which states The Council will consider making specific allocations as part of the Local Plan Part I Site Allocations to meet the development needs of Mendip which have not been specifically allocated to any particular location in this Part I Local Plan.

4.4 Consultation on the main modifications to LPP1 took place between 20th June and 4th August 2014 and the modifications were screened to establish whether further SA/HRA was required. No further SA/HRA was required at this time.

4.5 In preparing LPPII, the Council reviewed the LPPI Spatial Strategy options for site allocations and tested two reasonable alternatives around housing numbers. Local Plan Part II was primarily

concerned with allocating sites to deliver the housing and employment land outlined in Local Plan Part I. A site selection process was carried out. Stage 1 of the site selection process included a desktop review of constraints and was undertaken for each of these submitted sites to ascertain whether there were any severe constraints which would result in a site being ruled out. Examples of such constraints include being within an area of Flood Zone 3, being within a Special Landscape Feature area, being significantly removed from a settlement, having significant viability issues such as power lines on the site etc. The desktop review resulted in a number of sites being discounted at this early stage. The discounted sites were published in the Issues & Options Consultation Paper published in 2015 for each settlement, along with those sites considered suitable to be taken forward to the next stage. Those sites taken forward from Stage 1 of the site selection process, along with any additional sites put forward through the Issues & Options consultation were subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

- 4.6 SA was undertaken on two options around housing numbers. Option 1 was delivering the housing targets outlined in the adopted Local Plan Part I. Option 2 was the allocation of all the preferred sites in Frome, Glastonbury, Street and Wells and sites in the Primary and Secondary villages to meet the outstanding requirements. Although Option 2 was found to have more negative impacts than Option 1 the decision was taken to implement Option 2 due to the need to deliver more housing than the minimum outlined in the adopted Local Plan Part I.
- 4.7 Core Policy 2 also identified a need to distribute a further 505 dwellings in towns and villages as a consequence of rolling forward the plan period to 2029 (see para 4.21 in Local Plan Part I). Initially LPPII did not identify a need for specific allocations to provide for this additional housing and it was to be met through non-plan commitments.
- 4.8 During the course of the LPPII Examination, the Inspector identified that the Council's housing requirement should increase by 505 dwellings to meet the need for the additional 505 dwellings. The Inspector requested the authority to undertake a review of sites, focusing on the north-east of the district, to meet the 505 dwelling requirement. As part of this work the Council prepared an amendment to the Sustainability Appraisal which assessed only reasonable alternative site options in the north east of the district. Sites were taken forward through Examination and later adopted by the Council as part of the LPPII. However, following a Judicial Review, Policies MN1, MN2, MN3, NSP1 and BK1 were deleted. The Judgement found that the Council failed to consider any reasonable alternatives to allocating additional sites in the north-east of the district.
- 4.9 In accordance with the Court Order, the Council is now reviewing reasonable alternative site options to meet the district wide requirement for an additional 505 dwellings in accordance with Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Mendip District LPPI.
- 4.10 In doing so, the preferred Spatial Strategy option 2, as tested originally through the preparation of LPPI and subsequently as part of the preparation of LPPII will continue to be used as a basis for the identification of reasonable alternative site options because it underpins the Council's overarching spatial strategy:

Option 2 Allocation of all sustainable sites at the towns of Frome, Glastonbury, Street and Wells and sites in the Primary and Secondary Villages (subject to consideration of plan period commitments and completions)

- 4.11 It is not considered that there is a further requirement, through this limited update to LPPII to test alternative Spatial Strategy options to accommodate the additional 505 homes.
- 4.12 As allocations will be identified in accordance with the adopted Spatial Strategy, the individual sites will be considered as the reasonable alternatives for the purposes of SA.
- 4.13 In making preparations for the Sustainability Appraisal process for the LPPII Limited Update, the Council has undertaken a review and update of the Scoping Report prepared for LPPII in 2015. The LPPII Limited Update Scoping Report (2024) can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/
- 4.14 As set out in the Executive Summary of the LPPII LU Scoping Report (2024), only minor amendments to the sustainability issues and problems were identified. Overall, the Council consider that the sustainability objectives remain relevant and are sufficiently flexible to accommodate updated evidence and data including the impact of nutrient neutrality requirements across the district. As such, the Council has made one minor amendment to the overall Sustainability Appraisal Framework, which is outlined in the Scoping Report and also provided in Appendix 1 below.
- 4.15 For completeness, the Council will issue the LPPII Limited Update Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Framework for consultation to ensure that the conclusions reached by the Council align with those of the Statutory Consultation Bodies. It is not anticipated that material amendments will be required to the SA framework, but where amendments are required, this will result in further SA testing, in advance of the preparation of Regulation 19 version of the LPPII Limited Update.

5 Sustainability Appraisal Context

- 5.1 All of the plans, policies and programmes that are considered to be relevant to the production of the Local Plan Part II and the Sustainability Appraisal were outlined in the Scoping Report published in 2015. The Scoping Report assessed each of the relevant plans, policies and programmes to determine what implications they had for the Local Plan Part II. This assessment also helped to highlight what the main sustainability issues were for the district. This assessment has been updated to ensure that the Local Plan Part II Limited Update is considered in the context of up to date plans, policies and programmes. The updated assessment of relevant plans, policies and programmes can be found in **Appendix A** to the Local Plan Update Scoping Report. www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/

Baseline Information and Key Sustainability Issues

5.1 The baseline information was divided into the 13 themes outlined in the SEA Guidance and was first published as part of the LPPI Scoping Report in 2015. The baseline information was reviewed as part of the preparation of LPPII and again as part of the SA scoping for the LPPII Limited Update. The updated baseline information can be found in **Appendix B** of the Local Plan Update Scoping Report www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/. Analysis of the baseline and the social, environmental and economic characteristics of the district, along with the review of relevant plans, policies and programmes led to the identification of the key sustainability issues for the area, listed below.

Key Sustainability Issues in Mendip:

- a) There is an affordability issue around housing and as such a pressure for more affordable homes and to reduce the affordability gap (i.e. the difference between average earnings and average house prices).
- b) There is a need to provide housing suitable for smaller households and to accommodate the needs of the ageing population.
- c) There is a need to protect and enhance the district's important landscapes, protected areas and biodiversity.
- d) There is a need to ensure nutrient neutrality in parts of the area and mitigation schemes need to be in place before development can go ahead
- e) The important heritage assets of the district need to be conserved and enhanced.
- f) There is pressure to locate new development on previously developed land and therefore avoid the unnecessary loss of green field land.
- g) There is a need to further promote prudent use of resources including water, energy and waste materials. Therefore the increased development of renewable energy; increased recycling and re-use of waste are important for the future.
- h) Flooding presents a risk to a number of places within the district including areas of Glastonbury and Shepton Mallet.
- i) There is a lack of core services and facilities over much of the rural area.

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

5.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Objectives were formed to address the sustainability issues outlined above. They formed part of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework that was published in the 2015 Scoping Report. They have been reviewed and (with minor amendments to decision aiding questions) remain relevant. The SA objectives are therefore as shown in **Table 1**. The updated Sustainability Framework used to test the reasonable alternative site options for the LPPII Limited Update can be found in Appendix 1 to this report.

5.3 As set out above, the LPPII Limited Update Scoping Report will be subject to formal consultation, and any consequential amendments to the SA Framework will result in further testing of the reasonable alternatives, which will be presented through the Regulation 19 version of the LPPII Limited Update.

Table 1: Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

SAO Ref	SA Objective
SAO1	Promoting a strong, thriving and diverse local economy
SAO2	Maintain and enhance the distinctive character of settlements
SAO3	Protect and enhance the district's landscape
SAO4	To avoid, reduce and manage flood risk
SAO5	Protect, maintain and where possible enhance, the district's native biodiversity
SAO6	To maintain and where necessary improve water quality, and provide for sustainable sources of water supply
SAO7	Promote increased energy production from renewable sources and encourage a reduction in consumption of energy
SAO8	Protect and enhance the district's built environment
SAO9	Encourage more sustainable travel patterns
SAO10	Maintain and enhance the vitality of our town centres ensuring they are vibrant and exciting places to live, work and play
SAO11	Meet the district's housing needs whilst providing suitable housing for all in appropriate, sustainable locations
SAO12	Promoting healthy and safe communities
SAO13	Improve access to facilities and services

6 Options Appraisal: Sites

6.1 Given the limited scope and particular circumstances of the Local Plan Limited Update exercise four groups of sites have been considered:

- (1) new sites submitted through the call for sites.
- (2) Previous sites re-confirmed as available through the call for sites
- (3) sites in the planning process or granted permission, and
- (4) other housing opportunities on sites known to the Council.

6.2 Initial screening discounted any sites against the following criteria:

- (a) a site not located within or substantially within the Mendip plan area.
- (b) sites below the minimum threshold of 6 dwellings or 0.25 Ha. This reflects the windfall allowance which is already incorporated in the adopted Local Plan Part II.
- (c) Sites under construction and likely to be completed before submission in mid 2024.

6.3 The Council also screened out sites considered unsuitable for housing as identified in national policy. These include the following:

- Development in flood zone 3 as alternatives in lower risk zones exist.
- Sites which directly impact on designated and Irreplaceable Habitat

6.4 Sites in settlements which are not identified in the adopted settlement hierarchy have not been automatically discounted. These sites have been assessed to establish whether they might contribute land which is sustainable and developable with mitigation in place.

6.4 Sites taken forward were then subject of Sustainability Appraisal using the Framework included in Appendix 1. The findings for each site can be found in Appendix 2

6.5 SA was carried out with reference to the most up to date evidence base. The Council has taken into account any recent studies or changes in evidence base documents published since LPPII was prepared. A new landscape study has been published and was used to inform the SA. Mapping of renewable energy potential across the area has been carried out to inform the preparation of a Renewable Energy Strategy. Additional information was also sought from technical consultees, including the Lead Local Flood Authority, Education Authority, Somerset Ecology, Minerals and Waste Team, Climate and Place Team and the Highway Authority.

7 Selection of Proposed Allocations and Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives.

7.1 As allocations will be identified in accordance with the adopted Spatial Strategy, the individual sites will be considered as the reasonable alternatives for the purposes of SA.

7.2 The site selection process is set out in LPPII Limited Update Reg 18 Consultation www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/ The Council have discounted the following sites from assessment:

- Sites not located within, or substantially within, the Mendip plan area.
- Sites below the minimum threshold of 6 dwellings or 0.25 Ha. This reflects the windfall allowance which is already incorporated in the adopted Local Plan Part II.
- Sites under construction and likely to be completed before submission in mid-2024.
- Sites considered unsuitable for housing as identified in national policy. These include development in flood zone 3 and sites which directly impact on designated and irreplaceable habitat.

7.3 All sites not screened out have been tested against the sustainability objectives and the full results are presented in Appendix 2. Sites have been assessed in the context of the Mendip Local Plan Part 1 Spatial Strategy, as set out in Local Plan policies CP1 and CP2 and their potential for delivery by 2029. Proposals will also need to comply with national and local policy. Technical issues or the need for extensive mitigation will be regarded as a potential risk to delivery within the specified timescale. Each of these sites has been subject to SA (detailed results can be found in Appendix 2) and the results have informed the choice of proposed allocations. In the context of an established spatial strategy, each site has been considered to establish whether it is a reasonable alternative.

7.4 Table 1 below summarises the sustainability appraisal results for the proposed allocations.

7.5 Where negative impacts have been noted the SA identifies mitigation measures that will be required. Where mitigation is difficult or not possible this will usually result in a strong negative impact being noted.

Table 1: Summary of Sustainability Appraisal results for Proposed Allocations.

Site name	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	SO10	SO11	SO12	SO13
Adderwell Road FRO218	Red	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green
North Parade FRO227	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Light Blue	Dark Red	Light Blue	Dark Green				
Common Moor Drove GLAS124	Light Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Light Green	Red	Light Green	Light Blue	Dark Green	Light Blue	Light Blue
Norbins Road GLAS122	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Red	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green
r/o Crispin Centre STR146	Red	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Red	Red	Light Green	Light Blue	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Dark Green
Brooks Road FGA STR001	Light Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Light Green	Red	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green
Wells Police station Wells127	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Red	Red	Red	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green
White Post NRAD001M	Light Blue	Light Green	Red	Light Green	Light Green								
Beauchamps Drive NRAD008	Light Blue	Light Green	Red	Red	Light Green	Light Green							
Anchor Lane COLE014	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Red	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green

Key

Strong negative	Negative (mitigation possible)	neutral	positive	Strong positive
Dark Red	Red	Light Blue	Light Green	Dark Green

7.6 A discussion of sites considered and selected can be found in the Proposed Site Allocations consultation report (Regulation 18) A summary of all sites considered is included as Appendix 3 to the Consultation Report. (Summary of Site Options by Settlement) **Appendix 3 to the Consultation Report should be read as the Council's consideration of reasonable alternatives.**

[SCC - Public - 1.2 LU Summary of Site Options by Settlement.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](SCC - Public - 1.2 LU Summary of Site Options by Settlement.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com))

Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives

7.7 The Court Judgement found that the approach to reasonable alternatives was flawed in that the decision to confine the location of reasonable alternatives to the north/north east of the district was based on a misinterpretation of LPP1 and the 2014 Inspectors Report, based on what MDC took to have been the second Inspector's interpretation of LPP1. MDC's decision not to consider sites outside the north/north-east of the District in the SEA process was held to be unlawful.

7.8 The court order requires the Council to review and reconsider allocations to meet the district wide requirement for an additional 505 dwellings in accordance with Core Policies 1 and 2 of Mendip District Local Plan 2006-2029 Part 1: Strategy and Policies and the judgment of the court.

7.9 The Council has therefore considered reasonable alternatives in the context of policies CP1 and CP2 of LPP1 and which encompass the whole area of the former Mendip District. Consideration of the reasonable alternatives is comprised of detailed consideration of all those sites, across the area, that are available and were not screened out as set out in section 6 above. Alternative sites are considered in the context of the settlement hierarchy set out in policies CP1 and CP2.

7.10 Sites were only selected if negative impacts could realistically be mitigated and would not present a risk to delivery. The exception to this is the proposed allocation of site FRO227, where SA objective 7 indicates that the potential for on site renewable energy is limited and site COLE014 where SA objective 10, which relates to town centre vitality, is noted as a strong negative which cannot be mitigated. A site in a primary village could not reasonably be expected to contribute to town centre vitality.

7.11 The majority of sites are in or adjoining main Settlements, as set out in CP1. Exceptions to this are site COLE014 at Anchor Road Coleford and sites NRAD001M White Post and NRAD008 Beauchamp Drive.

7.12 COLE014, Anchor Road, Coleford adjoins a primary village. It scores well in the SA in all respects other than supporting town centre vitality and is deliverable by the end of the plan period. Coleford has so far delivered modestly against the minimum set out in CP1, with 66 homes constructed during the plan period so far (2007-2023). A further 70 are commitments, including permission for 63 homes already granted on this site.

7.13 Sites NRAD001M at White Post and NRAD008 at Beauchamp Drive score negatively for the key indicator, SAO11; meeting housing needs in sustainable locations. The sites can deliver a substantial number of homes within the plan period but are not well related to any of the settlements identified in the Spatial Strategy. However, the impacts of this can be mitigated, as the sites adjoin Midsomer Norton in BANES district. Both sites score well for SA objectives related to sustainable travel patterns (SAO9), promoting healthy and safe communities (SAO12) and protecting and improving access to community facilities (SAO13).

8 Monitoring

8.1 The delivery of the sites will be monitored annually through the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report. This will be undertaken using the annual housing monitoring data collected by the Council to understand which planning permissions relating to sites for housing have been implemented. This will enable the Council to understand which allocated sites have been granted planning permission. Of those with planning permission it will indicate those which have been completed within the year (years for monitoring purposes run from 01/04 to 31/03); which are under construction and which have not been started.

9 Next Steps

9.1 The Sustainability Appraisal process has led to the conclusions above being drawn and proposed site allocations being identified, as outlined in the “LPPII Limited Update Reg 18 Consultation Document” that has been published alongside this draft Sustainability Appraisal Report. Suggestions have been made as to how possible negative effects can be mitigated and mitigation measures will be addressed through the policies when prepared.

9.2 The information contained within this report and the accompanying appendices will be used to inform the preparation of the submission LPPII Limited Update. This will be undertaken in light of consultation responses received through the Regulation 18 consultation and the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Consultation. Where any significant changes are proposed these will be subject to reappraisal if necessary.

Appendix 1: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

SA Objective	Decision-aiding questions: Would development of the site....?
SAO1: Promoting a strong, thriving and diverse local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the provision of sufficient employment land to meet the district's requirements enhancing its economic vitality and viability Encourage and support the diversification of the district's economy Ensure provision of sites for small start-up businesses Support farm diversification and rural enterprise to provide accessible employment opportunities in rural areas and prevent dormitory settlements Protect number of jobs on employment sites from loss to residential uses where appropriate
SAO2: Maintain and enhance the distinctive character of settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adversely affect or result in the loss of features or scenes which are recognised as being distinctive
SAO3: Protect and enhance the district's landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the Mendip Hills AONB and the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, ensuring new development within these areas contributes positively to their character and appearance Protect the special landscape features of the district that contribute to local distinctiveness Adversely affect landscape character Avoid unacceptable visual impact Preserve and where possible enhance landscape character Be integrated into existing landform and landscape features
SAO4: To avoid, reduce and manage flood risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid inappropriate development on the floodplain Put properties at risk of flooding Promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
SAO5: Protect, maintain and where possible enhance, the district's native biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect those habitats and species of international, national and local importance Ensure all new development is integrated with, and makes a positive contribution to, biodiversity, including BNG Protect and enhance Somerset's Ecological Network, allowing for improved species migration and movement Ensure provision is made for nutrient neutrality where required

SAO6: To maintain and where necessary improve water quality, and provide for sustainable sources of water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote good river quality • Improve the district's water habitats • Avoid development in areas with little water available
SAO7: Promote increased energy production from renewable sources and encourage a reduction in consumption of energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of renewable energy projects across the district • Promote sustainable construction methods and energy efficiency
SAO8: Protect and enhance the district's built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of more sustainable transport methods • Ensure good quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness • Protect and conserve listed buildings, their settings and conservation areas • Ensure the integrity of locally important green spaces • Be well integrated with the existing urban form, townscape and landscape • Relate well to adjoining land uses • Contribute to improving the quality of the public realm
SAO9: Encourage more sustainable travel patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the need for travel by the private car • Promote cycling, walking and use of public transport
SAO10: Maintain and enhance the vitality of our town centres ensuring they are vibrant and exciting places to live, work and play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure retail offer within the town centres meets local need and an improved offer is encouraged where viable • Direct leisure, retail and employment uses to town centre locations
SAO11: Meet the district's housing needs whilst providing suitable housing for all in appropriate, sustainable locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver housing to meet the need set out in the Court Order • Provide sufficient affordable housing and a suitable mix of affordable housing types • Make the best use of previously developed land • Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land • Ensure housing is directed to the most sustainable locations
SAO12: Promoting healthy and safe communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to open space for future residents
SAO13: Improve access to facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure key community facilities are provided in locations easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking • Protect against the loss of rural facilities and services