

Consultation on West Berkshire Local Plan update Update of SA/SEA: Sections relevant to Thatcham

Following the Examination hearings on the draft West Berkshire Local Plan Update, the Inspector has proposed a Schedule of Main Modifications that are, in his view, necessary to make the Local Plan sound. West Berkshire Council is currently undertaking a consultation on these Main Modifications, ending at 11:59pm on Friday 31 January 2025. The Council is required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) on this version of the draft Local Plan Update, and is consulting on this Environmental Report at the same time

The full Environmental Report runs to 931 pages. This document is an extract of the sections that are most relevant to Thatcham (NE Thatcham and the two sites north of Bowling Green Road), which are listed in the table below. The text that is most significant is highlighted in yellow.

The page numbering is separate for each section, so the table lists both the page number in the footer and pdf page number of the Page numbers for this document have been added in red.

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Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)

Environmental Report

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039

~~Proposed Submission~~ Proposed Main Modifications

November 2024 ~~2022~~

SA/SEA Local Plan Review Proposed Main Modifications

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- Appendix 8c – Site Assessments and SA/SEA – Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the LPR
<p>population placing an increased demand on social care and healthcare services.</p>	<p>over 85s by 148% over the same period. This is above the national average and will call for a much increased demand for suitable housing, health care services and facilities for the elderly. The increased prevalence of those with long term illnesses and disability (closely linked to an ageing population) living longer along with a desire for independence, will have the similar effect. Equally, the need to take more personal control of health and wellbeing should increase demand for green infrastructure and health facilities. A key challenge has been identified to explore any link between the District Health profiles and air quality.</p>
<p>Sustainable rural communities/rural isolation/access to services: Access to community services, care and facilities in rural areas</p>	<p>The most deprived areas in terms of access to services and social care are spread over the more rural areas of the District. For isolated rural communities the need to support home independence will continue, along with increased availability of transport links, access to social care and the use of ICT technologies.</p>
<p>Education/skills: Addressing gaps in skills and adult education needed to find and remain in work</p>	<p>Demand for childcare places will increase from 2017 and parental choice over settings makes provision complex to predict. Higher primary numbers post-recession are about to hit secondary in 2019, with growth mainly around Newbury and Thatcham. New housing growth here is likely to need additional educational infrastructure. Correspondingly, as pupil growth moves out of the primary schools, numbers will decrease affecting rural areas most and raises an additional risk of viability.</p> <p>Levels of educational attainment in West Berkshire are generally higher than national for both school and higher qualifications. However, a significant number of the working population, 17%, have no qualifications, compared to 15% nationally, which can act as a break on the local economy and create pockets of deprivation and exclusion. Inequality in adult educational achievement should combine with opportunities to acquire skills suited to business need. A deficit of literacy and numeracy skills and the gap to more disadvantaged pupils at secondary phase needs to be addressed for reasons of well being, crime and health as well as future employment prospects.</p>
<p>Housing: The allocation and phasing of the housing delivery up to 2037 that meets the predicted demand. An identified shortage of affordable and/or suitable homes for local people at different stages of life</p>	<p>The higher than average annual income, and house prices now amongst the highest in the UK, have particularly affected key occupational workers and potential first time buyers who are unable to get onto the property ladder. The lack of smaller sized as well as affordable dwellings for predicted lower density households is an issue for the future, particularly in relation to rural areas and in retaining younger local people employed in the District. The increasing number and proportion of older persons and those with long term needs places more demand for housing and accommodation that is available and/or adaptable for different stages of life.</p>
<p>Crime and Safety:</p>	<p>Although the level of crime is of importance to the residents of the area, it is antisocial behaviour that is of more concern (even if only perceived) as this has a direct effect on the quality of life and general appearance of the area. The LPR can have a key role in promoting well managed environments and</p>

Key Sustainability Issues	Likely evolution without the LPR
	secure buildings which will influence the levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of both in an ageing District.
Economic / Material Assets	
Resource efficiency: Rising consumption of finite resources, especially carbon emitting energy.	Lifestyle and consumption trends in the UK and more widely have generally resulted in increased demands on energy and material resources. While many of the driving factors are outside the influence of the Council, others can be influenced in the direction of sustainability. Waste minimisation and recycling, high standards of water and land use efficiency plus energy efficiency including renewables, will require particular consideration, being areas where planning can have a direct role.
Employment and affordability: Difficulty in recruitment and retention.	The availability of skills suited to the local employment need and the high cost of housing means that some sectors such as agriculture, residential care and elementary occupations may be faced with staff recruitment and retention problems and pockets of relative income deprivation in and around Newbury, Thatcham and the fringe of Reading.
Employment Land: Allocation of the right mix of employment land to meet the needs of business.	The supply of modern good quality industrial accommodation of the right mix is limited with much of the existing stock needing refurbishment. In rural areas the demand for rural employment space is limited and will need stimulating to encourage rural and home based businesses.
Growth: Support from sustainable development.	With high employment rates it is likely that the greatest uplift in economic output will be driven through productivity improvements rather than by an increase in the number of people employed. Maintaining the vitality of town and other centres in face of competing retail offers is needed to protect the role they play in providing jobs and contributing to a strong local economy.
Sustainable transport: A heavy reliance on private car use and corresponding low levels of public transport use) leading to congestion and excessive demand on the road network.	The high dependency on private transport combined with forecasted increase in traffic flows and the need to cut emissions and improve air quality are drivers for addressing the key issue is slowing down the rate of increase in traffic and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport and alternatives to travelling. Provision needs to be integrated with other sustainability issues and solutions such as access to services in more remote areas and promoting healthy active living. The capacity of the road network, particularly around Newbury and Thatcham, the A34 and A339 is also a key issue.

4.3 Developing the SA Framework

Developing an SA framework provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared and forms a central part of the SA process.

A set out sustainability objectives and their indicators, which may be in the form of targets are a way in which the achievement of the objectives can be measured, make up the SA framework. These objectives and sub-objectives can also be used to monitor the implementation of the LPR. The table includes the SEA topics as listed in the regulations to show how they have been covered by the SA Objectives.

In the original scoping report for the SA/SEA, SA Objective 9 related to climate change. Given the increasingly high profile of climate change this is considered to be a critical SA objective and as such it is now the first SA objective to be considered in the SA process.

5.1 Development Strategy

The Council wish to develop a development strategy that is place based. This approach will set out the spatial context for development across the district. It considers the Spatial Areas, the overall spatial strategy for development and the settlement hierarchy. The full SA/SEA assessments are set out in the appendices.

5.1.1 Spatial Strategy

The Area Delivery Plan Policies of the Core Strategy set out the spatial strategy and distribution for development across the district. Four Spatial Areas were defined (Newbury and Thatcham, East Kennet Valley, Eastern Area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)).

The scoping of the LPR determined that a specific review of the spatial strategy and distribution was required to ensure that the spatial strategy for the district allowed for sustainable development to take place. The division of the district into separate areas with their own characteristics has been seen as useful, however, there are significant constraints within the current Eastern and East Kennet Valley Areas (including AWE DEPZ and the AONB) and as a result the option of combining these two areas into a single Eastern Area has been considered. The following two options have been assessed:

1. Retain existing spatial strategy of the Core Strategy (4 spatial areas – Newbury & Thatcham, Eastern Area, East Kennet Valley, AONB)
2. Revised spatial strategy with 3 spatial areas (Newbury & Thatcham, Eastern Area, AONB)

Table 10 Options considered for the Spatial Areas

Options	SA Summary (see appendix 4 for the full SA/SEA)	Approach taken forward
1) Retain existing spatial Strategy of the Core Strategy (4 spatial areas – Newbury & Thatcham, Eastern Area, East Kennet Valley, AONB)	Overall this option will have a neutral impact on sustainability. There are positive sustainability impacts identified in relation to economic and environmental sustainability. The impacts on social sustainability are likely to be neutral given the limitations for development options in the Eastern Area and East Kennet Valley.	This approach is not to be taken forward The limited scope for development within the Eastern Area under this option means that the option will not be taken forward
2) Revised spatial strategy with 3 spatial areas (Newbury & Thatcham), Eastern Area, AONB)	Overall this option is likely to have a positive impact on sustainability. There are significantly positive impacts identified in relation to economic sustainability, with positive impacts on social sustainability. While environmental sustainability is likely to be neutral with mitigation measures there could also be some positive environmental sustainability impacts.	This approach is to be taken forward The option provides greater flexibility in terms of the locations of development, especially within the Eastern Area of the district.

The spatial strategy also sets out how to distribute development across the district to meet the Council's development needs. The Core Strategy had a focus on Newbury and Thatcham, with two strategic sites allocated in Newbury and smaller sites allocated across the rest of the district. This mix of strategic and smaller sites across the district worked well for the Core Strategy by providing flexibility and natural phasing of developments across the plan period. As a result a similar mix of sites is considered to be appropriate for the LPR with no other alternatives considered.

As part of the LPR the distribution of development across the district has been reviewed and the following options considered:

1. **Additional housing requirement based on Core Strategy distribution** (60% dwellings in Newbury/Thatcham, 21% in Eastern Area and East Kennet Valley, 19% in AONB)
2. **Increased focus on Eastern Area**
A site at Grazeley was put forward as a long term development proposal by a group of landowners/developers as a potential new settlement, for in the region of 10,000 dwellings plus supporting infrastructure). The sites included in the proposal are located in West Berkshire, Wokingham and Reading, therefore, development in this area would be supporting growth across the three Local Authorities. A number of smaller sites would be considered across the rest of the district.
3. **Reduced focus on AONB**
There are still allocations in the AONB to deliver, which will largely meet housing need in this rural area. Two of the Rural Service Centres have designated NDPs (Hungerford & Lambourn), the third (Pangbourne) has limited development opportunities. This scenario would see limited additional growth in these settlements and in the smaller service villages (~~one two of which have adopted is preparing an NDPs (Compton (Feb 2022) and Hermitage (May 2024)), and one who adopted an NDP in early 2022 (Compton).~~
4. **Continued focus on Newbury**
This option would focus a strategic site in the Newbury areas, with number of smaller sites considered across the rest of the district.
5. **Focus on Thatcham**
This option would focus a strategic site in the Thatcham area, with a number of smaller sites considered across the rest of the district. The Core Strategy limited growth in Thatcham (despite it being in the top tier of the settlement hierarchy) due to the rapid expansion that had taken place in the town over recent years. This was to allow a period of consolidation, ensuring the infrastructure and town centre facilities could be upgraded to meet the demands of the existing population. In reviewing the vision for Thatcham for the LPR the Council commissioned a Thatcham Strategic Growth Study¹¹. The study identified that strategic development would be required in Thatcham to support service provision and regeneration.

¹¹ Thatcham Strategic Growth Study <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/local-plan-evidence>

Table 11 Spatial Strategy Summary of SA/SEA Options

Option	Summary of SA/SEA (see appendix 4 for the full SA/SEA)	Discussion and outcome
1: Additional housing requirement based on Core Strategy distribution	There are a number of positive sustainability impacts likely with this option, although there are also a number of unknown or neutral impacts as the existing spatial strategy as the strategy does not consider whether the current strategy has exhausted some or all of the development options within the settlement hierarchy.	This option is not to be taken forward There are a number of constraints within the existing settlements which mean that compared to the other options considered this option may not be able to deliver the required number of dwellings to meet local needs in the most appropriate way.
2: Increased focus on the Eastern Area	This option is not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to the constraints relating to the DEPZ for AWE Burghfield and the long term nature of the Grazeley settlement proposal to meet the growth needs of Reading.	
3: Reduced focus on AONB	This option suggests an overall neutral effect on the sustainability, however there are a number of significantly positive potential impacts in relation to protection of the AONB and natural environment. The option will require development elsewhere in the districts which could mean that sites 'less suitable' for development are required to deliver the local housing need.	This option is to be taken forward There are a number of outstanding allocations in the AONB which are expected to deliver during this plan period which will largely meet the housing need in this rural area. A number of settlements within the AONB are in the process of preparing NDPs, with one NDP having been adopted (Compton) in early 2022.
4: Continued focus on Newbury	This option gives a number of potentially positive sustainability effects in relation to focusing development on the biggest town with the largest number of facilities, with a significantly positive effect predicted due to the strategies' focus on the use of brownfield and. However, there are an unknown impact as to whether the strategy would be able deliver adequate housing to meet the local identified need due to the lack of suitable sites within the area.	This option is not to be taken forward Core Strategy had a high focus on Newbury with the allocation for 2 strategic sites on the edge of the town. Further largescale development opportunities are more limited, although there are opportunities for redevelopment within the settlement boundary and on brownfield sites. A reliance on focusing development in Newbury may not deliver the number of dwellings required to meet the local need.
E: Focus on Thatcham	This option given an overall positive effect on sustainability, with several potentially significantly positive impacts as a result of a large strategic site being developed. A large strategic site can deliver a number of positive benefits due	This option is to be taken forward The Core Strategy provided limited growth for Thatcham, but there are substantial opportunities

Option	Summary of SA/SEA (see appendix 4 for the full SA/SEA)	Discussion and outcome
	to the nature and scale of the development economically, socially and environmentally as it focuses development in one area, which can then have adequate mitigation measures and support networks developed within the design scope of the development to bring about improvements.	for strategic development in Thatcham which would lead to improved services and facilities in the town.

Following the decision that the spatial strategy should focus on Thatcham, strategic site options were considered, based on the sites submitted through the February 2020 HELAA.

Initially five groups of sites were identified as potential options for a strategic site:

1. North East Thatcham (THA20, including THA8, THA6, THA10, THA14) up to 2,500 dwellings
2. Colthorp (including THA1, THAT3, THAT4, THA4) approximately 800 dwellings
3. Newbury/Thatcham Gap (including THA13, THA11, THAT18, THA19, NEW9) approximately 100 dwellings
4. Henwick (including CA12, CA16, CA17, CA15, CA13) approximately 250 dwellings
5. North East Thatcham and Henwick (THA20, CA12, CA16, CA17, CA15, CA13)

Of these five sites, only one was considered to be a reasonable alternative for allocation **North East Thatcham** (Option 1). The other options were ruled out for a number of issues. Much of the site at **Colthorp** (option 2) is with flood zones 2 and 3, with poor transport links without significant investment. In addition the site includes the permanently permitted Colthorp Mineral Processing plant which is safeguarded in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The site at **Henwick** (option 4) is considered to be too small, on its own, to be of a strategic nature as it would not be able to provide the level of infrastructure required to support the development. Option 5 looked at whether the **Henwick** site could be combined with the sites at **North East Thatcham**, but it was decided that the site would be too remote from the North East Thatcham sites to deliver a cohesive development. The final option, Newbury/Thatcham Gap (option 3) was discounted as the site is too small to be of a strategic nature, but it would also result in coalescence of Newbury and Thatcham with a significantly landscape impact.

During the course of the LPR examination, it became clear that, with an extended plan period to 2041, the housing supply identified within the Plan was insufficient to meet the housing requirement. At the request of the Inspector, the Council reviewed the information available to the examination to identify whether there were any suitable and available sites for residential development which were not already allocated within the Plan. The information reviewed included the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), SA, and Regulation 19 representations and information submitted as part of the examination process. Through the review, Henwick was considered independently to the strategic allocation at NET and therefore, the detailed assessment related to the site is set out under the Thatcham site assessment in table 36. This does not impact on the spatial strategy for the district.

As a result of the considerations around the spatial strategy and distribution of housing, policy **SP1 The Spatial Strategy** has been written. A summary of the SA/SEA of the policy is set out below. Main Modifications have been proposed during the course of the examination. The SA/SEA has been reviewed in light of these modifications and the modifications have not resulted in any change to the overall SA/SEA outcome for the policy.

Table 12 Summary of SA/SEA for SP1 The Spatial Strategy

SP1 The Spatial Strategy (See Appendix 5 for the full SA/SEA)	Summary of effects
The Policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. The policy directs development to the most sustainable locations, therefore, giving positive impacts on all elements of sustainability. The policy is likely to have a number of positive knock-on effects on social and environmental sustainability as a result of focusing development on the most sustainable locations in the district.	Overall Effect: Positive Likelihood: High Scale: District Wide Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term

5.1.2 Settlement Hierarchy

The Reg. 18 scoping report for the LPR considered the settlement boundaries and determined that given the significant period of time that has elapsed since the settlement hierarchy has been reviewed and the risk of challenge both at examination and via appeals, the settlement hierarchy needed to be reviewed as part of the LPR process. A review of the settlement hierarchy¹² was carried out and two options were considered:

1. Remove Aldermaston as a Service Village due to a reduction in available service and facilities in the village since the initial designation
2. Add Streatley as a Service Village as the village has access to a number of services and facilities in the neighbouring village of Goring (located in Oxfordshire)

Due to the presence of Burghfield within the DEPZ a third option was also considered, in relation to whether it was appropriate to continue to include Burghfield as a Rural Service centre.

3. Remove Burghfield as a Rural Service Centre due to the presence of the AWE DEPZ

A summary of the SA/SEA of these options is set out in table 4 below.

Table 13 SA/SEA of the Settlement Hierarchy Options

¹² Settlement Hierarchy Review Topic Paper, November 2020 <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/local-plan-evidence>

Sandleford Park	Summary of SA/SEA	Discussion and outcome
		not come forward under that permission the Council would still wish to seek a comprehensive development of the site. Reducing the number of dwellings on the site allowed for better consideration of the constraints on the site (Ancient woodland, drainage, landscape buffers etc.) and will allow for adequate and appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place.

The policy has been assessed and a summary of the SA/SEA is set out in table 13. Since Reg 18 the policy has was been reviewed and updated to take into account the granting of planning permission, however, no changes are required to the assessment. Main modifications have been proposed to the policy and as a result the SA/SEA has been reviewed. The main modifications have not resulted in a change to the overall outcome of the SA/SEA.

Table 30 SA/SEA of Sandleford Strategic Allocation Policy

SP16 Sandleford Strategic Allocation (See Appendix 5 for the full SA/SEA)	Summary of effects
The site is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. The aim of the policy is to deliver housing to meet local housing needs, therefore, there will be a positive, or significantly positive impact on social sustainability. The wording of the policy sets out requirements to ensure positive impacts on environmental sustainability, which will be supported by other policies in the plan. The site is a greenfield site underlain by sand and gravel, so there are some potential negative environmental and economic sustainability impacts if adequate mitigation measures are not provided. There are also a number of uncertain sustainability impacts, but this is mainly as the policy does not make specific reference to those elements. Other policies in the plan should ensure impacts neutral or positive.	Overall Effect: Positive Likelihood: Medium Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term

The chosen option for the Spatial Strategy (considered at paragraph 5.1.1 above) includes provision of a strategic site in Thatcham.

The Thatcham Growth Study¹³ was commissioned to considered how best to deliver strategic development in Thatcham. The study identified that strategic development would be required in Thatcham to support the service provision and regeneration that Thatcham requires. While all sites in Thatcham have been considered the only sites (in combination with each other) that are considered suitable for strategic level of development are the group of sites located in North East Thatcham. No other alternatives have been considered as there are no other sites, or group of sites within

¹³ Thatcham Growth Study, May 2019 – September 2022 <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/local-plan-evidence>

Thatcham that would be able to deliver the scale of development required to support the additional infrastructure required (further details in the Site Selection Methodology¹⁴).

The Thatcham Strategic Growth Study considered a development of approximately 2,500 dwellings, on the North East Thatcham site, and this was the scale of the proposal included in the emerging Local Plan Review at Reg 18. The quantum of development at North East Thatcham, however, has been reviewed since the Reg 18 consultation. Following the Reg 18 consultation, in response to the number of comments received, the scale of development on the site was reduced to 1,500 dwellings. At Reg 18 up to 2,500 homes were proposed on the site. However, in response to the comments made as part of the Reg 18 consultation a figure of 1,500 homes is now being considered, which takes into account concerns over the environmental and highways impacts of the larger number of dwellings on the site. Following the recognition, during the examination, that additional houses would need to be allocated to meet the identified housing need in the LPR, to take account of the extended plan period to 2041, the Council was directed by the Inspector to modify the policy to deliver approximately 2,500 dwellings on the site; while recognising that not all of these dwellings will be delivered within the plan period.

At Reg 19 the SA/SEA considered the two options of 2,500 dwellings and 1,500 dwellings on the site, the summary of these two options is set out below. As such, reverting back to an increased scale of development on the site (2,500 dwellings) has not been reassessed as a separate option. These two options have been subject to SA/SEA and a summary of the SA/SEA outcome is below:

Table 31 SA/SEA of Options for Quantum of Development at North East Thatcham

North East Thatcham (quantum of development)	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 4 for the full SA/SEA)	Discussion and outcome
Up to Approximately 2,500 homes	Overall development of this site would be likely to result in a positive impact on all elements of sustainability. The scale of the development provides for community infrastructure to be delivered on site, resulting in a significantly positive impact on social sustainability. While there is an unknown impact on environmental sustainability in relation to impacts on air, water, noise and soil mitigation measures would be able to deliver an overall neutral impact. Development is likely to result in a positive impact in relation to economic sustainability as employment and business opportunities will be provided for on site along with community facilities. The scale of the site allows for greater scope for onsite mitigation to any potential sustainability impacts.	<p>This option is not to be taken forward.</p> <p>At Reg18 the site was included as a proposed allocation for approximately 2500 dwellings. Significant concerns were raised by the community over the quantum of development on the site, which led to the number of dwellings being reduced at Reg 19. However, during the Examination the Inspector directed the Council to modify the policy to deliver 2,500 dwellings on the site.</p>

¹⁴ Site Selection Methodology <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/local-plan-evidence>

North East Thatcham (quantum of development)	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 4 for the full SA/SEA)	Discussion and outcome
		<p>It is recognised that not all of these dwellings will be delivered within the plan period, with approximately 1760 dwellings being delivered to 2041.</p> <p>This option was originally to be taken forward and was included in the Reg 18 consultation. Despite providing a considerable number of new homes and community infrastructure to support these homes and the wider Thatcham community the potential impact the local community is considered too high, and politically a reduced number on the site is considered to be more acceptable. Therefore, this option will no longer be taken forward.</p>
<p><u>Approximately 1,500 homes</u></p>	<p>Overall development of this site is likely to give a neutral impact on all elements of sustainability. The scale of the development would provide for some community infrastructure, resulting in a positive impact on social sustainability, however, the development may not be of a size to deliver a wider range of facilities to support Thatcham such as new education facilities. While there is an unknown impact on environmental sustainability in relation to impacts on air, water, noise and soil mitigation measures would be able to deliver an overall neutral impact. Development is likely to result in a positive impact in relation to economic sustainability as employment and business opportunities will be provided for on site along with community facilities. The scale of the site will mean that more additional sites will need to be allocated across the district.</p>	<p><u>This option is not to be taken forward.</u></p> <p>This option was considered in light of the responses received to the Reg 18 consultation, which largely considered that 2,500 dwellings in Thatcham was too many. In response, the council has considered a reduced number of dwellings, which still enables a strategic level of development which can provide onsite community facilities. It is noted, that compared to a higher number of dwellings, this option may not deliver all of the education provision originally envisaged on the site, or the additional improvements to community infrastructure within Thatcham. However, a reduced number on the site is considered to be more appropriate. <u>The Inspector at the examination directed the Council to modify the policy to deliver 2,500 dwellings on the site.</u></p>

As a result, the policy wording to manage development on the site has been written and subject to SA/SEA. The policy has had a number of Main Modifications proposed during the course of the examination. The SA/SEA has been reviewed in light of these modifications, and the modifications have not resulted in any change to the overall SA/SEA outcome for the policy. A summary of the SA/SEA is given in table below.

Table 32 SA/SEA for North East Thatcham Policy

SP17 North East Thatcham (See Appendix 5 for the full SA/SEA)	Summary of effects
The policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A number of significantly positive impacts on sustainability have been identified. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as a result of the provision of housing to meet local needs, improving health, safety and wellbeing and protections to GI and biodiversity. There are likely to be positive sustainability impacts in relation to managing natural resources and supporting the economic base. There are also likely to be positive to significantly positive sustainability impacts in relation to responding to climate change and consideration of renewable energy technology. The site is a greenfield site and therefore, would result in a negative impact on environmental sustainability which would need to be mitigated.	Overall Effect: Positive Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term

5.3.2.2 Non-Strategic Residential Site Allocations

Review of Housing Site Allocations (HSA) Development Plan Document (DPD) Allocations

The plan period for the LPR overlaps with the previous plan period (2006 – 2026) and account, therefore, needs to be taken of sites that have already been allocated in the HSA DPD.

The HSA DPD (adopted May 2017) included a range of housing allocations across the district in line with the settlement hierarchy. Several of these sites have now been completed or are under construction and so do not need to remain as allocations within the LPR. The remaining HSA DPD sites have been reviewed and where there is a realistic chance of them being delivered they are to remain allocated sites, with many of them having been granted planning permission. The table below sets out the outcome of the deliverability review that was undertaken and states which sites are considered to be reasonable alternatives for reallocation in the LPR. The table takes a base date of 31 March 2023.

Table 33 HSA DPD Sites and SA/SEA Summary

<u>HSA Site Reference</u>	<u>Site Address</u>	<u>Status (at 31 March 2023)</u>	<u>Outcome of deliverability review</u>	<u>Recommendation for inclusion in LPR</u>
<u>Newbury</u>				
<u>HSA1</u>	<u>Land North of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury</u>	<u>Planning permission granted Jan 2021 (lapsed Jan 2023)</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Reasonable alternative for reallocation in LPR</u>
<u>HSA2</u>	<u>Land at Bath Road, Speen, Newbury</u>	<u>Outline planning permission granted Feb 2020</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Reasonable alternative for reallocation in LPR</u>

Newbury			
Site	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 8a b for the full SA/SEA)	Summary	Recommendation and Justification
			<u>The site was reviewed following the change in the plan period, but it is still not considered to be suitable for allocation at this stage.</u>

Thattham

Thattham is the second settlement identified as a main urban area within West Berkshire, sitting within the Newbury and Thattham spatial area. The Core Strategy identified that Thattham needed a period of consolidation following a significant period of growth in recent years. Therefore, through the plan-led system Thattham only received a limited amount of growth during this plan period. In reviewing the vision of Thattham as part of the LPR, and to best understand how to plan for growth in Thattham within the plan period, the Council commissioned masterplanning work¹⁷. The masterplanning work considered all of the HELAA sites promoted in Thattham as well as other evidence studies produced for LPR. It identified that only growth of a strategic scale could support the services provision and regeneration that Thattham requires.

The A4 runs through the town, splitting it into two sections, with a number of bus services and a railway station. To the south of Thattham runs the River Kennet (which is a SSSI) and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The town itself is not at risk from fluvial flooding, although large areas are at risk from surface water flooding and the town suffered badly from surface water flooding during July 2007. To the south of the town is Thattham Reeds Bed Special Area of Conservation (SAC) with a Local Nature Reserve.

~~Due to the proposed strategic allocation in Thattham, it is not considered appropriate to allocate any further sites in Thattham and therefore, no other sites have been assessed.~~

At Reg 19, a single strategic site was proposed for allocation in Thattham, therefore, no other sites were proposed for allocation as they were not considered necessary to help meet the Council's identified housing need, and a single strategic site was considered to be the preferred option. One site (THA5) had been included in the HSA DPD, which when reviewed remained suitable for development and therefore, it continued to be proposed for allocation.

During the LPR examination hearings, the Inspector identified a shortfall in the housing supply against the identified need as the plan period required lengthening to ensure it would cover 15 years from adoption of the Plan. The Council was directed to review the information available to the examination (ie. HELAA, SA and Regulation 19 representations) and identify whether any sites previously ruled out (for whatever reason) may now be suitable for allocation.

¹⁷ Thattham Strategic Growth Study (2020): <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/evidencebase>

The settlement of Thatcham incorporates parts of the parishes of Cold Ash. Where a site considered a reasonable alternative for development relates to Thatcham as a settlement they have been considered here, rather than in the specific parish where it sits.

Three sites to the south of Thatcham were reviewed as part of the Examination Action Points (THA5, THA9, THA21), but their location within the proposed settlement gap between Newbury and Thatcham (policy DM2) and their poor relationship to the existing development pattern of Thatcham meant that they were not considered further as reasonable alternatives for allocation.

Four sites are considered to be reasonable alternatives for allocation in Thatcham (HSA5, CA12, CA16, CA17) and so have been subject to SA/SEA to inform the site selection work. Although the sites CA12, CA16 and CA17 lie adjacent to each other, it is not considered to be a reasonable alternative to consider them as a single site as availability is unknown for one site and the other two sites are in separate ownership with no indication that the site promoters wish to bring the sites forward together meaning there could be no guarantee that the sites could reasonably be developed cohesively as a single site. The summary of the SA/SEA and decision making process is set out below:

Table 36 Summary of SA/SEA for Thatcham Sites

Thatcham			
Site	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 8a b for the full SA/SEA)	Summary	Recommendation and Justification
<u>HSA5 Land at Lower Way, Thatcham.</u>	<p><u>Overall the site is likely to have a neutral effect on sustainability, and the SA/SEA does not highlight any significant sustainability effects. The site is well related to the existing settlement, close to local services and facilities with opportunities for walking and cycling, which give a positive effect in terms of sustainability. The site is close to the sewage treatments works, and the impact that this would have on development is unknown, however appropriate mitigation measures will reduce any possible effects on social sustainability.</u></p> <p><u>The site is not at risk from flooding, which has a positive impact on sustainability; SuDS would be required to ensure that development did not have a negative impact on flooding elsewhere.</u></p> <p><u>There are potential negative impacts on environmental sustainability due to its landscape character and location near to protected sites. Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures would be required.</u></p>	<p>Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long term</p>	<p><u>The site is recommended for allocation.</u></p> <p><u>The site was allocated for development in the HSA DPD.</u></p> <p><u>The site has planning permission, and construction is underway, demonstrating that development on the site is acceptable and adequate mitigation measures are proposed to ensure no unacceptable impacts on any elements of sustainability.</u></p>

Thatcham			
Site	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 8a b for the full SA/SEA)	Summary	Recommendation and Justification
	<p><u>Planning Permission was granted for the site in January 2023, demonstrating that development on the site is acceptable and adequate mitigation measures are proposed to ensure no unacceptable impacts on any elements of sustainability.</u></p>		
<p><u>CA12 Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road</u></p>	<p><u>There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to flooding, landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.</u></p>	<p>Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timescale: Long Scale</p>	<p>The site is recommended for allocation.</p> <p><u>The site was not considered for allocation at Reg 18/19 as a single strategic site was promoted for allocation in Thatcham. Given the need for additional supply, identified through the course of the examination, the site has been reconsidered and it is regarded as being suitable for development in part.</u></p> <p><u>The site has good access to existing services and facilities in Thatcham, with good transport links and employment opportunities.</u></p> <p><u>The site area has been reduced to take into account the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment, which states that development would only be suitable below 95m contour. The northern part of the site would be retained as Green Infrastructure (GI).</u></p> <p><u>There would be potential to develop the site alongside CA17, although due to</u></p>

Thatcham			
Site	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 8a b for the full SA/SEA)	Summary	Recommendation and Justification
			different landownerships the sites are not required to come forward together.
CA16 The Creek, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham	There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.		<p>The site is not recommended for allocation.</p> <p>While the site is considered suitable for development, the Council have not been able to confirm its availability and therefore, the site is not currently considered deliverable and therefore, is not proposed for allocation.</p> <p>The site will be located within the settlement boundary, once redrawn around the proposed allocation at Henwick Park and The Regency Park Hotel and therefore, could come forward for development independently.</p>
CA17 Land east of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham	There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.		<p>The site is recommended for allocation</p> <p>The site was not considered for allocation at Reg 18/19 as a single strategic site was promoted for allocation in Thatcham. Given the need for additional supply, identified through the course of the examination, the site has been reconsidered and it is regarded as being suitable for development in part.</p> <p>The site has good access to existing services and facilities in Thatcham, with</p>

Thatcham			
Site	Summary of SA/SEA (See Appendix 8a b for the full SA/SEA)	Summary	Recommendation and Justification
			<p><u>good transport links and employment opportunities.</u></p> <p><u>The site area has been reduced to take into account the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment, which states that development would only be suitable below 95m contour. The northern part of the site would be retained as GI.</u></p> <p><u>There would be potential to develop the site alongside CA12, although due to different landownerships the sites are not required to come forward together.</u></p>

Cold Ash

Cold Ash is a Service Village, where some limited development is appropriate. Cold Ash is located to the north of Thatcham, with the north and eastern part of the village adjacent, or within the AONB. No water courses run through the village, so there is no risk of fluvial flooding and surface water flooding is limited to a small area to the south of the village. Run off from Cold Ash can have an impact on surface water in Thatcham and any development would need to take account of this. The River Lambourn Nutrient Neutrality Zone covers the north west corner of the village.

Cold Ash Parish is designated as a Neighbourhood Area, and ~~the Cold Ash Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan~~ was adopted in May 2024. Site selection work was undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan ~~Steering Group~~, as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, with has no identified no suitable sites identified as being suitable for allocation.

~~Four sites in Cold Ash (CA12, CA15, CA16, and CA17) lie adjacent to the settlement of Thatcham and were identified as being strategic in nature. The NPPF states at paragraph 13 that neighbourhood plans should contain non-strategic policies only. These four sites were considered in the masterplanning work for Thatcham.~~

Site Selection Summary

~~Six 13 sites were considered as reasonable alternatives for development in the Newbury and Thatcham Spatial Area, of these 6 are considered to be suitable for allocation and are therefore, proposed for allocation in the LPR. However, none of them are considered appropriate for allocation.~~

Five sites are to be rolled forward from the Housing Site Allocations and along with the strategic site allocation in Thatcham these are the only sites to be allocated in this spatial areas. SP13 sets out the policy for allocating the sites in Newbury and Thatcham.

At Reg 19 the Plan included policy SP13 Sites Allocated for Residential & Mixed Use Development in Newbury & Thatcham. This policy is considered to duplicate other parts of the plan and therefore, is not required.

Table 37 SP13 SA/SEA Summary for Newbury & Thatcham site allocations policy

SP13 Sites allocated for Residential & Mixed Use Development in Newbury & Thatcham (See Appendix 5 for the full SA/SEA)	Summary of effects
<p>The policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to social sustainability due to the provision of sites to deliver new houses to meet local needs and in relation to accessibility to community services and facilities. There is also likely to be a positive impact on economic sustainability as the policy will support the viability and vitality of town and village centres. A potential negative environmental sustainability impact has been identified in relation to the use of PDL as the sites are all allocated on greenfield land.</p>	<p>Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury & Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term</p>

Each allocated site has a dedicated policy. These have been subject to SA/SEA and a summary is set out below. Main Modifications have been proposed to policies RSA1 – 5, the SA/SEA has been reviewed and there is no change to the outcome of the SA/SEA.

Table 37 SA/SEA Summary for Site Policies (Newbury & Thatcham)

RSA1 Land north of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury (See Appendix 7 for the full SA/SEA)	Summary of effects
<p>The policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability. Social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage assets and provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.</p>	<p>Overall Effect: Positive Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term</p>
RSA2 Land at Bath Road, Speen, Newbury	Summary of effects
<p>The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability. Social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage assets and provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a</p>	<p>Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term</p>

sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.	
RSA3 Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury	Summary of effects
The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability. Social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity and provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.	Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term
RSA4 Land off Greenham Road, South East Newbury	Summary of effects
The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability. Social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity and provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.	Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term
RSA5 Land at Lower Way, Thatcham	Summary of effects
The policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability. Social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity, heritage assets and provide development that is conscious of climate change impacts. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified.	Overall Effect: Positive Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Newbury) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term
RSAX Henwick Park	
<u>The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability - social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape character. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified. Other policies in the plan will ensure that overall there is a positive impact on all elements of sustainability.</u>	Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term

RSAX Regency Park Hotel	
The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive impacts have been identified in relation to all types of sustainability - social sustainability 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 protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape character. Economic sustainability will benefit from new development in a sustainable location where there is good access to services and facilities include employment opportunities. No negative sustainability impacts have been identified. Other policies in the plan will ensure that overall there is a positive impact on all elements of sustainability.	Overall Effect: Neutral Likelihood: High Scale: Local (Thatcham) Duration: Permanent Timing: Long Term

Eastern Area

The Eastern Area consists of Purley-on-Thames, Tilehurst, Theale, Calcot, Burghfield, Mortimer and Aldermaston. The area has a close functional relationship with Reading. There are significant constraints to development which mean provision for development is more limited, these include the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (AONB) and the DEPZ for AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield.

Eastern Urban Area

The Eastern Urban Area comprises of Purley on Thames, Tilehurst and Calcot. As one of the District's urban areas, the Eastern Urban Area is a focus for development within the District and has relatively good accessibility to employment opportunities. Access to other facilities and services varies and the area draws upon the wider range of facilities available in Reading. There are good local bus connections and a mainline station at Tilehurst with trains to Reading and London and northwards to Oxford. There are also issues relating to traffic congestion, particularly in the vicinity of the junction 12 of the M4. Proximity to the M4 and the A4 causes additional impacts in terms of noise and air quality.

There are high quality landscape and environmental assets in this part of West Berkshire and some of these constrain development. The assets include the Thames National Path and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (AONB) which adjoins the urban area. The Kennet Valley East Biodiversity Opportunity Areas lies to the south of Reading. To the south of the urban area much of the land is within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

No new sites were promoted through the HELAA process in Purley-on-Thames or Calcot., ~~therefore, no sites will be allocated in these areas.~~

Although Tilehurst Parish is designated as a Neighbourhood Area and Tilehurst Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council have decided not to allocate sites within the Plan.

~~13 sites in Tilehurst were assessed within the HELAA, and eight of these were assessed to be 'not developable within the next 15 years'. Four sites are located within the settlement boundary, leaving one site (TIL13) as the only potential new site for allocation, alongside the three remaining HSA DPD allocations. Four sites are considered to be reasonable alternatives for allocation in the Eastern Urban Area (HSA9, HSA11, HSA13, TIL13) and so have been subject to SA/SEA to inform the site selection work. The summary of the SA/SEA and decision making process is set out below:~~

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Key effects of options on the SA/Objectives

++	+	?	0	-	--
Significantly Positive	Positive	Uncertain	Neutral	Negative	Significantly Negative

2.4 Quantum of Development at North East Thatcham

	1a: North East Thatcham (up to 2500 dwellings)		1b: North East Thatcham (1,500)	
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change	++	Allocation of a site of this size would provide the potential for significant climate mitigation measures to be included within the development. There is limited flood risk on the site, which could be used within the design of the site to provide GI and other measures to mitigate against climate change.	+	Allocation of a site of this site would provide the potential for climate change mitigation measures to be included within the development. There is limited flood risk on the site, which could be used within the design of the site to provide GI and other measures to mitigation against climate change.
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	++	Allocation of the site would deliver a significantly proportion of houses needed to meet local needs, in a sustainable location. Fewer additional sites in other areas across the district would be required.	+	Allocation of the site would deliver a high proportion of houses need to meet local needs, in a sustainable location. Other alternative sites across the district may be required to provide for the Council's total housing requirement.
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	+	New development should be designed with health, safety and wellbeing in mind to ensure that inequalities are reduced.	+	New development should be designed with health, safety and wellbeing in mind to ensure that inequalities are reduced.
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	++	Allocation of this site would allow for infrastructure necessary to support the development of the site to be provided within the development, close to where the new homes will be located. A development of this size would also support regeneration and improvement of other community facilities within Thatcham.	+ / ?	Allocation of this site would allow for some of the infrastructure necessary to support the development of the site provided within the development, close to where new homes will be located. However, development of this size may not be able to support some of the larger community infrastructure projects required to allow for greater support for Thatcham (eg. Education provision).
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel	+	Allocation of this site would provide internal routes for walking, cycling and public transport as well as linking into the existing networks. The site is however, some way from the station, so creating safe links to the station would be key.	+	Allocation of this site would provide internal routes for walking, cycling and public transport as well as linking into the existing networks. The site is however, some way from the station, so creating safe links to the station would be key.

	1a: North East Thatcham (up to 2500 dwellings)		1b: North East Thatcham (1,500)	
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced	?	Development of the site could result in impacts on the natural, built and historic environment without adequate mitigation measures being in place.	?	Development of the site could result in impacts on the natural, built and historic environment without adequate mitigation measures being in place.
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire	?	Development of the site could result in impacts on air, water and soil quality and noise without adequate mitigation measures being in place.	?	Development of the site could result in impacts on air, water and soil quality and noise without adequate mitigation measures being in place.
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use	-	The site is a greenfield site	-	The site is a greenfield site
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently	+	Development of a strategic site allows for more efficient use of resources and should help to reduce waste generation as part of the development process.	+	Development of a strategic site allows for more efficient use of resources and should help to reduce waste generation as part of the development process.
10: To support strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs	+	As a strategic site development would include a mix of uses including employment.	+	As a strategic site development would include a mix of uses including employment.

Summary of Effects					
Option 1a	Effect:	Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timing:
	Positive	Medium	Local (Thatcham)	Permanent	Long Term
	Overall development of this site would be likely to result in a positive impact on all elements of sustainability. The scale of the development provides for community infrastructure to be delivered on site, resulting in a significantly positive impact on social sustainability. While there is an unknown impact on environmental sustainability in relation to impacts on air, water, noise and soil mitigation measures would be able to deliver an overall neutral impact. Development is likely to result in a positive impact in relation to economic sustainability as employment and business opportunities will be provided for on site along with community facilities. The scale of the site allows for greater scope for onsite mitigation to any potential sustainability impacts.				
Option 1b	Effect:	Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timing:
	Neutral	Medium	Local (Thatcham)	Permanent	Long Term
	Overall development of this site is likely to give a neutral impact on all elements of sustainability. The scale of the development would provide for some community infrastructure, resulting in a positive impact on social sustainability, however, the development may not be of a size to deliver a wider range of facilities to support Thatcham such as new education facilities. While there is an unknown impact on environmental sustainability in relation to impacts on air, water, noise and soil mitigation measures would be able to deliver an overall neutral impact. Development is likely to result in a positive impact in relation to economic sustainability as employment and business opportunities will be provided for on site along with community facilities. The scale of the site will mean that more additional sites will need to be allocated across the district.				

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SP17 North East Thatcham Strategic Site

Reviewed for main modification. Significant changes to policy, however, on review no overall change to SA/SEA outcome.

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	9(a): To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact as it seeks for a sustainable, low carbon development.		The policy is likely to have a positive impact on all element of sustainability in relation to responding to climate change.
	9(b): To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	+	The policy requires consideration of SuDS that could deliver net gains for Thatcham, but there is no other reference made to flood risk. The policy does include requirements for GI, ecology and sustainability measures to be included which may all have a positive impact on flood risk,	The policy, in combination with other policies in the plan (eg. the flooding policy) should result in a positive impact. A modification to the policy requires the existing flood attenuation ponds to be retained, protected and enhanced.	
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	1(a): To maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need	++	The policy includes specific reference to the provision of affordable housing to be provided on the site.		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as it will help to meet housing to meet local needs, including affordable housing and provision to meet needs across all sectors of the community.
	1(b): To enable provision of housing to meet all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements	++	The policy includes requirements for a range of dwellings types as set out in SP18. There is also a requirement for 3% of dwellings to be delivered via serviced custom/self-build.		
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	2(a): To support healthy, active lifestyles	++	The policy includes requirements for sports facilities, sustainable modes of travel to be designed into the site to allow for safe, active travel.		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact as it seeks to support and improve health, safety and wellbeing.

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
	2(b): To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact as the design of the site should be such to design out crime.		
	2(c): To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI across the District	++	The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact as it includes details of the GI provision required.		
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services	++	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on accessibility community services and facilities, including education provision, health care provision and other services/facilities		The policy is likely to have a positive impact on all elements of sustainability as it seeks to improve accessibility to community infrastructure.
	3(b): To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	?	The policy itself unlikely to impact on access to IT facilities as there is no mention of IT facilities in the policy.	Other policies in the plan require consideration of digital infrastructure, so overall the development should result in a positive impact on digital accessibility.	
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	4(a): To reduce accidents and improve safety	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on road safety as safe travel will be critical to the design of the site.		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on all element of sustainability as it seeks to provide opportunities for safe and sustainable travel.
	4(b): To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	++	The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on walking, cycling and public transport as the development should be designed with these in mind.		
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built	5(a): To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	++	The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on biodiversity as it sets out specific ecological		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seeks to conserve and enhance the

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.			requirements for the development		natural, built and historic environment.
	5(b): To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on landscape character as consideration of the landscape is written into the policy.		
	5(c): To protect or, conserve and enhance the built and historic environment to include sustaining the significant interest of heritage assets	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on the historic environment as it includes the requirement for a Historic Environment Strategy to be submitted		
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	6(a): To reduce air pollution	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on air quality	Other policies in the plan will ensure that there is no negative impact on air quality.	The policy is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability in relation to air, water, soil or noise.
	6(b): To manage noise levels	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on noise levels		
	6(c): To maintain and improve soil quality	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on soil quality		
	6(d): To maintain and improve water quality	+	The <u>modified</u> policy is unlikely to impact on water quality. Requires consideration of waste water	<u>Other policies in the plan also require consideration of water resources and waste water.</u>	
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	7(b): To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate	-	The policy is greenfield		The policy is likely to have an overall neutral impact, with a positive impact on social sustainability as it seeks to provide suitable densities of dwelling across the site.
	7(b): To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on density of land use, as the number of dwellings on the site takes into account appropriate densities.		
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and	8(a): To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable	++	The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on energy use as it requires the site to consider energy		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seek sot manage natural resources.

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
manage their use efficiently.	energy technologies, generation and storage		use and provide on-site renewable energies.		
	8(b): To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials	0	The policy is unlikely to have an impacts on waste generation. However, the policy does require 'BREEAM' excellent for non-residential buildings which can include consideration of waste management.		
	8(c): To reduce water consumption and promote reuse	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impacts on water consumption as it requires an integrated water supply and drainage strategy to be submitted.		
	8(d): To reduce the consumption of minerals and promote reuse of secondary materials	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on the consumption of minerals as it requires a MRA to be submitted.		
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	10(a): To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impacts on employment opportunities as it includes a requirement for community facilities, which could include employment opportunities, to be provided on site.		The policy is likely to have a positive impact on economic sustainability as it requires provision of employment opportunities.
	10(b): To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently	0	The site is unlikely to impact on the effective and efficient use of employment land		
	10(c): To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres	++	The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on the viability and vitality of Thatcham as the development will support itself and other		

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
			improvements within Thatcham.		
Overall Effect:		Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timing:
Positive		High	Local (Thatcham)	Permanent	Long Term
<p>The policy is likely to have an overall positive impact on sustainability. A number of significantly positive impacts on sustainability have been identified. There is likely to be a significantly positive impact on social sustainability as a result of the provision of housing to meet local needs, improving health, safety and wellbeing and protections to GI and biodiversity. There are likely to be positive sustainability impacts in relation to managing natural resources and supporting the economic base. There are also likely to be positive to significantly positive sustainability impacts in relation to responding to climate change and consideration of renewable energy technology. The site is a greenfield site and therefore, would result in a negative impact on environmental sustainability which would need to be mitigated.</p>					

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DM2: Separation of settlements around Newbury and Thatcham

No modifications proposed to policy.

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	9(a): To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on GHG emissions		The policy is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability in relation to climate change
	9(b): To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on flood risk		
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	1(a): To maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need	-	The policy will have unknown impact on the provision of affordable housing as it prevents development from taking place within the gaps.		Protecting the gaps could have a negative impact on sustainability as it will not allow housing development within the protected gaps
	1(b): To enable provision of housing to meet all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements	-	The policy will have unknown impact on the provision of affordable housing as it prevents development from taking place within the gaps.		
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	2(a): To support healthy, active lifestyles	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on healthy active lifestyles		The policy is likely to have a positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seeks to protect green spaces between settlements some of which form GI provision.
	2(b): To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour		
	2(c): To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI across the District	+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on GI as it will keep green spaces between existing settlements.		

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on access to community services		The policy is unlikely to impact on access to community infrastructure
	3(b): To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on access to IT facilities		
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	4(a): To reduce accidents and improve safety	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on road safety		The policy is unlikely to impact on safe and sustainable travel
	4(b): To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on opportunities for walking, cycling or public transport		
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.	5(a): To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	++	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on GI as it will keep green spaces between existing settlements which will support biodiversity.		The policy is likely to have a significantly positive impact on environmental sustainability as it seeks to protect open spaces and landscape character which in turn will help to protect the landscape character.
	5(b): To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	++	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on GI as it will keep green spaces between existing settlements which conserve the landscape character.		
	5(c): To protect or, conserve and enhance the built and historic environment to include sustaining the significant interest of heritage assets	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on the historic environment		
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	6(a): To reduce air pollution	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on air pollution		The policy is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability
	6(b): To manage noise levels	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on noise levels		
	6(c): To maintain and improve soil quality	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on soil quality		
	6(d): To maintain and improve water quality	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on water quality		

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	7(b): To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on PDL		The policy is unlikely to impact on efficient use of land
	7(b): To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on density of land use		
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently.	8(a): To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable energy technologies, generation and storage	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on energy use		The policy is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability in relation to natural resources
	8(b): To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on waste generation		
	8(c): To reduce water consumption and promote reuse	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on water consumption		
	8(d): To reduce the consumption of minerals and promote reuse of secondary materials	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on consumption of minerals		
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	10(a): To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on employment opportunities		The policy is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability in relation to the economic base.
	10(b): To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on effective and efficient use of land		
	10(c): To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres	0	The policy is unlikely to impact on viability and vitality of town and village centres.		
Overall Effect:	Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timing:	
Neutral	High	Local (Newbury and Thatcham)	Permanent	Long Term	

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
<p>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. Potential negative sustainability impacts have been identified in relation to social sustainability as the policy restricts development in these areas.</p>					

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++	+	?	0	-	--
Significantly Positive	Positive	Uncertain	Neutral	Negative	Significantly Negative

CA12 Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (235 dwellings)

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	9(a): To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	?	The impact on climate change will depend on the design/layout of the site.	Climate change measures and mitigation would be required should the site be reallocated for development.	There is likely to be an unknown impact on all elements of sustainability as the impact would depend upon the climate change measures and mitigation proposed should the site come forward.
	9(b): To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	0 / -	The site is in FZ1. A surface water flow route passes through the site.	Development would need to avoid areas at risk of flooding. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) would need to be provided.	
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	1(a): To maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on provision of affordable housing as it is of a scale to provide affordable housing		There is likely to be a positive impact on social sustainability as the site would help to deliver housing to meet identified needs.
	1(b): To enable provision of housing to meet all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on the provision of housing as it is of a scale to provide a mix of housing types and tenures.		
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	2(a): To support healthy, active lifestyles	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on healthy, active lifestyles as the site is close to local services and facilities.		There is likely to be a positive impact on social sustainability due to the location of the site and opportunity for good design should the site be allocated for development.
	2(b): To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	0	The site is unlikely to impact on levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.		
	2(c): To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI (Green Infrastructure) across the District	?	There is likely to be an unknown impact on GI as it would depend on what GI would be proposed as part of the development should the site be allocated.	Policies in the plan require consideration of GI, therefore, should the site be retained as an allocation consideration of GI provision would be required.	

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on access to community facilities as it is well located for services and facilities, including education and employment facilities.		The site is likely to have a positive impact on social sustainability as it is located close to existing community infrastructure.
	3(b): To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	?	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on access to IT facilities, as although the site is of a scale that would be expected to deliver FTTP at the time of construction, this would depend on the delivery and implementation of the site should it be allocated.		
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	4(a): To reduce accidents and improve safety	?	There is likely to be an unknown impact on road safety, as development of the site could result in road safety concerns but could also provide improvements.		The site is likely to have a positive impact on social and environmental sustainability as there are good safe and sustainable travel links.
	4(b): To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	+	There is likely to be a positive impact as the site is close to local walking and cycling opportunities, with local bus routes passing close to the site.		
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.	5(a): To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	?	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on biodiversity as the site is also within 2km of a SAC and SSSI and adjacent to a LWS.	Mitigation measures would need to be provided.	Without adequate mitigation measures the site would have a negative impact on environmental sustainability.
	5(b): To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	- / ?	Development of the whole site would result in a negative impact on landscape. Mitigation measures, including reducing the developable area of the site would reduce the impact.	Mitigation measures would be required, including not developing the whole site and the presence of a landscape buffer between Thatcham and Cold Ash.	Mitigation measures could result in a neutral impact.
	5(c): To protect or, conserve and enhance the built and historic environment to include	0	The site is unlikely to impact on the historic environment		

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
	<u>sustaining the significant interest of heritage assets</u>				
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	6(a): <u>To reduce air pollution</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on air pollution</u>		<u>The site is likely to have an overall neutral impact on environmental sustainability.</u>
	6(b): <u>To manage noise levels</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on noise</u>		
	6(c): <u>To maintain and improve soil quality</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on soil quality</u>		
	6(d): <u>To maintain and improve water quality</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on water quality</u>		
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	7(b): <u>To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate</u>	-	<u>The is likely to have a negative impact on PDL as the site is greenfield</u>		<u>The site is unlikely to impact on sustainability as the site is greenfield. Mitigation measures would be required to limit the impact.</u>
	7(b): <u>To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to have an impact on land use density.</u>	<u>The West Berkshire Density Pattern book study has been used to determined the development potential of the site.</u>	
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently.	8(a): <u>To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable energy technologies, generation, and storage</u>	?	<u>The site is likely to have an unknown impact on energy use as the impact would depend on the proposals put forward on the site for sustainable energy use/generation.</u>	<u>Proposal would be able to ensure a positive impact should the site be reallocated for development.</u>	<u>The site is likely to have an unknown impact on environmental and social sustainability in relation to consumption of natural resources.</u>
	8(b): <u>To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to have an impact on waste generation</u>		
	8(c): <u>To reduce water consumption and promote reuse</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The site is unlikely to have an impact on water consumption</u>		
	8(d): <u>To reduce the consumption of minerals and</u>	<u>?</u>	<u>The site is likely to have an unknown impact on mineral consumption as the site is partly with a MSA.</u>	<u>Consideration of the mineral resources would be required through a MRA and</u>	

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
	<u>promote reuse of secondary materials</u>			<u>opportunities for prior extraction would need to be considered.</u>	
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	<u>10(a): To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District</u>	0	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on employment opportunities.</u>		<u>The site is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability.</u>
	<u>10(b): To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently</u>	0	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on use of employment land.</u>		
	<u>10(c): To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres</u>	0	<u>The site is unlikely to impact on the viability and vitality of the town centre.</u>		

Effect:	Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timescale:
Neutral	High	Local (Newbury)	Permanent	Long term
Summary:				
<p>There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to flooding, landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.</p>				

Site Assessment

Spatial Area:	<u>Newbury / Thatcham</u>	Settlement:	<u>Thatcham</u>	Parish:	<u>Cold Ash</u>
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Site ID:	<u>CA12</u>	Site Address:	<u>Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham</u>
Use(s) proposed by site promoter	<u>Residential and open space</u>	Development Potential:	<u>225 dwellings</u>

Recommendation:

The site is recommended for allocation

Justification:

The SA/SEA considered the spatial distribution of development across the district (see pp.23-25 of the CD3a SA/SEA Environmental Report for the Proposed Submission LPR). One of the options taken forward was a focus on Thatcham. This would focus a strategic site in the Thatcham area, with a number of smaller sites across the rest of the district. The Core Strategy limited growth in Thatcham due to the rapid expansion that had taken place in the town over recent years. This was to allow a period of consolidation, ensuring the infrastructure and town centre facilities could be upgraded to meet the demands of the existing population.

In reviewing the vision for Thatcham for the LPR the Council commissioned the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study (SIT2b). The study identifies that strategic development would be required in Thatcham to support service provision and regeneration.

Five groups of sites were identified as potential options for a strategic site, and North East Thatcham (THA20) was considered the reasonable alternative for allocation. Henwick was considered to be too small on its own to be of a strategic nature as it would not be able to provide the level of infrastructure required. Nonetheless, the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study recognised that an allocation on the site (and the enclosed sites CA16 The Creek and CA17 Land east of the Regency Park Hotel) presents an opportunity to add additional housing units if required, and the potential residential capacity and provision of facilities and open space has been tested through recent planning applications and appeals.

At the time of submission, a sufficient supply of sites had been identified to last until the end of the Plan period and the site was not recommended for allocation. However, given the need for additional supply, the site has now been reconsidered and is regarded as suitable for development.

The site at Henwick Park remains available and there are no issues which would preclude against the allocation of the site.

Discussion:

Site description:

The site forms a large area of open countryside under grass to the north of Bowling Green Road and Heath Lane. It is bounded to the east by Cold Ash Hill. The southern part of this eastern boundary is open with housing opposite, to the east of Cold Ash Hill, below the lower slopes 95m AOD contour. The northern part of the site is defined by a hedge with open fields to the east of Cold Ash Hill. To the south, the site is bounded by the well-defined edge of Thatcham along Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road and the dense mature tree cover to the north side of these roads. To the west lies Henwick Old Farm, a listed building with its own grounds. North of Henwick Old Farm is a footpath which runs through a shallow but pronounced valley and up the hillside to cross over to Cold Ash Hill, north of the site. The northern boundary follows a tree lined field boundary between woodland north-west of the site and Cold Ash Hill. The site is surrounded on three sides by open countryside and forms the major part of the open countryside between Cold Ash and Thatcham.

Planning history:

15/01949/OUTMAJ: Outline planning application for up to 265 residential dwellings (Class C3) with associated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses, public open space including allotments, community orchard, sports pitch and pavilion, ecology meadow, parkland, trim trail and children's play area. Provision of a GP surgery and flood alleviation ponds as part of the wider Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan. Matters to be considered – access. Refused Dec 2015. Appeal dismissed July 2017 (appeal ref: APP/WO340/W/16/3144193).

January 2023 HELAA conclusions:

The site is potentially available (there are several landowners, however there is an option agreement with a developer) and achievable as there are no known market, legal, cost, ownership fragmentation or delivery issues.

Development of the whole site would be unacceptable because it would result in the coalescence of Thatcham and Cold Ash. Development of whole site would also result in harm to the AONB. Part of the southern area of the site may be suitable but further assessment is required.

A major surface flood flow route passes through the site towards the east side and in the south east and south west corner. Substantial attenuation measures required to mitigate for this which will have some impact on the developable area.

Whether the site is considered developable is also dependent on further assessment through the plan-making process, in relation to whether circumstances exist to support the change to the settlement boundary.

Landscape:

AONB Unit:

Extends into open countryside to the detriment of the gap between settlements.

Natural England:

Due to the nature of landscape assessment, they are unable to provide any detailed comments at this stage. They will need to see further evidence before they could determine which sites would be damaging to the AONB.

Other comments:

A 2015 Landscape Capacity Assessment (in which the site had the ref THA011) concluded that development on the whole site would result in harm. Cold Ash is an AONB settlement and although it has expanded southwards out of the AONB and down the slope towards Thatcham, it retains a distinctive separate identity. The development of the whole of this site would lead to the perception of a merging of the two settlements and would therefore have an adverse impact on the AONB settlement pattern.

The LCA recommended that the site should be considered in conjunction with CA16 and CA17. The study advised that if any one of the sites were to be developed in isolation this could result in an unacceptable level of expansion of Thatcham north of the well-defined settlement boundary along Bowling Green Road and Heath Lane. It concluded it is particularly important to limit the northern expansion of this area in order to retain the separate identities of Cold Ash and Thatcham, to retain the open rural character of the open countryside between the two settlements and to prevent further intervisibility between the built forms of each settlement.

The site promoter has commented that development would take place in the south eastern part of the site, with the remainder of land used for parkland, agricultural land, and flood alleviation ponds.

Planning application 15/01949/OUTMAJ:

An outline planning application for 265 dwellings, which was later amended to 225 dwellings, was refused in 2015. It went to appeal where it was allowed, however it was recovered for determination by the Secretary of State who dismissed the appeal and refused planning permission.

Following the submission of an amended scheme for 225 dwellings, the Council accepted that the development would occupy the lower and less visible portion of the site and withdrew their concerns about the effect on the landscape character of the area, the setting of the AONB, and the separation of Thatcham and Cold Ash.

The amended scheme restricts development to below the 95 metre AOD contour and away from the 'square field' to the north east of the Regency Park Hotel.

As part of the appeal, a landscape Statement of Common ground was prepared, and no areas of dispute were identified. The Inspector concluded that the development would retain an area of open space between the settlements, and there would be limited inter-visibility because of the retention and reinforcement of vegetation. It would extend no further northwards on the western side of Cold Ash Hill than the existing housing on the eastern side, appearing as a consolidation of the urban area, and would be perceived as an extension of Thatcham rather than of Cold Ash.

The Secretary of State agreed with the Inspector that there is no indication that the development would have a harmful effect on the setting of the AONB. He further agreed with the Inspector that the scheme would avoid an unduly harmful visual impact.

Flood risk:

Fluvial:

FZ1.

Surface water:

At the time of preparation of the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), there was a surface water flood flow route that passed through the site towards the east side and in the south east and south west corners.

The most up-to-date risk of surface water flooding data from the Environment Agency shows that parts of the site are at risk:

- 1 in 30 year event: 2% of site
- 1 in 100 year event: 4% of site
- 1 in 1000 year event: 13% of site

There are two West Berkshire Flood Alleviation Schemes located to the south east of the site.

Groundwater:

The JBA Groundwater Flood Map indicates that across the site groundwater levels are negligible in a 1 in 100 year flood event.

The Jacobs Groundwater Flood Risk modelling does not show the site to be at risk of groundwater emergence in either a 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 year flood event.

Highways / Transport:

Access:

The site was subject to planning applications 15/01949/OUTMAJ and 16/01508/OUTMAJ. Access was obtained via an enlarged roundabout Cold Ash Hill/Heath Lane and a T junction on Bowling Green Road. Both accesses were acceptable to the Council's Highways Team and would again be required with linkages through the site. Further pedestrian accesses were proposed onto Cold Ash Hill, Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road. Again, these should still be provided. Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road already have good quality pedestrian/cycle routes. Minor mitigation to pedestrian and cycle routes will continue to be required. There are a number of sites being put forward around the north of Thatcham. Widening of Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road fronting the site will be required. The developer will need to provide a margin of land to allow for this.

However, should THA20 come forward some of this site will be required to widen and realign the Heath Lane and the Thatcham Northern Distribution Road.

Local Highway Capacity:

The HELAA assessment of the site did not identify any issues. Updates to the Local Plan Review Transport Assessment work are in progress.

Strategic Road Network:

National Highways have advised that individually the site would unlikely materially impact the operation of the strategic road network.

Heritage:

Undesignated Heritage Asset:

Site of demolished historic farm on site. Geophysical survey carried out in 2015 indicated a few anomalies.

Other comments from Council's Archaeology Officer:

External field boundaries and some internal are at least 19th century in date and should be preserved in any development design.

Other comments from Council's Archaeology Officer:

Watching Brief condition likely.

Education:

No comments.

Environmental Health:

Site near to A4 and Thatcham Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Significant risk of Particulate Matter and Nitrogen Dioxide. However, AQMA revoked since comments made.

Low risk of contamination.

Low risk of noise and vibration problems to future occupants.

Ecology:

Thames Valley Environmental Research Centre:

Medium risk of adverse impacts.

- Priority habitat within site and within a 500m radius surround.
- No ancient woodland within 500m.
- European protected species within 500m.
- Priority species within 500m.
- No statutory sites within 500m.
- Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone within 500m.
- 3 Local Wildlife Site within 500m.

Natural England:

No comments.

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust:

- Site is within 2km of the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain Special Area of Conservation. There is a risk of harmful impacts on Special Area of Conservation if adequate mitigation measures are not implemented.
- Site is within 2km of at least one Site of Special Scientific Interest. There may be a risk of harmful impacts on the Site of Special Scientific Interest if adequate mitigation measures are not implemented.
- Site is directly adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site. There is a substantial risk of harmful impacts on the LWS if adequate avoidance and mitigation measures are not implemented. It may be inappropriate to develop this site; detailed assessment is required.

Minerals and Waste:

Quarter of the site is within Mineral Safeguarding Area. Such areas are underlain by (mainly) sand and gravel. Safeguarding policies apply in order to prevent needless sterilisation of mineral resources. Consideration of extraction prior to any development would be encouraged.

Utility Services**Water supply:**

No comments.

Wastewater network:

No comments.

Electricity distribution:

No comments received from SSE.

Gas network:

No comments received from utility companies.

Other:

None.

Parish / Town Council:

No comments. Site was not included as an allocation within the proposed submission (Regulation 19) LPR.

SA/SEA summary:

There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to flooding, landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.

Availability:

Promoter has confirmed that the site is available.

Achievability:

Option agreement with developer. No known issues.

Relationship to / in combination effects of other sites :

CA16 and CA17 adjoin the site.

CA17 Land east of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (55 dwellings)

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
9: To reduce emissions contributing to climate change and ensure adaptation measures are in place to respond to climate change.	9(a): To reduce West Berkshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions	?	The impact on climate change will depend on the design/layout of the site.	Climate change measures and mitigation would be required should the site be reallocated for development.	There is likely to be an unknown impact on all elements of sustainability as the impact would depend upon the climate change measures and mitigation proposed should the site come forward.
	9(b): To sustainably manage flood risk to people, property and the environment	0	The site is not at risk of flooding		
1: To enable provision of housing to meet identified need in sustainable locations	1(a): To maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on provision of affordable housing as it is of a scale to provide affordable housing		There is likely to be a positive impact on social sustainability as the site would help to deliver housing to meet identified needs.
	1(b): To enable provision of housing to meet all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on the provision of housing as it is of a scale to provide a mix of housing types and tenures		
2: To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	2(a): To support healthy, active lifestyles	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on healthy, active lifestyles as the site is close to local services and facilities.		There is likely to be a positive impact on social sustainability due to the location of the site and opportunity for good design should the site be allocated for development.
	2(b): To reduce levels and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	0	The site is unlikely to impact on levels of fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.		
	2(c): To enable the protection and enhancement of high quality multi-functional GI across the District	?	This is likely to be an unknown impact on GI as it would depend on what GI would be proposed as part of the development should the site be allocated.	Policies in the plan require consideration of GI, therefore, should the site be retained as an allocation consideration	

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
				of GI provision would be required.	
3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services	+	The site is likely to have a positive impact on access to community facilities as it is well located for services and facilities, including education and employment facilities.		The site is likely to have a positive impact on social sustainability as it is located close to existing community infrastructure.
	3(b): To support the development of access to IT facilities including Broadband particularly in rural locations	0	The site is unlikely to have an impact on access to IT facilities.		
4: To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable travel.	4(a): To reduce accidents and improve safety	?	There is likely to be an unknown impact on road safety, as development of the site could result in road safety concerns but could also provide improvements.		The site is likely to have a positive impact on social and environmental sustainability as there are good safe and sustainable travel links.
	4(b): To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport	+	There is likely to be a positive impact as the site is close to local walking and cycling opportunities, with local bus routes passing close to the site.		
5: Ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced.	5(a): To conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of West Berkshire	?	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on biodiversity as there is potential for Great Crested Newts in the area. The site is also within 2km of a SAC and SSSI.	Mitigation measures would need to be provided. A NatureSpace report would need to be provided. Biodiversity Net Gain would be required.	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on environmental sustainability. Mitigation measures would be required and the site would need to be considered for allocation alongside CA12 in order to avoid any negative impacts on the landscape.
	5(b): To conserve and enhance the character of the landscape	?	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on landscape. The LCA considers the site would need to be considered alongside CA12, and that isolated development of the site could result in a negative impact.	The site should be considered for development alongside CA12. Mitigation measures would be required.	
	5(c): To protect or, conserve and enhance the built and	?	Area of high historic landscape character sensitivity and archaeological	A Heritage Impact Assessment would be	

<u>SA Objective</u>	<u>SA Sub-Objective</u>	<u>Effects of Policy on SA Objectives</u>	<u>Justification for assessment</u>	<u>Mitigation / Enhancement</u>	<u>Comment</u>
	historic environment to include sustaining the significant interest of heritage assets		potential. Presence of non-designated heritage assets. Further work would be required to determine the impact on the historic environment.	required and appropriate mitigation measures provided where necessary.	
6: To protect and improve air, water and soil quality, and minimise noise levels throughout West Berkshire.	6(a): To reduce air pollution	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on air pollution		The site is likely to have an overall neutral impact on environmental sustainability.
	6(b): To manage noise levels in main settlements	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on noise		
	6(c): To maintain and improve soil quality	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on soil quality		
	6(d): To maintain and improve water quality	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on water quality		
7: To promote and improve the efficiency of land use.	7(b): To maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings where appropriate	-	The site is likely to have a negative impact on PDL as the site is greenfield		The site is unlikely to impact on sustainability as the site is greenfield. Mitigation measures would be required to limit the impact.
	7(b): To apply sustainable densities of land use appropriate to location and setting.	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to have an impact on land use density.	The West Berkshire Density Pattern book study has been used to determine the development potential of the site.	
8: To reduce consumption and waste of natural resources and manage their use efficiently.	8(a): To reduce energy use and promote the development and use of sustainable /renewable energy technologies, generation and storage	?	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on energy use as the impact would depend on the proposals put forward on the site for sustainable energy use/generation.	Proposal would be able to ensure a positive impact should the site be reallocated for development.	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on environmental and social sustainability in relation to consumption of natural resources.
	8(b): To reduce waste generation and disposal in line with the waste hierarchy and reuse of materials	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to have an impact on waste generation		

SA Objective	SA Sub-Objective	Effects of Policy on SA Objectives	Justification for assessment	Mitigation / Enhancement	Comment
	8(c): To reduce water consumption and promote reuse	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to have an impact on water consumption		
	8(d): To reduce the consumption of minerals and promote reuse of secondary materials	<u>?</u>	The site is likely to have an unknown impact on mineral consumption as the site is partly with a MSA.	Consideration of the mineral resources would be required through a MRA and opportunities for prior extraction would need to be considered.	
10: To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs.	10(a): To encourage a range of employment opportunities that meet the needs of the District	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on employment opportunities.		The site is unlikely to impact on any element of sustainability.
	10(b): To support key sectors and utilise employment land effectively and efficiently	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on use of employment land.		
	10(c): To support the viability and vitality of town and village centres	<u>0</u>	The site is unlikely to impact on the viability and vitality of the town centre.		

Effect:	Likelihood:	Scale:	Duration:	Timescale:
Neutral	High	Local (Newbury)	Permanent	Long term
Summary:				
There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.				

Site Assessment

Spatial Area:	Newbury / Thatcham	Settlement:	Thatcham	Parish:	Cold Ash
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Site ID:	CA17	Site Address:	Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham
Use(s) proposed by site promoter	Residential	Development Potential:	45 dwellings

Recommendation:

The site is recommended for allocation

Justification:

The SA/SEA considered the spatial distribution of development across the district (see pp.23-25 of the CD3a SA/SEA Environmental Report for the Proposed Submission LPR). One of the options taken forward was a focus on Thatcham. This would focus a strategic site in the Thatcham area, with a number of smaller sites across the rest of the district. The Core Strategy limited growth in Thatcham due to the rapid expansion that had taken place in the town over recent years. This was to allow a period of consolidation, ensuring the infrastructure and town centre facilities could be upgraded to meet the demands of the existing population.

In reviewing the vision for Thatcham for the LPR the Council commissioned the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study (SIT2b). The study identifies that strategic development would be required in Thatcham to support service provision and regeneration.

Five groups of sites were identified as potential options for a strategic site, and North East Thatcham (THA20) was considered the reasonable alternative for allocation. The site was considered to be too small on its own to be of a strategic nature as it would not be able to provide the level of infrastructure required. Nonetheless, the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study recognised that an allocation on CA12 Land at Henwick Park, CA16 The Creek and CA17 Land east of the Regency Park Hotel presents an opportunity to add additional housing units if required, and the potential residential capacity and provision of facilities and open space has been tested through recent planning applications and appeals.

At the time of submission, a sufficient supply of sites had been identified to last until the end of the Plan period and the site was not recommended for allocation. However, given the need for additional supply, the site has now been reconsidered and is regarded as suitable for development.

The site remains available and there are no issues which would preclude against the allocation of the site.

Discussion:

Site description:

The site forms a large area of amenity grassland immediately to the east of the Regency Park Hotel. The boundary of the site with an area of car parking and hotel buildings is open. Dense hedgerow encloses the site along the northern, southern and eastern boundaries with glimpses through to the fields within CA12 to the east.

Planning history:

No relevant planning history.

Local Plan history:

The site was assessed in the 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (site ref THA014) as 'potentially developable'. The site was subject to site selection work as part of Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document but was ruled out for allocation because it was the Council's preferred approach, in accordance with the Core Strategy, to consider this area as a whole as part of a revised Local Plan, when the area could be holistically planned for.

January 2023 HELAA conclusions:

The site is available (in single ownership, and the owner is a developer) and achievable as there are no known market, legal, cost, ownership fragmentation or delivery issues.

There are a number of factors which would need to be investigated further to confirm that the site is developable - a series of mitigation measures to conserve and enhance the AONB; and to maintain the character of the land north of Thatcham. Further information also required on ecology before a robust decision can be made.

Whether the site is considered developable is also dependent on further assessment through the plan-making process, in relation to whether circumstances exist to support the change to the settlement boundary.

Landscape:

AONB Unit:

No comments.

Natural England:

Due to the nature of landscape assessment, they are unable to provide any detailed comments at this stage. They will need to see further evidence before they could determine which sites would be damaging to the AONB.

Other comments:

The 2015 Landscape Capacity Assessment concluded that the development on this site alone would not result in harm to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. The potential development area would need to be below the 95m AOD contour and form the northern limit of development off Bowling Green Road. Most of the rest of the site would be suitable for development subject to a narrow belt of Green Infrastructure along the southern edge to retain the character of Bowling Green Road. Tree belts to be provided to the boundaries with open countryside or to the adjacent potential development area. Green Infrastructure to break up the built form.

However, it is recommended that the site could be considered in conjunction with CA12 (Land at Henwick Park). The LCA study advised that if any one of the sites were to be developed in isolation this would result in an unacceptable level of expansion of Thatcham north of the well-defined settlement boundary along Bowling Green Road and Heath Lane.

Flood risk:

Fluvial:

FZ1.

Surface water:

- 1 in 30 year event: 1% of site
- 1 in 100 year event: 1% of site
- 1 in 1000 year event: 2% of site

Minor risk at far south of site which can be mitigated for.

Groundwater:

The JBA Groundwater Flood Map indicates that across the site groundwater levels are negligible in a 1 in 100 year flood event.

The Jacobs Groundwater Flood Risk modelling does not show the site to be at risk of groundwater emergence in either a 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 year flood event.

Highways / Transport:

Access:

Access to the site will need to be obtained from Bowling Green Road, preferably via the existing access to the hotel. Linkages will need to be provided with the adjoining site (CA12) should it come forward for development.

Local Highway Capacity:

The HELAA assessment of the site did not identify any issues. Updates to the Local Plan Review Transport Assessment work are in progress.

Strategic Road Network:

National Highways have advised that individually the site would unlikely materially impact the operation of the strategic road network.

Heritage:

Recommendations for further work:

Possible small scale farm or country house of late 19th century date. Fieldwork carried out in 2015 on surrounding land but not on this plot.

Recommendations for further work:

Late 19th century yard of buildings. Recording required for any demolition. Area of high historic landscape character sensitivity and archaeological potential. Northern site boundary 18th century or earlier. Features should be preserved along its course.

Recommendations for further work:

Heritage Impact Assessment recommended due to presence of non-designated heritage assets.

Education:

No comments.

Environmental Health:

Site near to A4 and Thatcham Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Possible Particulate Matter and Nitrogen Dioxide. However, AQMA revoked since comments made.

Contamination unlikely.

Low risk of noise and vibration problems to future occupants.

Ecology:

Thames Valley Environmental Research Centre:
Medium risk of adverse impacts.

- Priority habitat within site and within a 500m radius surround.
- No areas of ancient woodland within 500m.
- European protected species within 500m.
- Priority species within 500m.
- No statutory sites within 500m.
- Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone within 500m.
- 2 Local Wildlife Sites within 500m.

Natural England:
None.

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust

- Site is within 2km of the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain Special Area of Conservation. There is a risk of harmful impacts on Special Area of Conservation if adequate mitigation measures are not implemented.
- Site is within 2km of at least one Site of Special Scientific Interest. There may be a risk of harmful impacts on the Site of Special Scientific Interest if adequate mitigation measures are not implemented.

Other comments:

Potential for Great Crested Newts in area. Developers must submit a NatureSpace report / certificate, or comply with Natural England Standing Advice at the planning application stage.

Minerals and Waste:

Southern half of the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. These areas are underlain by (mainly) sand and gravel. Safeguarding policies will apply in order to prevent needless sterilisation of mineral resources. Consideration of extraction prior to any development would be encouraged.

Utility Services

Water supply:
No comments.

Wastewater network:
No comments.

Electricity distribution:
No comments received from SSE.

Gas network:
No comments received from utility companies.

Other:
None.

Parish / Town Council:

No comments. Site was not included as an allocation within the proposed submission (Regulation 19) LPR.

SA/SEA summary:

There are no significant impacts from this site. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities giving opportunities for walking and cycling. Without mitigation there are potentially negative impacts on environmental sustainability in relation to landscape and biodiversity. Suitable mitigation could be provided which would result in an overall neutral impact. The development of the site for housing will have a neutral effect on economic sustainability. Whilst housing development contributes towards economic development in the short term through the construction of the site, it is not seen to promote key business sectors and business development in the longer term.

Availability:

The site is in single ownership and is owned by a developer. There are no disclosed legal issues that would prevent development.

Achievability:

The site is owned by a developer. There are no disclosed legal issues that would prevent development.

Relationship to / in combination effects of other sites:

CA12 and CA16 adjoin the site.