Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan

Regulation 18 Preferred Spatial Options

Volume 2 of 2: Appendices

October 2025

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LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041

Volume 2 of 2: Appendices to the Regulation 18 Preferred Spatial Option SA

LC-1127	Document Control Box
Client	West Oxfordshire District Council
Report title	Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2021–2041 – Appendices to the Regulation 18 Preferred Spatial Option SA.
Status	Final
File name	LC-1127_Vol 2of2_West Oxfordshire_R18_SA_Appendices_2_311025LB.docx
Date	October 2025
Author	GW/AF
Reviewed	LB
Approved	ND

Front Cover: Bampton by 'UK Views'

Appendices

Appendix A: SA Framework

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
1	**Climate change mitigation:** Minimise West Oxfordshire District's contributions towards the causes of climate change	Climatic factors	• Help to reduce the per capita carbon footprint of West Oxfordshire? • Encourage renewable energy generation or the use of energy from renewable or low-carbon sources? • Promote sustainable construction principles? • Increase energy efficiency? • Support a low carbon economy?	• Carbon emissions from domestic, industrial and commercial sources in the district • Percentage of energy generated from renewable sources • Energy consumption
2	**Climate change adaptation:** Adapt to the anticipated levels of climate change	Climatic factors and water	• Avoid development in areas at high risk of flooding and seek to reduce flood risk? • Take into account the likely impacts of climate change and use sustainable drainage solutions? • Increase the coverage and connectivity of green infrastructure? • Promote the use of technologies and techniques to adapt to the impacts of climate change? • Ensure new development is resilient to the effects of extreme weather events?	• Number of properties at risk of flooding • Area and connectivity of green infrastructure • Implementation of adaptive techniques such as SuDS and passive heating/cooling systems • Number of developments given planning permission on floodplains contrary to EA advice

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
3	**Biodiversity and geodiversity:** Conserve, enhance and restore the district's biodiversity and geodiversity	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	• Conserve and enhance designated features and assets of European and national nature conservation value? • Support the positive management of locally important sites designated for their nature conservation and geodiversity value? • Contribute towards wider green infrastructure and/or nature recovery networks and promote habitat connectivity? • Deliver biodiversity net gain and seek to maximise wider environmental net gain? • Enable biodiversity to adapt to and be resilient to climate change? • Avoid damage and deterioration of habitats?	• Number and diversity of protected species present in the local area • Quality and extent of priority habitats (habitats of principal importance) • Area and condition of sites designated for biological or geological interest • Uplift in biodiversity units provided in new developments measured using the DEFRA BNG Metric • Nitrogen deposition levels and critical load exceedances at Oxford Meadows SAC • Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations
4	**Landscape:** Conserve, enhance and manage the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes	Landscape	• Conserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness, and strengthen sense of place? • Protect and enhance visual amenity? • Conserve and enhance the special character of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) and its setting, seeking opportunities to further the purpose of the landscape? • Align with the purposes of the Green Belt i.e. prevent coalescence of settlements and urban sprawl? • Safeguard local identity of settlements and preserve openness of the countryside?	• Number of planning applications granted within the CNL • Identified local landscape characteristics and sensitivities within the published Landscape Assessment for the district and for the main towns • Landscape sensitivity and capacity • Development within the Green Belt • Tranquility rating of the local area
5	**Cultural heritage:** Conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets and support the effective management of the historic environment	Cultural heritage	• Conserve, enhance and where appropriate, restore and repair West Oxfordshire's internationally, nationally or locally designated heritage assets and their settings? • Respect, maintain and strengthen local historic character and distinctiveness? • Conserve features of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest and, where necessary, encourage their conservation and restoration? • Improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings?	• Number of applications granted within conservation areas • Heritage assets on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register • Statutory and non-statutory sites in the Historic Environment Record (HER) and identified in the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
6	**Air quality:** Protect and improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air	Air	• Improve air quality and avoid generating further air pollution? • Minimise exposure to poor air quality? • Protect and enhance the quantity and connectivity of green infrastructure assets that deliver air quality benefits?	• Development with potential to generate a significant increase in road traffic emissions or other air pollutants • Proximity to AQMAs and current AQMA status • Number of people living in areas of poor air quality e.g. within 200m of a main road • Areas of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) annual mean objective exceedance
7	**Water:** Maintain and improve water quality and ensure efficient use of water resources	Water	• Protect and improve water quality of the district's rivers and inland waterbodies? • Ensure adequate capacity in water resources and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development? • Maximise water efficiency of buildings to reduce the demand on water resources? • Protect and enhance the quantity and connectivity of green and blue infrastructure assets that deliver water quality benefits? • Meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan?	• Quality of water bodies (rivers and inland water) in or adjacent to sites. • Number of developments adopting the optional requirement for water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day. • Number of developments given planning permission contrary to EA advice relating to river water quality or the protection of groundwater. • Ecological and chemical status of waterbodies.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
8	**Natural resources and waste:** Ensure efficient use of the district's soil and mineral resources and reduce waste	Soil and material assets	• Maximise the use of previously developed or under-used land? • Minimise the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land? • Seek to bring contaminated land back to beneficial use through remediation? • Protect and maintain natural capital assets, including soil resources? • Protect mineral resources from sterilisation? • Minimise waste disposal, and encourage recycling, re-use or composting of waste? • Promote the adoption of sustainable design and the use of locally and sustainably sourced, and recycled materials in construction?	• Re-use of previously developed or brownfield land • Re-use of contaminated land • Area of potential BMV agricultural land lost to development • Number of developments within Mineral Consultation Areas • Use of locally sourced materials • Percentage of the district's waste that is recycled or composted
9	**Housing and equality:** Provide affordable, high quality and environmentally sound housing for all, whilst reducing crime and social deprivation	Population, human health and material assets	• Provide a suitable mix of housing to meet the needs of the current and future populations, including those with specialist housing needs? • Seek to increase the provision of affordable housing and homes suitable for first-time buyers? • Provide high quality sustainably constructed housing? • Ensure that the best use is made of existing housing stock? • Create safe neighbourhoods and support community cohesion? • Reduce crime and the fear of crime?	• Varied housing mix • Percentage of dwellings delivered as affordable housing • Number of extra care homes, and accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the population • Provision of pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • Rates of crime

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
10	**Health and wellbeing:** Safeguard and improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities in health	Population and human health	• Improve access to healthcare and leisure facilities, particularly in rural areas? • Support healthy and active lifestyles? • Improve accessibility to the countryside and other recreational resources? • Improve the quality and extent of existing recreational assets and the green infrastructure network? • Consider the needs of the growing elderly population?	• Proximity and travel time to healthcare and leisure facilities • Provision and accessibility of open greenspace and green infrastructure • Accessibility to sports facilities • Hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population • Percentage of the population having access to a natural greenspace within 400m of their home
11	**Transport and accessibility:** Improve accessibility, increase the proportion of travel by sustainable modes, and reduce the need to travel	Population and material assets	• Promote sustainable transport patterns and reduce the need to travel, particularly in areas of high congestion? • Help to reduce reliance on private car use by providing good access via more sustainable transport modes including public transport, walking and cycling? • Improve the provision, connectivity and safety of active travel routes to encourage their use? • Tackle social exclusion?	• Distance and accessibility to public transport options • Proximity and connectivity of walking and cycling links • Frequency of bus services • Distance and travel times to key services and amenities • Sustainability of existing routes of access into sites, considering anticipated increases in usage • Local increases in road traffic congestion and journey times, particularly on the A40

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA topic(s)	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal…	Indicators include (but are not limited to)
12	**Education:** Increase access to education and improve attainment to develop and maintain a skilled workforce	Population and material assets	• Seek to provide infrastructure to improve education and skills? • Provide or improve sustainable access to education and training opportunities? • Support opportunities for community enterprises and the voluntary sector? • Support the provision of an appropriately skilled workforce?	• CIL contributions for education from new development • Proximity and travel time to primary and secondary schools • Capacity of primary and secondary schools • Qualification levels e.g. National Vocational Qualifications • Access to higher education opportunities • Number of Adult Education Opportunities including apprenticeships likely to be generated through new development
13	**Economy and employment:** Ensure sufficient employment land and premises are available to develop and support innovative and sustainable economic growth	Population and material assets	• Provide or improve sustainable access to a range of employment opportunities? • Support vibrant market towns and a sustainable rural economy? • Support, develop and attract competitive business sectors? • Promote rural diversification? • Protect and enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment and retail areas?	• Proximity and travel time to employment opportunities • Unemployment rates • Number of vacant business units • Total area of new employment floorspace • Number of new business start-ups as a result of new development

Appendix B: Assessment of Spatial Strategy Options

Appendix B Contents

Tables

B.1 Introduction

B.1.1 Overview

B.1.1.1 During the previous Regulation 18 'Preferred Policy Options' Local Plan consultation[1], seven spatial options were identified by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) as reasonable alternative approaches for the emerging spatial strategy:

- Option 1 – Hierarchical Approach;
- Option 2 – Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton);
- Option 3 – Witney Focus;
- Option 4 – Carterton Focus;
- Option 5 – Dispersed Growth;
- Option 6 – New Settlement; and
- Option 7 – Public Transport Focus.

B.1.1.2 The seven spatial strategy options were evaluated within the accompanying Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options SA Report (June 2025)[2].

B.1.1.3 Drawing on the findings of the SA assessments, as well as comments received in response to the Preferred Policy Options consultation in summer 2025, WODC considered that a 'hybrid' approach may offer more sustainable outcomes than any one of the previous options alone. As such, WODC has identified an eighth reasonable alternative spatial option for consideration at the current Preferred Spatial Options consultation stage that takes on board the aspects of the other seven options that were most supported.

B.1.1.4 The assessment of spatial options has therefore been updated within this document, incorporating the new Option 8 'Hybrid Approach' and evaluating this alongside the previous seven option.

B.1.1.5 Taking into account past completions, commitments, adopted local plan allocations and windfall allowance, WODC identified the residual housing requirement to be identified in the new Local Plan is approximately 8,000 homes. This has increased since the Preferred Policy Options consultation stage, where 6,500 homes was the residual need, as a result of extending the Plan period by an additional two years to ensure that it covers a minimum of 15 years post-adoption.

B.1.1.6 The eight spatial strategy options as identified by WODC are presented in **Table B.1.1**. Each option provides a different spatial configuration of housing and employment growth, to account for the residual housing need of c.8,000 homes that will be delivered in addition to the existing commitments. The approximate distribution of growth associated with the

[1] WODC (2025) West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041. Draft Preferred Policy Options Paper. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qf3bnn0n/wodc-local-plan-preferred-policy-options-consultation-paper-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 15/10/25]

[2] Lepus Consulting (2025) Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan. Regulation 18: Preferred Policy Options SA Report. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qi1puvnm/sustainability-appriasal-of-the-west-oxfordshire-local-plan-preferred-options-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 15/10/25]

previously assessed Options 1-7 has been updated since the previous SA stage, to reflect latest calculated residual housing need.

Table B.1.1: *Eight spatial strategy options identified by WODC*

Option	WODC description	Approximate distribution of growth
1 – Hierarchal Approach	Roll forward the strategy of the current Local Plan which is based on a 'hierarchal' approach as follows: • A significant proportion of new homes, jobs and supporting services focused at the 3 main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton; • Additional growth at the rural service centres, with Eynsham having a particularly important role (including a new village – Salt Cross – to the north) and Woodstock being identified as suitable for a reasonable scale of development. More modest levels of development at the other rural service centres of Burford, Charlbury, Bampton and Long Hanborough to help reinforce their existing roles; • Limited development in villages; and • Development in small villages, hamlets and open countryside restricted to that which requires and is appropriate for a rural location.	• 2 x strategic allocations would be made at Carterton and Witney (1,800 each settlement) • 1x strategic allocation at Chipping Norton which is partially in the AONB (900 dwellings) • 1x non-strategic allocation at each of the rural service centres (300 x 7) • Balance of 1,400 homes at each of the larger villages
2 – Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton)	Focusing the vast majority of future development (beyond existing commitments) more specifically at the three main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.	• 2 x strategic allocations at Witney and Carterton (5,000 dwellings total, 2,500 each) • 2 x strategic allocations at Chipping Norton (1,800 dwellings total, 900 each) • Balance of 1,200 homes at each of the rural service centres
3 – Witney Focus	Most future development (beyond existing commitments) focused narrowly at Witney as the District's largest settlement and main service centre.	• The total residual housing requirement (8,000) would be met at Witney, maximising development of all promoted development sites around the town
4 – Carterton Focus	Most future development (beyond existing commitments) would be focused narrowly at Carterton as the District's second largest town and service centre.	• The total residual housing requirement (8,000) would be met at Carterton, maximising development of all promoted development sites around the town (in neighbouring parishes of Brize Norton, Shilton and Alvescot)
5 – Dispersed Growth	A more 'dispersed' approach to the future pattern of development so that instead of growth being steered mainly towards the district's larger settlements, it would be more evenly distributed across West Oxfordshire.	• 15% growth would be attributed to major service centres (c.4,800 dwellings)

Option	WODC description	Approximate distribution of growth
		• 10% (3,200) to rural service centres (c.1,100) and larger villages (c.2,100)
6 – New Settlement	Future growth focused primarily at a large, purpose-built new settlement somewhere in the district.	• A single new settlement of 8,000 homes somewhere in the district, or • Two new settlements of c.4,000 homes each somewhere in the district
7 – Public Transport Focus	Focus growth (beyond existing commitments) along key public transport corridors and around public transport hubs e.g. rail stations.	• 6,200 homes along the A40 corridor including 2,500 at Carterton 2,500 at Witney and 1,200 'elsewhere' along the A40 corridor • 1,800 homes along the Cotswold and Cherwell Valley rail lines focused at rural service centres and larger villages
8 – Hybrid Approach	A hybrid of Options 1-7 including: • The majority of strategic scale development focussed at the Main Service Centres (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton); • More modest levels of development at a number of service centres (Long Hanborough, Bampton, Burford and Charlbury); • Non-strategic allocations at a number of larger villages (Ducklington, Middle Barton and Standlake); and • Non-strategic allocations at settlements along rail corridors (Tackley and Kingham).	• 86% to main service centres (c.4,130 dwellings to Carterton as new settlement(s); c.2,200 to Witney; and c.550 to Chipping Norton) • 8% to service centres (c.640) • 6% to larger villages and those with rail connections (c.480)

B.1.1.7 Each of the eight spatial strategy option has been assessed for its likely sustainability impacts, a summary of which is presented in **Tables B.2.1 – B.2.13** and overall findings discussed in **Chapter B.3**. Full explanations and reasonings behind each overall 'score' are set out for each of the 13 SA Objectives in **Chapter B.2**.

B.1.1.8 The options have been evaluated relative to each other, with best and worst performing options identified within each SA Objective. It should be noted that the performance of options is indicative at this stage and based on the available information, when considered at a strategic level.

B.2 Evaluation of spatial strategy options

B.2.1 SA Objective 1 - Climate change mitigation

B.2.1.1 The majority of West Oxfordshire's carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions are attributed to domestic and transport sources[3]. All eight spatial strategy options will deliver a similar amount of growth within the district and therefore have potential to significantly increase CO_2 emissions and other greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during the construction and occupation of development, including via increased traffic on local road networks.

B.2.1.2 Option 6 would focus growth at one new settlement of 8,000 homes, or two smaller new settlements of 4,000 homes. A new settlement will provide the opportunity to create well-designed places with co-located homes and services that support the 20-minute neighbourhood concept[4] and facilitate walkable neighbourhoods that are safe and highly accessible to all members of the community. Planning a new settlement to include high-quality connections to local services will encourage residents to travel by foot or other active modes of travel which will help to minimise congestion and reduce GHG emissions such as carbon dioxide. Indeed, the comparative modelling of the growth scenarios[5] indicated that a scenario based on new settlements would perform the strongest in terms of both transport and operational emissions. Whilst the new settlement is likely to be isolated in respect to existing infrastructure and services, there is a great opportunity to design the new settlement to be energy efficient and incorporate low-carbon and renewable technologies. National and local design policy and guidance should be followed to ensure any development considers approaches to mitigate climate change[6]. Overall, although the development will still likely lead to GHG emissions to some extent, there are likely to be greater opportunities to incorporate climate mitigation measures at early stages of development and pursue sustainable design concepts. A major positive impact on climate change mitigation could be achieved for Option 6.

B.2.1.3 Option 7 looks to focus growth along key public transport corridors and hubs which will help to encourage the uptake of public transport and consequently reduce reliance on private car use and associated emissions. Assuming that development can be located in areas with good access to frequent, rapid and reliable sustainable transport links, such as bus services along the A40 and A44 and railway corridors, Option 7 has potential to perform the best with regard to climate change mitigation, although the large scale of development will still likely lead to some GHG emissions. Comparative modelling of the

[3] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2024). UK local authority greenhouse gas emissions estimates 2022. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023 [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[4] TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[5] Bioregional (2025) Net-Zero Spatial Planning Support. Task 3. Comparative modelling of nine growth scenarios. West Oxfordshire District Council. *[Note: this modelling was undertaken with reference to the nine scenarios presented in the earlier Regulation 18 WODC 'focused consultation on ideas and objectives']*

[6] TCPA and RTPI (2023). The Climate Crisis. A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change. Available at: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-climate-crisis-a-guide-for-local-authorities-on-planning-for-climate-change/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

growth scenarios[7] indicated that the public transport focus would however result in further emissions than a strategy based on new settlements, but this would also be dependent on the location of a new settlement with respect to strategic transport routes. On balance, a major positive impact could be achieved for Option 7.

B.2.1.4 Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 will focus development within or surrounding existing urban areas and the main centres in the district, likely to locate development in closer proximity to a range of services including sustainable transport, employment opportunities and shops. These four spatial strategy options will be likely to facilitate reduced reliance on private car use and associated emissions, encouraging uptake in sustainable modes of travel including active travel for local journeys. Furthermore, Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 may provide greater opportunities for the re-use of previously developed land (PDL) in comparison to rurally focused development through Option 5, although losses of undeveloped land will be likely to some extent given the district's limited supply of PDL. Development through Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 could therefore result in lower GHG emissions as a result of construction if existing buildings are repurposed. Furthermore, through the use of PDL, development will likely result in a reduced loss of green infrastructure (GI) and open space which provide ecosystem services such as air filtration and carbon sequestration. These benefits are likely to be most pronounced under Option 3 (Witney), followed by Option 2 (main service centres), Option 4 (Carterton) and then Option 1 (hierarchical approach), reflecting the relative emissions predicted in the comparative modelling of growth scenarios[8]. On balance, although the large scale of development will still likely lead to an increase in GHG emissions to some extent, the opportunities for greater use of sustainable transport and opportunities to re-use PDL, a minor positive impact is identified for Options 2, 3 and 4 on climate change mitigation, and an overall negligible impact for Option 1.

B.2.1.5 Option 8 focuses the majority of growth at the main service centres (Carterton, Witney and Chipping Norton), with more modest development at other service centres and selected larger villages, including rail-connected settlements. This approach is likely to deliver similar opportunities to Options 1-4 for reducing reliance on private car use and facilitating active and sustainable travel due to the concentration of growth in accessible locations. The inclusion of development along rail corridors further supports sustainable travel, similar to Option 7. While Option 8 does not provide the same level of carbon mitigation potential associated with a single, well-planned new settlement (as in Option 6), the hybrid approach includes a number of strategic-scale opportunities that will allow for integration of sustainable design, low-carbon construction techniques, and proximity to existing services. Overall, Option 8 is expected to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, performing slightly better than Options 2, 3 and 4.

B.2.1.6 Option 5 will adopt a dispersed approach to growth across the district, including development in rural areas, potentially introducing barriers to the access and uptake of sustainable travel. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to climate change mitigation. Through locating development in areas which are generally poorly served by public transport, it is expected that there will be greater reliance on private car use which will result higher levels of transport related emissions. Comparative

[7] Bioregional (2025) Net-Zero Spatial Planning Support. Task 3. Comparative modelling of nine growth scenarios. West Oxfordshire District Council. *[Note: this modelling was undertaken with reference to the nine scenarios presented in the previous Regulation 18 WODC 'focused consultation on ideas and objectives']*

[8] Ibid

modelling of the growth scenarios[9] indicated Option 5 as the consistently worst-ranked for total, operational and cumulative carbon emissions. Overall, a major negative impact is identified for Option 5 on climate change mitigation as a result of the likely high use of private vehicles and associated GHG emissions released due to the rural nature of development.

B.2.1.7 It is recommended that the Council secure any new supporting sustainable travel infrastructure prior to development to ensure that sustainable travel choices become the norm. Development at all eight options should consider potential impacts associated with embodied carbon, pursuing the quantification of embodied carbon and reduction in embodied carbon, for example through ensuring a fabric first approach[10] is taken at the conception of development, ensuring development uses low carbon materials and pursues Passivhaus standards[11]. It is recommended that climate tools are used to understand the extent of carbon emissions as a result of development, including the 'THERMOS' tool[12] to optimise local district energy network planning processes to facilitate low-carbon heating and cooling systems and the 'SCATTER' tool[13] to measure and model emissions.

Table B.2.1: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation*

SA1 – Climate change mitigation	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	0	+	+	+	--	++	++	+

B.2.1.8 **Option 7 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to climate change mitigation. The focus of growth along key public transport corridors and hubs under Option 7 will help to encourage the uptake of public transport and consequently reduce reliance on private car use and associated emissions. This is closely followed by **Option 6** (New Settlement) which is likely to provide the best opportunities for self-containment with careful planning.

B.2.1.9 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to climate change mitigation. Through locating development in areas which are generally poorly served by public transport, it is expected that reliance on private car use will be greater, which will result higher levels of transport related emissions.

B.2.2 SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation

B.2.2.1 The district is affected to varying degrees by fluvial (river) flooding and groundwater flooding. A small proportion of the district lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3, predominantly along the River Thames that comprises the southern border of the district, and its tributaries. Small areas of surface water flood risk (SWFR) can be found within the district, primarily along watercourses in the south east and north of the district. Climate change

[9] Ibid

[10] Roofspace Solutions. What is a Fabric First Approach? Available at: https://roofspacesolutions.co.uk/the-fabric-first-approach/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[11] Passivhaus Trust (2025) Standards & Policy. Available at: https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[12] THERMOS (2024). THERMOS tool. Available at: www.thermos-project.eu/thermos-tool/tool-access/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[13] SCATTER (2024). SCATTER tool. Available at: https://www.anthesisgroup.com/case-studies/scatter/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

impacts will be expected to increase the risk of flooding throughout the district alongside heat risk and drought which are other known climate threats to the district and wider Oxfordshire County[14].

B.2.2.2 Soils and vegetation play vital roles in in attenuating flood risk, by intercepting surface water flooding and storing water that could otherwise lead to flooding, causing harm to people and property. Therefore, spatial strategy options which are likely to lead to the loss of undeveloped land or areas of GI are likely to increase flood risk in the area. Furthermore, spatial strategy options which will increase the density or extent of development within existing urban areas will also contribute to the urban heat island (UHI) effect.

B.2.2.3 Option 6 could result in large-scale loss of undeveloped land due to the proposed development of a new settlement. However, the development of a new settlement provides the opportunity to incorporate climate adaptation measures such as resilient housing designs, and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) which can replicate greenfield runoff rates and reduce flood risk. Development should make use of relevant SuDS guidance[15] to ensure effective implementation and explore multi-functional schemes. Furthermore, development of a new settlement as advocated under Option 6 provides an opportunity to utilise nature-based solutions from the early stages of development, such as conserving and enhancing waterbodies, planting trees and hedges or improving soil cover[16]. On balance, a negligible impact is identified for Option 6 due to the potential for climate adaptation opportunities. Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option with regard to climate change adaptation as it has the greatest potential for implementing climate adaptive design and layout and can also ensure built development will not be located in areas at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding.

B.2.2.4 Due to the rural nature of Option 5, it is more likely that development will result in cumulative large-scale losses of undeveloped land or GI which play vital roles in attenuating flood risk and reducing threats from heat risk. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to climate change adaptation as it is more likely development will be located in rural locations and could result in larger losses of undeveloped land and GI. A minor negative impact on climate change adaptation is identified for Option 5.

B.2.2.5 Development associated with Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 is likely to be located within and around existing urban areas. Development under Option 7 will be located alongside key public transport corridors, which includes some of these same urban areas. Option 8, the hybrid approach, focuses growth at the main service centres with smaller allocations at service centres and villages and could include a new settlement at Carterton offering similar opportunities to Option 6 for integrated climate adaptation measures, which may help offset pressures on GI and urban flood risk. Urban areas within the district are affected by large extents of flood risk, especially areas such as Witney which is prone to

[14] AtkinsRealis (2024). Oxfordshire County Council – Climate resilience, Current and future climate risk and vulnerability and health impacts assessments in Oxfordshire. April 2024. Available at: https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/12/CEQ15-Climate-Vulnerability-Assessment.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[15] Ciria (2015). The SuDS Manual. Available at: https://www.ciria.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=C753& [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[16] Environment Agency (2021). Use nature-based solutions to reduce flooding in your area. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-nature-based-solutions-to-reduce-flooding-in-your-area [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

both fluvial flood risk from the River Windrush[17] and SWFR. Increased development within existing urban areas may put pressure on existing open spaces to be converted to residential or employment use, reducing GI coverage, which can otherwise help to adapt to climate change impacts such as flooding and help to alleviate UHI effect. Increased urban development and thereby an increase in the extent of impermeable surfaces is likely to decrease rates of infiltration and increase the UHI effect and contribute to wider issues such as drought, which areas such as Carterton, which suffered from water disruption to homes due to the July-August heatwave in 2022[18], are vulnerable to. Overall, development at Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 is likely to have a minor negative impact on climate adaptation, although Option 8 may perform slightly better than the other urban-focused options due to the opportunities associated with the new settlement.

Table B.2.2: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation*

SA2 – Climate change adaptation	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

B.2.2.6 **Option 6 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to climate change adaptation as it has the greatest potential for implementing climate adaptive design and layout, and is also likely to have the greatest scope to ensure built development will not be located in areas at risk of flooding now or in the future.

B.2.2.7 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to climate change adaptation as it is more likely development will be located in rural locations and could result in larger losses of undeveloped land and GI, which plays a vital role in attenuating flood risk and reducing threats from heat risk.

B.2.3 SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

B.2.3.1 Biodiversity assets within West Oxfordshire include Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is partially located within the east of the district, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) including Wychwood Forest and Blenheim Park, as well as other National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Components of the district's GI network are also likely to serve as important wildlife corridors, facilitating the movement of species and linking to the wider countryside including ancient woodlands, river corridors and the Cotswold National Landscape (CNL) which covers around a third of the district. Habitats across the district primarily consist of arable land with large areas of improved grassland alongside rarer habitats such as semi-natural and unimproved grassland[19]. As a result of the large quanta of housing and

[17] AtkinsRealis (2024). Oxfordshire County Council – Climate resilience, Current and future climate risk and vulnerability and health impacts assessments in Oxfordshire. April 2024. Available at: https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/12/CEQ15-Climate-Vulnerability-Assessment.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[18] Ibid.

[19] West Oxfordshire District Council (2024). Nature Recovery Plan 2024-2030. Restoring and enhancing West Oxfordshire's natural environment. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbk0ob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

employment growth proposed within all eight options, it is likely that pressure on biodiversity assets will increase and adverse impacts at the landscape scale are likely.

B.2.3.2 The development of a new settlement, as for Option 6, provides an opportunity to avoid significant impacts on biodiversity features through appropriate location, design and layout and incorporation of multi-functional GI, as well as opportunities to apply Building with Nature Standards[20] to ensure that development incorporates wildlife into placemaking. Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option with regard to biodiversity as it provides the greatest opportunity to consider the impacts of development on biodiversity at the earliest stages of development and as such incorporating multi-functional open spaces and habitats. However, whilst it is expected that development at the new settlement (and all development under each spatial option) will provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG), the large-scale development anticipated could still result in direct loss of habitats, however this is expected to be localised habitat loss in comparison to widespread impacts seen through development at the alternative six options. Overall, a minor negative impact on biodiversity is identified for Option 6.

B.2.3.3 Development through Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 is likely to be located within and around existing urban areas. Development under Option 7 will be located alongside key public transport corridors, including within existing urban areas. Option 8 focuses growth at the main service centres with smaller allocations at service centres and selected villages, including rail-connected settlements, and could include a new settlement at Carterton. The new settlement provides opportunities to integrate multi-functional GI and biophilic design from the outset, potentially offsetting some pressures on biodiversity associated with urban and service centre growth. Although potentially to a lesser extent than countryside locations, the district's urban areas support some distinctive habitats, species and ecological linkages. The Oxford Meadows SAC, designated for rare habitats such as lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*)[21], is located adjacent to the A40 and is sensitive changes in air quality, water quality and quantity. Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 are likely to increase road users along the A40 and result in further impacts on the SAC from vehicular emissions. Option 7 in particular, closely followed by Option 8, may help to increase public transport uptake and reduce per capita emissions to some extent, although there is still potential for increased pressures on local biodiversity and impacts to less sensitive biodiversity features. Overall, minor negative impacts on biodiversity are identified for Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8, with Option 8 potentially performing slightly better than the other five options due to the opportunity for a new settlement at Carterton to integrate biodiversity measures from the outset.

B.2.3.4 Option 5 looks to disperse development in rural locations and could result in greater losses of undeveloped land and disruption to the ecological network. Development associated with Option 5 will be likely to increase habitat fragmentation across the district and increase pressures on biodiversity assets including rurally located statutory biodiversity sites such as Wychwood NNR, Chimney Meadows NNR, Crecy Hill LNR, Saltway LNR and non-

[20] Building with Nature Standards. Building with Nature. Standards Framework (BwN 2.0) Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c45e569c3c16a9eac56d244/t/6351513d1afee236d4cf6ce8/1666273600232/Building_with_Nature_Standards_Framework_2.0_Oct22_Download_Version.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[21] JNCC. Oxford Meadows SAC. Available at: https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012845 [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

statutory LWS that are spread across the district[22]. Overall, development through Option 5 is likely to have a minor negative impact on biodiversity within the district. Whilst the extent and severity of impacts will depend on site-specifics, there is potential for Option 5 to be the worst performing option with regard to biodiversity as it will disperse development across the district, largely in rural locations on undeveloped land and therefore likely to lead to widely felt biodiversity impacts.

Table B.2.3: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity*

SA3 – Biodiversity	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

B.2.3.5 **Option 6 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to biodiversity as it provides the greatest opportunity to plan holistically and consider the impacts of development on biodiversity at the earliest stages of development, incorporating multi-functional GI and open spaces which can act as stepping stones for wildlife. Option 8 may also present some similar opportunities, performing second-best.

B.2.3.6 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to biodiversity as it will disperse development across the district, largely in rural locations on undeveloped land and therefore likely to lead to widely felt biodiversity impacts and incremental loss of the ecological network.

B.2.4 SA Objective 4 – Landscape

B.2.4.1 The Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) encompasses a large proportion of the north west of the district. The Cotswolds is the largest National Landscape in England and is recognised by its rich, diverse and high-quality landscape encompassing flower-rich limestone grasslands and ancient broadleaved woodland[23]. West Oxfordshire contains a small portion of the Oxford Green Belt in the east of the district, which prevents urban sprawl from Oxford and aims to avoid coalescence with nearby settlements such as Eynsham, Cassington and Bladon[24]. Green Belt is not a statutory landscape designation; however, it plays a vital role in preserving the setting, character and openness of the countryside.

B.2.4.2 Options 1 and 2 are likely to include some development in and around Chipping Norton, with potential for urban sprawl into the sensitive surrounding landscape. The majority of Chipping Norton is located within the CNL and as such development through Options 1

[22] West Oxfordshire District Council (2024). Nature Recovery Plan 2024-2030. Restoring and enhancing West Oxfordshire's natural environment. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbk0ob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[23] Cotswold National Landscape (2025). Special qualities of the Cotswolds – A National Treasure. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-landscape-2/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[24] LUC (2015) Oxford Green Belt Study (2015). Available at: https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/3789/oxford-green-belt-study-2015 [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

and 2 will have potential to result in adverse impacts on the special qualities[25] of the landscape. Noise associated with development along the A44 is already identified as a disturbance to the landscape, as detailed in the Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment[26], and could be worsened through increased growth in these locations. However, some of the development through Options 1 and 2 has the potential to be located in and around existing built-up areas and therefore adverse impacts on sensitive landscape features will be reduced to some extent. Overall, a minor negative impact on the landscape character is identified for Options 1 and 2.

B.2.4.3 Pursuing Options 3 or 4 will see development focussed solely at Witney or Carterton and as such will minimise development at more rural locations. Development will primarily be focused on undeveloped greenfield sites, but will be more concentrated at the edge of the urban areas compared to a more dispersed strategy. This concentrated approach will be expected to alter the character of the townscapes, disrupting the countryside views to and from the towns, and changing the landscape character from rural agricultural to suburban. The large-scale development proposed within and around Witney and Carterton through Options 3 and 4 has potential to increase noise and light pollution in combination with existing infrastructure such as the A40 and flying associated with RAF Brize Norton as detailed in their respective landscape assessments[27][28], which could result in wider adverse effects on the character and tranquillity. Options 3 and 4 may include some opportunities for development on PDL and brownfield sites, although it is recognised that most development will be focused at the settlement edge. On balance, a minor negative impact on landscape is identified for Options 3 and 4 where they have the potential to alter the surrounding landscape character of Witney and Carterton.

B.2.4.4 Development through Option 5 will be dispersed across the district which has potential to alter the rural landscape character and wider setting. Distributing development could potentially help to avoid significant adverse effects focused in particular locations, however it is more likely to result in widespread and potentially cumulative adverse impacts on rural settlements across West Oxfordshire. As a result, Option 5 has the potential to be the worst performing option. Dispersed development through Option 5 could result in disturbance to the quality, integrity and tranquillity of the rural landscape. Option 5 could locate development in villages within the CNL, which is likely to result in an adverse impact on the rich character of these rural settlements, as well as adversely affecting views to and from the villages, such as those experienced by users of the Public Right of Way (PRoW) network. Overall, a minor negative impact is anticipated for landscape under Option 5.

B.2.4.5 Option 6 seeks to pursue development at one or two new settlements, which will avoid the widespread adverse effects associated with dispersal but would be expected to completely alter the landscape character of the development area. A new settlement also provides an opportunity to create a distinct sense of place and identity, using landscape-led design

[25] Cotswold National Landscape (2025) Special qualities of the Cotswolds – A National Treasure. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-landscape-2/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[26] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qwrkoffm/chipping-norton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[27] AHLC (2007) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Witney Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2mdjjkq4/witney-landscape-assessment-2007-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[28] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Carterton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/gykgnexu/carterton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

practices, including buffers and appropriate building materials, as well as soft landscaping to ease the transition between rural and urban areas and protect sensitive landscape features. GI can also be integrated to mitigate landscape impacts that cannot be avoided. Landscape-led development will ensure that the potential large-scale loss of undeveloped land can provide the opportunity to create a new coherent neighbourhood that is well designed and complements the wider landscape setting. Development of a new settlement through Option 6 should make use of the National Design Guide[29] which provides recommendations on how design at all levels can shape the character of a new place. As a result, Option 6 can be identified as the best performing option where incorporating effective and appropriate design will help to prevent adverse impacts on the landscape. Overall, a negligible impact on the landscape is identified.

B.2.4.6 Option 7 seeks to focus development in areas along key public transport corridors. Development is likely to be dispersed throughout settlements along the A40 and the Cotswold and Cherwell Valley railway lines. Whilst reducing private car use is beneficial in many respects, locating development within public transport corridors, such as near to Hanborough Station along the Cotswold railway line, is likely to result in adverse impacts on the distinctive landscape and townscape character of the small rural settlements, many of which are located within the CNL. Locating development along the A40 corridor is also more likely to result in coalescence due not only to new development, but also as a result of associated infrastructure, such as new roads, road junctions and increased parking areas. This will also have the potential to contribute to greater noise and light pollution along the A40[30], near Witney particularly, which is likely to disturb the surrounding landscape setting. Overall, a minor negative impact on landscape is anticipated for Option 7.

B.2.4.7 Option 8, the hybrid approach, combines growth at main service centres with smaller allocations at service centres and selected villages. The proportion of growth directed to Chipping Norton, service villages and other well-connected villages is likely to be lower than under Options 1, 2, 4 and 7, meaning less development in proximity to the CNL and reduced potential impacts on sensitive landscape areas. The potential new settlement at Carterton provides an opportunity to implement landscape-led design, buffers, and high-quality materials, helping to reduce adverse impacts on landscape character. On balance, Option 8 may perform slightly better than the other urban-focused options due to these opportunities, although minor negative impacts are still anticipated.

Table B.2.4: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 4 – Landscape*

SA 4 – Landscape	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

B.2.4.8 Based on the limited available data in terms of landscape sensitivity and capacity, **Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option** with regard to landscape where

[29] DLUHC (2021). National Design Guide. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[30] AHLC (2007) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Witney Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2mdjjkg4/witney-landscape-assessment-2007-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

there are likely to be the best opportunities for strong place making and incorporating effective and appropriate design into a new settlement to ensure integration into the wider landscape. This would however need to be informed by site-specific appraisals to evaluate the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape if/when potential locations for a new settlement were identified.

B.2.4.9 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to landscape where a dispersed approach to development is more likely to result in widespread and potentially cumulative adverse impacts on rural settlements across West Oxfordshire.

B.2.5 SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage

B.2.5.1 West Oxfordshire has a rich history with a plethora of historical assets located within the district. One notable historic asset found within West Oxfordshire is Blenheim Palace, including the surrounding parklands and gardens, a designated World Heritage Site[31]. There are multiple listed buildings (LB) and scheduled monuments (SM) located within the Blenheim Estate. West Oxfordshire is predominantly rural, with market towns and villages set within an attractive rural landscape. Historic settlements are characterised by the distinctive vernacular design and use of local building materials including Cotswold limestone and Stonesfield slate and the relationship of settlements with the surrounding countryside. Large country estates are also characteristic of West Oxfordshire and a key element of the district's cultural heritage including those at Cornbury, Great Tew and Ditchley.

B.2.5.2 Through Options 1 (hierarchical approach) and 2 (main service centres), developments will primarily be focussed within the main centres, and through Option 1 this then defaults to rural centres, villages and the rest of the district. Focussing the majority of development within the main centres will be likely to result in a lesser impact on the setting of heritage assets than more rural spatial strategies, given the level of existing development already present within the main centres. Despite this, the main service settlements in West Oxfordshire consist of small market towns with conservation areas (CAs) located at their centres, such as 'Witney and Cogges' CA. The Witney and Cogges CA includes eight character areas with specific features contributing to the CAs distinctiveness and are recognised to be under threat from various vulnerabilities including poorly maintained properties, traffic and noise pollution[32]. Extensive development in or around such CAs has the potential to dilute the historic character for which they have been identified. A minor negative impact on cultural heritage is likely for Options 1 and 2.

B.2.5.3 Options 3 and 4 seek to focus development around Witney and Carterton respectively. Focussing development primarily in either of these two towns will be expected to reduce the extremity of adverse impacts where existing development acts as a buffer to heritage assets or already forms part of the setting to the asset. This said, as discussed within **paragraph B.2.5.2** above, Witney is a historic market town and new development through Option 3 has potential to adversely impact the features and setting of assets including the Witney and Cogges CA. However, this is not the case for Carterton, where there is no CA

[31] UNESCO World Heritage Convention (2025) Blenheim Palace. Available at: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/425/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[32] West Oxfordshire District Council (2013). Witney and Cogges. Conservation Area Character Appraisal Preservation and Enhancement. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/snadiyuv/witney-and-cogges-conservation-area-character-appraisal.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

designated at its centre, although the features and settings of the few listed buildings located in Carterton could be impacted as a result of development through Option 4. Overall, a minor negative impact on cultural heritage is anticipated for Options 3 and 4.

B.2.5.4 Option 5 seeks to disperse growth more widely throughout the district. This approach to the spatial development in West Oxfordshire will relieve the burden from one particular location, which will be more likely to contribute to changes in the setting of heritage assets. Development in rural locations, however, is anticipated to more significantly affect heritage assets, such as listed buildings. For example, any development at larger villages is likely to result in a more profound impact on the features and settings of heritage assets in these settlements. Given the potential to have an impact on a wider range of heritage assets, Option 5 can be identified as the worst performing option. Overall, a minor negative impact on cultural heritage is identified for Option 5.

B.2.5.5 Whilst the creation of a whole new settlement under Option 6 could significantly alter the setting and character of heritage assets in the local area, through the careful location and design of the settlement, significant effects could be avoided. It is expected that through incorporating sensitive design of buildings, as well as use of GI and green buffers, impacts on the setting or features of heritage assets could be avoided or significant harm reduced. Where designated or locally important historic buildings fall within the developable area of the new settlement, appropriate use of materials and methods can be used to repair and maintain the historic asset, using Historic England's Technical Guidance and Research[33]. Furthermore, following guidance from Historic England[34], development should seek opportunities to enhance historic assets through improved energy efficiency, maintenance and repair to contribute to a greener future and adapt to climate change. As such, there is potential for Option 6 to be the best performing as development at a new settlement will allow for cohesive development with sensitive design which compliments West Oxfordshire's historic environment. Overall, a negligible impact on cultural heritage is identified for Option 6.

B.2.5.6 Option 7 would see development located in proximity to key public transport networks for the district. For the most part, this is expected to result in development in and around the main settlements in West Oxfordshire, such as Witney, Carterton, Burford and Chipping Norton. Urban locations may be more capable of accommodating further development without significantly affecting heritage assets. However, development with access to the Cotswold and Cherwell railway lines are likely to be located in more rural locations where any development would be expected to have a more prominent impact on heritage assets. Therefore overall, a minor negative impact on cultural heritage is anticipated for the approach under Option 7.

B.2.5.7 Option 8 directs growth to main service centres with smaller allocations at service centres and selected villages. Option 8 would be expected to perform similarly to Option 7 in urban areas. However, the proportion of development in rural locations and historic settlements, such as Chipping Norton, is likely to be lower than under Options 1, 2, 4 and 7, reducing

[33] Historic England (2024). Technical Guidance and Research. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/advice/technical-conservation-guidance-and-research-brochure-pdf/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[34] Historic England (2024). Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency-advice-note-18/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

the potential for impacts on heritage assets in these locations. The potential new settlement at Carterton also provides an opportunity to incorporate sensitive design, green buffers, and high-quality materials, helping to avoid or reduce harm to heritage features. On balance, Option 8 may perform slightly better than other urban-focused options, although minor negative impacts on cultural heritage are still anticipated.

Table B.2.5: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage*

SA 5 – Cultural heritage	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

B.2.5.8 **Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option** with regard to cultural heritage as development at a new settlement will allow for cohesive development with sensitive design which compliments West Oxfordshire's historic environment, and avoids the most sensitive locations. Option 4 (Carterton Focus) is likely the second-best option, reflecting the relatively fewer sensitive heritage assets in Carterton compared to the other locations, followed by Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) which also directs a substantial proportion of growth to Carterton.

B.2.5.9 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to cultural heritage as under this approach there is potential for adverse effects on a wider range of heritage assets.

B.2.6 SA Objective 6 – Air quality

B.2.6.1 Poor air quality is a leading contributor to poor human health as well as environmental risks. Contributors to poor air quality in West Oxfordshire include air pollutants and emissions released from road traffic, which is likely to increase further through the provision of c.8,000 homes and employment land during the Plan period to 2043. There are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within West Oxfordshire including 'Chipping Norton' AQMA and 'Witney' AQMA both of which were designated in 2005 for exceedances in nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)[35]. WODC's latest Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) (2025)[36] states that levels of NO_2 are continuing to fall across the district.

B.2.6.2 Options 1 and 2 seek to locate the majority of new development within the main service centres. Whilst this is likely to prevent the worsening of air quality more widely across the district, it is likely to result in higher concentrations of harmful air pollutants, such as NO_2, in the built-up areas, and particularly in Chipping Norton and Witney which already contain AQMAs. Low emission and electric vehicles, as well as public transport access, are likely to become more widely used which will support lower levels of air pollutants, however overall, a minor negative impact for air quality is anticipated under Options 1 and 2.

B.2.6.3 Through Option 3 development will be focussed in and around Witney, with potential to result in significant increases to the throughflow of traffic from private vehicles. As a result,

[35] DEFRA (2025) UK Air: AQMAs Declared by West Oxfordshire District Council. Available at: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/local-authorities?la_id=309 [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[36] West Oxfordshire District Council (2025) Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR), June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/d1nbwdqn/air-quality-annual-report-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

this will be expected to worsen air quality within Witney, putting pressure on the existing AQMA which may not then be in a position to meet its NO_2 targets. As such, Option 3 could be identified as the worst performing option as increased development will bring a greater number of vehicles and associated emissions expected to put pressure on the existing Witney AQMA. However, existing transport infrastructure will provide access to sustainable transport choices and potentially reduce reliance on private car use. Overall, a major negative impact for air quality is most likely under Option 3.

B.2.6.4 Option 4 seeks to locate development in and around Carterton. Whilst concentrating all development to meet the residual housing need and associated employment growth in and around one centre will increase the volumes of traffic passing through Carterton, as well as on the nearby A40 and through surrounding settlements such as Shilton, Carterton does not contain a designated AQMA. Furthermore, existing transport infrastructure within Carterton will provide residents with access to sustainable transport choices and could reduce the reliance on private car use. As a result, this is less likely to exacerbate existing poor air quality than Option 3. On balance, a minor negative impact for air quality is anticipated under Option 4.

B.2.6.5 Option 5 seeks to disperse growth more evenly throughout West Oxfordshire including at rural service centres and larger villages, as well as at major service centres. Option 5 is likely to locate residents in areas with limited access to sustainable transport (see **section B.2.11** – SA Objective 11 Transport and Accessibility). Poor access to sustainable transport options is likely to increase the reliance on private vehicles, which will be expected to result in adverse effects associated with higher emissions levels. Overall, a minor negative impact for air quality is anticipated under Option 5.

B.2.6.6 The development of a new settlement through Option 6 could provide opportunities to reduce some of the impacts of air pollution caused by development, through locating and designing main roads within the new settlement away from proposed residential development to avoid exposure to pollutants. The new settlement should also be planned to avoid congestion that would prevent pollution hotspots. Adopting principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood will also encourage integrated active travel and sustainable modes of travel, which will reduce the need for private car use and potentially reduce transport related pollutants. Furthermore, through providing electric vehicle (EV) charging points and associated infrastructure to support the uptake in EVs, air quality could be further enhanced through reducing emissions of harmful pollutants such as NO_2 and particulate matter. Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option for air quality as it will likely incorporate sustainable and active travel routes, minimising the use of private vehicles through the potential to co-locate key services and facilities within a sustainable distance. Overall, a negligible impact on air quality is identified.

B.2.6.7 Option 7 seeks to focus development within public transport corridors, predominantly along the A40, Cotswold and Cherwell railway lines. As noted within **paragraph B.2.11.3** the A40 is undergoing significant improvements, including improved public transport services and links to the emerging West Oxfordshire railway corridor. Focussing development on these locations will be expected to result in an uptake in public transport use with bus routes into main service centres, such as Witney, Carterton and Burford, as well as accessible train services into Oxford and beyond. Whilst this is expected to increase the use of public transport and reduce emissions, it will not eliminate the use of private cars and associated air pollutants and has the potential to contribute to additional traffic along the A40. Overall, a minor negative impact for air quality is anticipated under Option 7.

B.2.6.8 The hybrid approach under Option 8 distributes growth across main service centres, smaller service centres, and selected villages with rail connections such as Tackley and Kingham. By directing a substantial proportion of growth to Carterton and other well-connected locations, Option 8 is likely to benefit from access to sustainable transport and lower existing congestion, helping to reduce reliance on private vehicles. Overall, the approach is likely to perform slightly better than Options 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7, but not as well as Option 6. A minor negative impact on air quality is anticipated under Option 8.

Table B.2.6: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 6 – Air quality*

SA 6 – Air quality	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	--	-	-	0	-	-

B.2.6.9 **Option 6 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to air quality, assuming that this can become a self-sustaining settlement that will incorporate sustainable and active travel routes, minimising the use of private vehicles through the potential to co-locate residential growth with employment opportunities, key services and facilities within a sustainable distance. It would be closely followed by **Option 7** and **Option 8**, given the focus of development in public transport corridors and well-connected settlements respectively, with likely lower per capita emissions.

B.2.6.10 **Option 3 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to air quality as increased development will bring a greater number of vehicles and associated emissions expected to put pressure on the existing Witney AQMA.

B.2.7 SA Objective 7 – Water

B.2.7.1 There are several watercourses running though West Oxfordshire including the Rivers Evenlode, Windrush, Glyme, Shill Brook and their tributaries, as well as the River Thames flowing along the southern border of the plan area. Increased development has the potential to impact on the bed and banks of watercourses, as well as cause pollution to waterbodies and groundwater resources. New development will also result in the production of wastewater and as such it is necessary to ensure there is capacity for treating and holding wastewater.

B.2.7.2 West Oxfordshire is an area of 'water stress' and Thames Water's latest Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2024[37] forecasts potential shortages of water during the Plan period. In terms of environmental capacity, the Environment Agency's catchment data explorer[38] suggests that most of the watercourses in the study area have 'poor' ecological status and 'fail' with regard to chemical status. In terms of the Sewage Treatment Works serving the area, a number have been operating outside of their permits in recent years. Thames Water has acknowledged that Bampton, Carterton, Woodstock, Chipping Norton and Witney along with Church Hanborough STWs all fall into this category.

[37] Thames Water (2024). Thames Water Resources Management Plan 2024. Available at: https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/water-resources [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[38] Environment Agency (2025) Catchment Data Explorer: Thames River Basin District. Available at: https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/6 [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

B.2.7.3 Through Options 1 and 2, the majority of development will be concentrated at the main service centres within West Oxfordshire. The main service centres, including Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, are more likely to already have relevant water-related infrastructure in place, such as for wastewater treatment, although expansions may be needed to accommodate growth. Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton all have watercourses running through or around the settlements and as such the watercourses are likely to experience higher volumes of pollutants from the construction and tenure of development. In the WODC area there is a section of SPZ3 which lies to the east of Chipping Norton. Development in and around the SPZ3 in Chipping Norton has the potential to pollute the groundwater at this location. Therefore, a minor negative impact on water resources and water quality is anticipated for Options 1 and 2.

B.2.7.4 Under Options 3 and 4 developments will be focussed on Witney and Carterton respectively. The River Windrush and several of its tributaries run through and around Witney, with the Shill, Kencot and Highmoor Brook running around Carterton. Development at these two locations respectively will likely result in increased levels of pollutants being released into the watercourses. Additionally, concentrating this volume of development at one place will also be expected to place pressure on existing wastewater treatment and holding facilities, which is indicated at Witney where the sewage treatment works are undergoing upgrades to accommodate increases in flow[39]. Options 3 and 4 can therefore be identified as the worst performing where development will be expected to worsen the quality of existing watercourses as well as placing pressure on wastewater treatment and holding facilities. As such, a minor negative impact on water resources and water quality will be anticipated for Options 3 and 4.

B.2.7.5 Option 5 sets out a dispersed pattern of development. This will involve some development being located in major service settlements, rural service centres and larger villages. Dispersing development across different settlements of varying sizes alleviates pressure on any single settlement and surrounding watercourses, as well as spreading the demand on wastewater infrastructure. This said, with a dispersed development pattern it will be more likely for a greater number of watercourses to be affected with potential for adverse impacts in relation to the bed, banks and quality of the watercourse. As such, a minor negative impact on watercourses and water quality will be expected for Option 5.

B.2.7.6 Option 6 provides opportunities to mitigate impacts on water quality through the early design phases of the new settlement. Mitigation measures to avoid water pollution could be achieved through appropriate management of construction and incorporation of sustainable drainage and GI to reduce impacts during the operation of the development. However, the large scale of development in one area is more likely to result in the requirement for further and separate wastewater treatment and holding facilities to accommodate the capacity needed to support the anticipated large-scale growth. Option 6 could be identified as the best performing option where a new settlement can be located in areas of low flood risk as well as incorporating key design elements which will support natural water flows and functions, including effective drainage and increased rates of infiltration through the use of SuDs and GI. Overall, a minor negative impact for water quality and water resources is anticipated for Option 6.

[39] Thames Water (2023) West Oxfordshire District Council's Waterways Day. Available at: https://westoxon.gov.uk/media/55bbavqm/thames-water-presentation-1.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

B.2.7.7 Option 7 seeks to place development in public transport corridors. There are several watercourses which intersect or run near to the A40, such as the River Windrush and its tributaries, as well as Chill, Limb, Shill and Kencot Brooks. Development in these locations is likely to result in adverse effects on watercourses where pollution, such as from emissions associated with traffic on the A40, is likely to worsen the quality of these watercourses. Despite this, distributing development across a greater number of locations is less likely to place pressure on a finite number of wastewater treatment and holding facilities and as such is less likely to cause further issues, such as overflow at peak times. Overall, a minor negative impact on water quality and water resources is likely under Option 7.

B.2.7.8 Option 8 distributes development across main service centres, smaller service centres, and selected villages with rail connections. While the majority of growth at main service centres may increase pressures on local watercourses and wastewater infrastructure, the more modest levels of development at smaller settlements spread potential impacts across a wider area, reducing pressure on any single location. As a result, Option 8 is likely to perform slightly better than Options 1-5 and 7, where either concentrated growth or widespread dispersal may place greater pressure on individual watercourses or treatment facilities. Although Option 8 will potentially include a new settlement at Carterton, the option as a whole may offer fewer opportunities to fully incorporate sustainable drainage and wastewater management measures from the outset, unlike Option 6, which involves a purpose-built large-scale settlement. Overall, a minor negative impact on water resources and water quality is anticipated under Option 8.

Table B.2.7: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 7 – Water*

SA 7 – Water	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

B.2.7.9 Based on the limited available information, **Option 6 could be identified as the best performing** with regard to water option where a new settlement can incorporate key design elements which will support natural water flows and functions, including effective drainage and increased rates of infiltration through the use of SuDs and GI.

B.2.7.10 **Options 3 and 4 emerge as the worst performing options** with regard to water where development will be expected to worsen the quality of existing watercourses as well as placing pressure on wastewater treatment and holding facilities.

B.2.8 SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste

B.2.8.1 West Oxfordshire is predominantly rural, meaning the large-scale development at any of the eight options will likely result in the loss of undeveloped land to some extent. The district encompasses extensive areas of high-quality agricultural land, with approximately 84% classified as Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grades 1, 2, and 3. Grades 1, 2 and potentially 3 (if found to be sub-grade 3a) represent the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Grade 1 represents the highest and most excellent quality. While most of the district falls under Grade 3, there are smaller portions of Grade 2 in the south, and a small portion of Grade 1 within the west.

B.2.8.2 Development associated with any of the eight options has potential to lead to a significant loss of undeveloped land, including BMV agricultural land. This may have significant adverse effects on soil resources, such as direct soil loss from excavation, compaction, increased erosion, structural degradation, nutrient depletion, and heightened risks of pollution or contamination during construction. The resulting loss of soil and its ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and water filtration, is considered permanent and irreversible.

B.2.8.3 Options 2, 3, 4 and 8 are likely to result in a relatively lesser impact on soil resources across the district due to the urban focus of development and therefore greater likelihood for higher density development, and potentially more opportunities than the other options for use of PDL. Furthermore, areas such as Witney and Carterton both contain pockets of lower quality Grade 4 ALC land and Carterton also includes areas of non-agricultural land, which could be developed, protecting BMV agricultural land. Option 4 could be identified as the best performing option with regard to natural resources as it could develop on non-agricultural land and lower quality Grade 4 ALC land, protecting BMV agricultural land. Option 6, and to a lesser extent Option 8, could provide opportunity to incorporate GI into the proposed new settlement(s). Preserving areas of undeveloped land and establishing robust GI networks which are critical for effective surface water drainage and preventing soil erosion. These measures also play a key role in maintaining ecological networks, which are integral to supporting essential soil functions.

B.2.8.4 Options 1 and 7 could lead to similar effects as Options 2, 3, 4 and 8, however the loss of undeveloped land is likely to be more pronounced owing to the relatively higher proportion of growth directed towards smaller and more rural settlements. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to natural resources, as it will disperse development across the district's rural areas. Losses of soil will be widespread rather than concentrated in specific areas as expected through the alternative six options, which could result in cumulative impacts on ecosystem services and ecological networks throughout the district. Overall, due to the large-scale growth anticipated at all eight options and the large extent of Grade 3 ALC and Grade 2 ALC land across the district, significant losses of undeveloped land and BMV agricultural land are anticipated.

B.2.8.5 On balance, due to the potential for greater use of PDL through development under Options 2, 3, 4 and 8, and potential GI provision through Option 6 and 8, these five options have potential for a minor negative impact on BMV soil and natural resources within the district. A major negative impact on BMV soil and natural resources is identified for Options 1, 5 and 7.

B.2.8.6 It is recommended that soil surveys are conducted to identify the presence of Grade 3a and 3b land under the ALC system. These subgrades distinguish between good quality agricultural land (3a) and moderate quality agricultural land (3b). The insights from soil surveys support evaluating development impacts on soil health, ecosystem services, and natural capital. Additionally, soil surveys can guide site layouts, ensuring the retention and optimal use of higher-grade soils. For instance, these soils could be retained for community purposes, such as allotments, to preserve and promote long-term soil productivity.

B.2.8.7 In 2023/2024, a total of 43,160 tonnes of household waste was collected in West Oxfordshire[40], with 57% diverted for reuse, recycling, or composting. It is assumed that new residents will have an annual waste production in line with the national average of 377kg per person. Development through any of the eight options is expected to result in a significant increase in household waste, and potentially more diverse waste products associated with employment growth, placing greater strain on existing waste management infrastructure. This will also challenge the Council's collaborative target with Oxfordshire local authorities to achieve a 70% recycling and composting rate for household waste by 2030[41].

B.2.8.8 Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 will locate development in areas with good links to transport infrastructure and will therefore be likely to provide better sustainable access to waste infrastructure. The development of a new settlement through Option 6 (and to a slightly lesser extent under Option 8) is also likely to include the provision of appropriate waste management infrastructure and adopt design principles that locate development within a sustainable distance to local services, which could include waste infrastructure, such as different recycling points. Option 5 will look to disperse development rurally and therefore locate development in areas with poor transport links and therefore more limited opportunities to access waste infrastructure and recycling facilities. There is little separating the performance of the options in terms of waste alone, for the purpose of this high-level assessment.

Table B.2.8: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste*

SA8 – Natural resources and waste	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	--	-	-	-	--	-	--	-

B.2.8.9 **Option 4 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to natural resources as it could develop on non-agricultural land and lower quality Grade 4 ALC land, protecting BMV agricultural land. This is likely to be followed by Option 8, given that this option also directs a significant proportion of growth to the Carterton area.

B.2.8.10 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to natural resources. Option 5 will look to disperse development across the district's rural areas. Losses of soil will be widespread rather than concentrated in specific areas as expected through the alternative six options, which could result in cumulative impacts on ecosystem services and ecological networks throughout the district.

B.2.8.11 There is little separating the eight options in terms of waste alone, for the purpose of this high-level assessment.

[40] DEFRA (2025). Local authority collected waste generation annual results 2023/24. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[41] West Oxfordshire District Council. Requirements for refuse and recycling provision at new developments. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/gjyfjvyk/waste-and-recycling-criteria-for-new-developments.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

B.2.9 SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality

B.2.9.1 In August 2025, the average house price in West Oxfordshire was £435,000, reflecting a 7.2% increase from August 2024. This rise surpassed the South East region's average increase of 1.8% over the same period[42]. Additionally, first-time buyers in the district faced higher costs compared to the previous year. National and sub-regional housing objectives emphasise improving housing affordability, ensuring high-quality housing, fostering market stability, enhancing choice, and aligning housing supply locations with accessibility and economic development patterns.

B.2.9.2 According to the latest standard method figure, the housing need for the district is at least 905 dwellings per annum (c.16,290 homes for the 18-year period 2025-2043). All eight options will significantly contribute to the identified housing need, with each being capable of delivering the entire residual housing need of 8,000 homes (accounting for existing planning permissions, adopted local plan allocations and windfall allowance). As a result of the development at any of the eight options, increased affordability and a greater mix of housing may be provided.

B.2.9.3 Development at Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will locate development in and around the existing urban areas. Development within urban areas will help to provide residents and particularly younger people with access to the housing market and facilitate the co-location of housing and jobs and potentially preventing out commuting which (as discussed further in **paragraph B.2.13.2**) is an ongoing issue within the district. Although West Oxfordshire is among the least deprived districts in the country, significant areas of the district face challenges with the 'barriers to housing and services' domain according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)[43], including challenges with housing affordability. This includes areas surrounding Carterton, Witney and Chipping Norton. Development within these more deprived areas will increase the affordability of homes and could result in residents staying in areas longer, fostering a sense of community and improving social cohesion. Option 3 could be identified as the best performing option with regard to housing and equality as development will be focused within the district's most deprived areas, of which Witney contains more than Carterton and Chipping Norton. Overall, a major positive impact on housing provision and equality is identified for these five options.

B.2.9.4 Development at Option 7 will locate housing along the A40 and other public transport corridors. Broadly, this approach will provide potential to position development close to essential services and job opportunities which are accessible via public transport. Overall, a major positive impact on housing provision is identified for Option 7. Option 8, with its emphasis on growth around main settlements and smaller centres with rail connections, is similarly likely to provide housing close to services and transport.

B.2.9.5 Option 6 (and to a slightly lesser extent, Option 8) presents an opportunity to design the new settlement to meet the varied needs of residents. This includes providing high-quality, appropriately sized homes, affordable housing, supported living arrangements, as well as single and multiple occupancy residences that address diverse accessibility requirements. Delivering high-quality placemaking will be crucial, therefore development should make

[42] ONS (2025). Housing prices in West Oxfordshire. Available at: www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/housingpriceslocal/E07000181/# [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[43] MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Technical report. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8b387740f0b609909b5908/IoD2019_Technical_Report.pdf [Date accessed 29/10/25]

use of the National Design Guide[44] which sets out ways to plan for a well-designed connected network and also the Oxfordshire County Council Street Design Guide[45] to make sure development contributes to social cohesion. By focusing development in a single location, Option 6 offers the potential to create a cohesive, well-integrated community. However, development concentrated in one location could result in social inequalities in other areas of the district, in contrast to Option 8 where the more dispersed approach may provide more flexibility. Overall, a major positive impact on housing provision and equality is identified for Option 6.

B.2.9.6 Option 5 looks to disperse development across rural locations within West Oxfordshire. Locating development too thinly across rural areas could have implications in terms of the coordination and delivery of key infrastructure. Furthermore, the most deprived areas within the district are within urban areas (see **paragraph B.2.9.3**) and therefore developing in rural areas could exacerbate existing social inequalities. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to housing and equality as dispersed development across rural locations could result in implications on the delivery of key infrastructure and direct development away from the most deprived areas. Nevertheless, overall, a major positive impact on housing provision is identified for Option 5.

Table B.2.9: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality*

SA9 – Housing and equality	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++

B.2.9.7 Although all options will deliver a similar number of homes, **Option 3 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to housing and equality as development will be focused within the district's most deprived areas where the greatest benefits for delivering a range of housing and addressing inequalities could be achieved. Option 8, with its balanced approach of focusing growth around main settlements and smaller, rail-connected villages, is likely to perform closely behind, offering accessibility to housing in well-connected areas, while mitigating the risk of exacerbating inequalities in rural areas.

B.2.9.8 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to housing and equality as dispersed development across rural locations could result in implications on the delivery of key infrastructure and direct development away from the most deprived areas.

B.2.10 SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing

B.2.10.1 The nearest A&E facilities to West Oxfordshire are located at the John Radcliffe Hospital approximately 10km east of the district, Horton General Hospital approximately 9km north of the district, and the Great Western Hospital approximately 17km south of the district. According to data provided by WODC, there are 13 GP surgeries within the district. Additionally, the district hosts two community hospitals: Witney Community Hospital, which

[44] DLUHC (2021). National Design Guide. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[45] Oxfordshire County Council (2021). Street Design Guide. Available at: https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s66322/Street%20Design%20Guide.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

offers rehabilitation and palliative care, and Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital, which provides outpatient and maternity services. Development at any of the eight options could place additional pressure on existing healthcare facilities.

B.2.10.2 Eight leisure facilities serve local communities within the district, alongside various open spaces, including allotments, amenity greenspaces, parks, recreation grounds, natural greenspaces (both accessible and private), and areas designed for children and young people. The anticipated population growth resulting from any of the eight options will place additional strain on these leisure facilities and open spaces. Without careful planning, this could hinder the objectives outlined in the West Oxfordshire Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (2022)[46] to protect, enhance, and provide outdoor sports facilities.

B.2.10.3 Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will locate residents in urban areas centred around Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. Option 3 (Witney Focus) could be identified as the best performing option with regard to health and wellbeing owing to the number of healthcare facilities, leisure facilities and variety of open spaces which could be more likely to meet the demands of residents and future development. Witney includes various healthcare facilities such as Deer Park Medical Centre and Windrush Medical Practice. Carterton includes two healthcare centres, Carterton Health Centre and Broadshires Health Centre. Chipping Norton contains Chipping Norton Health Centre to the east. Furthermore, the presence of multiple leisure facilities in these urban areas further supports the health and wellbeing of residents. Development associated with Options 1, 2, 3, 4 or 8 will be expected to locate residents in areas that are well served by healthcare facilities and leisure facilities. Options 1 (Hierarchical Approach), 2 (Main Service Centre Focus) and 8 (Hybrid Approach) may provide the greatest variation in service availability across the different locations.

B.2.10.4 The five options (Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8) will also provide residents with sustainable access to open space which is known to have physical and mental health benefits and can encourage uptake in nature-based activities such as walking, cycling, community gardening and food-growing projects[47]. Witney includes various playing fields and parks, including the Witney Lake and Country Park, and other recreation grounds. Carterton includes sports pitches at Monahan Way and the Kilkenny Lane Country Park located to the north of the town. Chipping Norton provides some playing fields and recreational grounds. The Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (2022)[48] sets out action plans for open space sites including those identified within Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton and aims to protect and enhance these sites through improvements to pitch quality, maintenance works and increased capacity at the sites to reduce overplay and pressures on existing sites. Overall, through providing residents with sustainable access to healthcare, leisure facilities and open space, a major positive impact on health and wellbeing is identified for these five options.

B.2.10.5 Option 7 will focus growth along the A40 corridor. Healthcare facilities located within close proximity to the A40 include 'Cogges Surgery' in Witney and 'Broadshires Health Centre' in Carterton. The A40 will provide sustainable travel options to access surrounding

[46] West Oxfordshire District Council (2022). West Oxfordshire Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan Report, February 2022. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2041/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[47] Natural England (2025). Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Principles/WhyPrinciples.aspx [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[48] Ibid.

healthcare facilities. Development at Option 7 will also locate development in areas that are served by leisure centres at Witney and Carterton which are relatively accessible through public transport links. Development through Option 7 will locate residents in areas with a variety of open space, including Carterton and Witney as outlined in **paragraph B.2.10.3** above. Overall, a major positive impact is identified for Option 7 as development will be located in areas with sustainable access to healthcare facilities, leisure facilities and open space.

B.2.10.6 Option 6 provides opportunities to deliver healthcare facilities, leisure facilities and open space within a new settlement alongside housing. The provision of new health and leisure services would help to alleviate pressures on existing infrastructure in the district. Furthermore, the design of the new settlement as a well-planned neighbourhood aligned with the 20-minute neighbourhood concept[49] is anticipated to improve access to local services, including healthcare facilities and leisure facilities. Designing the new settlement to incorporate various GI such as natural and semi-natural greenspaces, play areas, and recreational spaces will provide residents with sustainable access to a wide range of open spaces. It is recommended that healthcare facilities, leisure facilities, open space and appropriate transport infrastructure are established prior to the commencement of development to guarantee residents can access local services through the most sustainable means available. Overall, through potential infrastructure provision and co-locating local services, a major positive impact on health and wellbeing is identified for Option 7.

B.2.10.7 Option 5 looks to disperse development across rural locations within West Oxfordshire. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to health and wellbeing. Rural areas across the have relatively limited access to healthcare and leisure facilities, which are predominantly concentrated in urban centres. Consequently, development through Option 5 is likely to locate residents in areas with restricted access to these essential services. However, rural locations offer excellent access to the surrounding countryside and a variety of open spaces, including historically significant RPGs such as Ditchley Park, Cornbury Park and Blenheim Palace. On balance, despite providing sustainable access to open spaces, a minor negative impact is identified for Option 5 on health and wellbeing due to poor access to healthcare and leisure facilities.

Table B.2.10: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing*

SA10 – Health and wellbeing	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	++	++	++	++	-	++	++	++

B.2.10.8 Without detail on capacity of healthcare infrastructure, **Option 3 could potentially be the best performing option** with regard to health and wellbeing owing to the number of healthcare facilities, leisure facilities and variety of open spaces within Witney which could be more likely to meet the demands of future development.

[49] TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

B.2.10.9 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to health and wellbeing owing to the rural nature of development proposed under Option 5 and the limited sustainable access to healthcare and leisure facilities.

B.2.11 SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility

B.2.11.1 West Oxfordshire's strategic road network includes the A40, which passes through the district from east to west, complemented by routes such as the A424, A4095, A415, A44, and A361. A network of B roads and smaller roads ensures connectivity among the district's rural communities. The district benefits from excellent rail links, with eight stations situated along two major railway lines, the Cotswold and Cherwell railway lines. Due to the area's predominantly rural character, access to bus services is variable. Nonetheless, frequent bus routes efficiently connect Witney and Carterton to Oxford City. Additionally, the western part of the district features several National Cycle Network routes, facilitating active travel options.

B.2.11.2 Development at any of the eight options could potentially enhance opportunities to deliver transport infrastructure. This might include establishing new bus routes, increasing service frequency, and upgrading the PRoW and cycle networks.

B.2.11.3 Option 7 will focus growth along the A40 corridor. The A40 corridor serves as a vital connection to Oxford and is undergoing significant upgrades, including improved junctions to streamline travel between Witney and the A40, although it is currently severely congested, particularly at peak travel times. Oxfordshire County Council is also continuing with further improvements to the A40 to support dedicated bus lanes between Eynsham Park-and-Ride and Wolvercote, as well as pedestrian crossings and shared-use pathways, aiming to improve safety for walkers and cyclists between Witney and Oxford[50]. There is potential for reinstatement of a rail connection from Carterton to Oxford via Witney and Eynsham; should the rail project, or a more general 'multi-modal transport corridor' proposition be realised in this location, development here would benefit from additional sustainable transport options. Short and potential longer-term improvements along the A40 corridor will provide a multitude of benefits including reduced emissions of harmful pollutants by alleviating congestion (see **paragraph B.2.6.7**), increased sustainable travel options and increased access to employment opportunities (see **paragraph B.2.13.5**). Development at Option 7 will locate residents at the centre of an interconnected transport network offering diverse sustainable travel options, assuming that high frequency and affordable public transport links can be secured. Overall, a major positive impact on transport and accessibility is identified for Option 7; although, this will need careful monitoring to ensure effectiveness of sustainable transport schemes in alleviating congestion along the A40 corridor.

B.2.11.4 Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will locate the majority of development within urban areas and well-connected settlements. These areas are well-served by existing transport infrastructure, including the A40 at Witney and Carterton and the A44 at Chipping Norton. Furthermore, development through these five options will provide good access to public transport services, which are widely accessible within the urban centres of the district.

[50] Oxfordshire County Council (2024) Future transport projects. A40 improvements. Available at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/roadworks/future-transport-projects/a40-improvements#:~:text=The%20new%20scheme%20connects%20the,A40%20between%20Witney%20and%20Oxford. [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

Option 8 in particular focuses growth only around the major centres, and smaller centres and villages that have rail connections. All of these options will benefit from the proposed enhancements to the A40 like Option 7. The A44 is also to be developed as part of the countywide Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022-2050[51], which will provide increased sustainable transport options for residents within Chipping Norton, including new park and ride sites, enhancements to PRoW and cycle networks, new slip roads and junction upgrades to improve traffic flow and increase the uptake in active modes of travel[52]. On balance, a major positive impact on transport and accessibility is identified for Option 8, alongside a minor positive impact for Options 2, 3 and 4, assuming that public transport interventions will help to overcome road capacity challenges. An overall negligible impact is identified for Option 1 that will include a proportion of growth in villages that may have fewer connections.

B.2.11.5 Option 6 presents the opportunity to incorporate effective transport-related design into the early development phases of a new settlement. Designing new settlements with the 20-minute neighbourhood concept[53] in mind promotes walkable communities that are safe and easily accessible for everyone. Creating neighbourhoods with high-quality links to local services encourages travel on foot or bicycle and will further encourage healthy lifestyles. Development should make use of the National Design Guide[54] which sets out ways to plan for a well-designed connected network which provides residents with choice in how to make their journeys and highlights the importance of active travel and sustainable transport infrastructure. It is recommended that transport infrastructure is established prior to the commencement of development to guarantee access to local services through the most sustainable means available. It would also be vital that the new settlement is in a location that allows for connections to public transport corridors linking to the wider area. Overall, a major positive impact on transport and accessibility is identified for Option 6.

B.2.11.6 Option 5 focuses development in rural areas, where there is likely to be limited access to existing transport infrastructure. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to transport and accessibility. West Oxfordshire is a highly rural district reflected with a low population density of 160 people per square kilometre[55]. Option 5 will locate development in rural areas that are generally served by less frequent public transport routes and limited rail access, resulting in greater reliance on private car use. Overall, a minor negative impact on transport and accessibility is identified for Option 5.

[51] Oxfordshire County Council (2022) Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022-2050. July 2022. Available at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-connecting-oxfordshire/LocalTransportandConnectivityPlan.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[52] Ibid.

[53] TCPA (2021) 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[54] DLUHC (2021) National Design Guide. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[55] ONS (2021) Population density. Census Maps. Available at www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/population-density/population-density/persons-per-square-kilometre [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

Table B.2.11: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility*

SA11 – Transport and accessibility	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	0	+	+	+	-	++	++	++

B.2.11.7 **Option 7 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to transport and accessibility. Development at Option 7 will locate development at the centre of an interconnected transport network offering diverse sustainable travel options.

B.2.11.8 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to transport and accessibility. Option 5 will focus development in rural areas with likely limited access to existing transport infrastructure.

B.2.12 SA Objective 12 – Education

B.2.12.1 West Oxfordshire accommodates 58 primary schools and nine secondary schools, offering residents a variety of education facilities and opportunities. Educational attainment in the district is high, with 62% of residents holding a degree-level qualification or higher and 83% possessing two or more A-levels or equivalent advanced qualifications[56].

B.2.12.2 Further education options within the district are limited. Sixth form provision is available at secondary schools throughout the district, while college needs are addressed by the Witney Campus of Abingdon and Witney College. While there are no universities in West Oxfordshire itself, the district benefits from being within commuting distance of Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University, and the Royal Agricultural College.

B.2.12.3 Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will locate development in areas well served by existing transport infrastructure and a range of education facilities. Option 3 could be identified as the best performing option with regard to education as Witney provides the greatest range of education, including primary schools such as 'Tower Hill Community Primary School' and 'Queen Emma's Primary School', secondary schools such as 'Henry Box School' and 'Woodgreen Comprehensive School' and schools that meet specific needs such as 'Springfield School'. Witney is also well served by existing transport infrastructure, with the A40 providing links to wider education opportunities including higher education opportunities within Oxford such as Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University. However, the large quantum of growth anticipated across these five options is likely to increase pressures on educational facilities, particularly at Carterton and Witney, where schools are already over-subscribed[57]. Option 8, with its mix of urban development and some dispersed growth to larger villages, may also alleviate some of these pressures by providing opportunities for new schools in less congested areas, while still benefiting from the connectivity of urban centres. On balance, minor positive impacts are identified for Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 on education.

[56] Nomis (2024) Labour Market Profile – West Oxfordshire. Qualifications (Jan 2024-Dec 2024). Available at: www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157327/report.aspx#tabquals [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[57] Oxfordshire County Council (2024) Pupil Place Plan. 2023/24 – 2027/28. January 2024. Available at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/our-work-schools/Pupil-Place-Plan.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

B.2.12.4 Option 7 will focus development along the A40 corridor, the primary bus route in West Oxfordshire. The south of Witney is located adjacent to the A40, and Carterton is located south of the A40 which both accommodate a large proportion of West Oxfordshire's education facilities. Furthermore, development along the A40 corridor will also provide links to primary, secondary and higher education facilities in Oxford such as Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University. This will be likely to provide sustainable transport choices to access a range of educational facilities. Overall, a minor positive impact on education is identified for Option 7.

B.2.12.5 All options will have potential to incorporate new educational facilities. However, Option 6 presents a particularly significant opportunity to establish new schools within the new settlement, ensuring sustainable access for residents. The most feasible way to ensure sufficient access to schools is by developing in areas that are located within a sustainable distance to current educational facilities. However, through liaison with the education authority (Oxfordshire County Council), the expansion of existing schools and development of new schools should be explored to ensure that development does not increase pressure at existing schools. Development of a new school could provide modern facilities and access to the most up to date technology, promoting digital literacy and innovative learning methods. Planning new settlements to integrate principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept[58] will facilitate walkable neighbourhoods that are safe and highly accessible to all members of the community, improving access to local services such as educational facilities. Overall, a minor positive impact on education is identified at Option 6 due to the increased opportunity to provide educational facilities at a new settlement and locate residents within sustainable distances to schools.

B.2.12.6 Option 5 will direct development to rural locations, locating residents in areas poorly served by existing education and transport infrastructure. Option 5 is likely the worst performing option with regard to education, as most secondary and further educational facilities are concentrated around existing urban areas. Dispersed development may reduce pressures on smaller settlements that include primary schools, which are likely to have limited capacity. Furthermore, there are over 4,600 homes and businesses within rural areas of the district that are without superfast broadband, hindering access to online learning and research. The ongoing partnership between WODC and Gigaclear[59] is currently working to address these issues and The Digital Infrastructure Programme[60] deployed by Oxfordshire County Council aims to improve digital infrastructure across the county, particularly connecting remote locations and could therefore reduce technology gaps and lessen inequalities. On balance, a negligible impact on education is identified for Option 5.

[58] TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[59] Gigaclear (2025). West Oxfordshire. Available at: https://gigaclear.com/west-oxfordshire [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[60] Oxfordshire County Council (2024). Digital Infrastructure Programme. Available at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/digital-infrastructure [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

Table B.2.12: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 12 - Education*

SA12 – Education	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+

B.2.12.7 **Option 3 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to education as Witney provides the greatest range of education through existing infrastructure.

B.2.12.8 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to education. The majority of educational facilities are located within and around existing urban areas, therefore rural areas are without access to a variety of educational opportunities.

B.2.13 SA Objective 13 – Economy and employment

B.2.13.1 West Oxfordshire District boasts a strong tourism industry, driven by renowned attractions including Blenheim Palace and historic market towns like Witney and Burford. The strategic location of the district offers valuable economic connections to Oxford City, Cherwell District, and the Vale of White Horse District. Key employment areas which drive the local industry include Oxford Science Park, RAF Brize Norton, Siemens, and Abbott.

B.2.13.2 However, a significant challenge to the district's economic growth is the high number of out-commuters, which hampers efforts to attract and retain large multinational businesses and expand employment opportunities. According to the 2021 Census data, it is estimated that 3,954 West Oxfordshire residents commute to Oxford, 2,542 commute to Cherwell, and 1,752 commute to the Vale of White Horse[61].

B.2.13.3 An increased population as a result of development under any of the eight options is expected to drive higher levels of spending within the district, thereby boosting the local economy and creating new job opportunities. Furthermore, a growing population will naturally lead to a larger pool of skilled workers, enhancing workforce diversity. While the large number of out-commuters means that the economic benefits of housing growth may not be fully retained within the district, some positive impacts are still anticipated.

B.2.13.4 Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will locate new development in areas well served by existing transport infrastructure, local services and employment opportunities. These options are likely to locate residents in areas with the greatest access to existing job opportunities and new employment floorspace. Carterton accounts for 24% of the district's economically active population, however only 13% of the district's total employment provision. In contrast, Witney represents 29% of the economically active population but holds 35% of the available jobs[62]. Therefore, Option 3 (Witney Focus) could perform slightly better in regard to access to employment compared to Option 4 (Carterton Focus). Options 1, 2 and 8, which direct a proportion of development to rural service centres and larger villages, may also help to maintain the economic vitality of smaller settlements, though residents in these areas could face more limited access to a wider range of employment opportunities.

[61] ONS (2023) Visualising people flows: An interactive introduction to Census 2021 origin-destination data. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusorigindestination/?utm#workplace [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[62] CAG Consultants (2015). West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/svvbpu22/west-oxfordshire-economic-snapshot-jan-2015.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

Option 8 would however ensure distribution of growth to larger villages only where they are served by rail connections, allowing sustainable transport options to access jobs further afield. Overall, the growth expected as a result of development at Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 will be likely to boost the local economy and result in a major positive impact.

B.2.13.5 Option 7 will focus development along the A40 corridor, the primary bus route in West Oxfordshire. Witney is located adjacent to the A40, and accounts for 35% of the district's employment provision, accounting for 47% of the district's employment in the retail sector[63]. Residents located along the A40 will be located in areas well served by existing transport infrastructure, and existing employment locations at Carterton, Witney and Eynsham. The A40 is also expecting major improvements between Eynsham and Oxford including infrastructure for bus travel, safe walking and cycling routes[64]. In addition to existing employment areas surrounding the A40, transport linkages will enable residents to pursue employment opportunities in Oxford. Oxford includes approximately 4,950 business, including major employers such as BMW, University of Oxford, Oxford University Press and Unipart Group of Companies[65]. Overall, Option 7 is likely to have a major positive impact on the economy and is identified as the best performing option for SA Objective 13.

B.2.13.6 Option 6 provides opportunities to boost the local economy and improve sustainable access to employment through the design and layout of a new settlement. Planning new settlements to support the 20-minute concept[66] will provide residents with sustainable access to employment opportunities. By co-locating residents with local services such as shops, it is likely that residents will shop locally and therefore help local businesses thrive. Furthermore, local businesses will be more likely to source their products from other local businesses, resulting in a multiplier effect, where locally spent money circulates. Development should also include provision of high-speed fibre internet to allow for home working and improved efficiency for local businesses. Employing the 20-minute neighbourhood concept will locate workers in areas that are walkable, and this could enhance quality of life and result in a better work-life balance and boost productivity levels. Overall, development at Option 6 provides opportunity to increase sustainable access to employment and boost the local economy through adopting the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. A major positive impact on the economy is identified.

B.2.13.7 Option 5 will direct development to rural locations where employment opportunities will be limited. Although there is potential for new employment growth to offset this to some extent, dispersal of residential and economic growth may lead to a mismatch between the skills of the workforce and the types of employment opportunities available in the local area. Option 5 could be identified as the worst performing option with regard to the economy. Residents will be reliant on the existing transport infrastructure to access further employment opportunities. It is recommended that improvements to existing transport

[63] Ibid.

[64] Oxfordshire County Council (2024). News. Funding agreed for major A40 improvements between Eynsham and Oxford. Available at: https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/funding-agreed-for-major-a40-improvements-between-eynsham-and-oxford/ [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[65] Oxford City Council (2024). Economic statistics. Available at: www.oxford.gov.uk/statistics-oxford/economic-statistics [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

[66] TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 29/10/25]

infrastructure are secured prior to development to ensure residents have access to a wide range of employment opportunities. Development at Option 5 could reduce outmigration to urban centres and boost the rural economy through the creation of additional jobs as a result of the large-scale development. Development within rural areas will also help support smaller settlements, keeping local commercial and retail services viable to residents. On balance, a minor positive impact is identified for Option 5 on the economy.

Table B.2.13: *Impact matrix of spatial options under SA Objective 13 – Economy and employment*

SA13 – Economy and employment	1 – Hierarchical Approach	2 – Main Service Centre Focus	3 – Witney Focus	4 – Carterton Focus	5 – Dispersed Growth	6 – New Settlement	7 – Public Transport Focus	8 – Hybrid Approach
SA Score	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	++

B.2.13.8 **Option 3 is identified as the best performing option** with regard to the economy and employment opportunities. Development through Option 3 is likely to locate residents in the areas with the greatest access to existing employment opportunities.

B.2.13.9 **Option 5 is identified as the worst performing option** with regard to the economy and employment opportunities. Residents will be reliant on the existing transport infrastructure to access further employment opportunities, and new local employment provision is unlikely to be as diverse in any one location than the other options.

B.3 Conclusions

B.3.1 Overview

B.3.1.1 **Table B.3.1** presents the high-level summary assessment scores for the eight spatial options, as detailed within the narrative assessment.

B.3.1.2 All of the eight spatial options evaluated in this assessment have benefits and limitations associated with their approach, some of which are not known with certainty at this high level of assessment. All of the options will support the provision of housing and employment growth in West Oxfordshire to meet the identified needs for the Plan period up to 2043.

B.3.1.3 For climate change mitigation (SA Objective 1) the best performing option is identified as Option 7 (Public Transport Focus), where supporting development in public transport corridors will encourage greater uptake in the use of sustainable and active modes of transport, closely followed by Option 6 (New Settlement) where self-containment can be maximised. Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) also performs well, due to its focus on growth in areas well-served by public transport, though it may require more detailed transport planning to fully realise its benefits. The best performing option under climate change adaptation (SA Objective 2) is identified as Option 6 (New Settlement), whereby the creation of one large, or two smaller new settlements will provide opportunities to incorporate climate adaptive design into the layout of the site, such as through the incorporation of SuDs, GI and green buffers, making a community more resilient to future pressures. Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) was identified as the worst performing option under both climate change mitigation and adaptation given the increased likelihood of losing GI and PDL, along with their associated ecosystem service functions.

B.3.1.4 Option 6 (New Settlement) is also identified as the best performing option with regard to air quality and water (SA Objectives 6 and 7). The potential to co-locate services and facilities as well as incorporating sustainable and active modes of travel will support lower levels of air pollutants which will be expected to limit adverse impacts to air and water quality. Options 7 (Public Transport Focus) and 8 (Hybrid Approach) also perform well, benefiting from directing growth to well-connected settlements, thereby lowering per capita emissions. For air quality, the worst performing option is identified as Option 3, and for water the worst performing options were both Options 3 and 4, as a result of increased pressures placed on watercourses, treatment facilities and the Witney AQMA.

B.3.1.5 The delivery of the residual housing requirement of c.8,000 homes will have potential to result in direct or indirect adverse effects on biodiversity designations in some form under any option. However, Option 6 (New Settlement) is identified as the best performing option as focussing development in a new settlement will provide the opportunity to consider impacts on biodiversity (SA Objective 3), as it provides the opportunity to plan holistically and consider biodiversity impacts from the outset. Option 8 also presents some similar opportunities, and is identified as the second-best performing option for biodiversity. Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) is identified as the worst performing option for biodiversity as it will disperse development across a wider area, leading to incremental and cumulative losses of habitats.

B.3.1.6 With regards to landscape and cultural heritage (SA Objectives 4 and 5) the best performing option is again identified as Option 6 (New Settlement), as it allows for strong placemaking and the potential to incorporate effective and appropriate design that integrates the new settlement into the surrounding landscape and can avoid the most sensitive landscape and heritage features. This would however need to be informed by site-specific appraisals to evaluate the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape. The worst performing option for landscape and cultural heritage is identified as Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) which is likely to have the most widespread and potentially cumulative adverse impacts on rural settlements, and their heritage assets, across West Oxfordshire.

B.3.1.7 With regards to natural resources (SA Objective 8), Option 4 (Carterton Focus) is identified as the best performing option as it is the most likely to protect BMV land through locating development on non-agricultural and lower quality Grade 4 ALC land. Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) follows closely behind, directing a significant proportion of growth to Carterton. The worst performing option identified was Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) as this is most likely to result in the greatest loss of previously undeveloped land and BMV land. Although, with regard to waste it was not possible to determine a worst performing option given the similar proposed volume of growth under all eight of the options.

B.3.1.8 In terms of housing and equality (SA Objective 9), the best performing option is identified as Option 3 (Witney Focus), as it will encourage development and investment within the district's most deprived areas, thus potentially helping to reduce inequalities. Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) performs closely behind, providing a balanced approach that delivers housing in both main settlements and smaller, rail-connected villages, which helps to mitigate inequalities in rural areas. Conversely, Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) has been identified as the worst performing option as it has potential to exacerbate inequalities through placing residents in areas which have more limited access to key services and facilities.

B.3.1.9 For transport and accessibility (SA Objective 11), the best performing option is identified as Option 7 (Public Transport Focus), which will be expected to provide access to sustainable and active modes of travel connecting to local services and amenities, as well as education facilities and employment opportunities. Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) also performs well, as it directs growth to settlements with good access to public transport. The worst performing option is identified as Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) as dispersing development will be less likely to place residents within sustainable access to public and active modes of transport.

B.3.1.10 Option 3 (Witney Focus) has been identified as the best performing option with regards to health and wellbeing, education, and economy and employment (SA Objectives 10, 12 and 13). Option 3's approach will provide access to a range of education facilities and employment opportunities within Witney itself, as well as beyond in Oxford which is accessible via bus and an emerging new rail link. Development within Witney is also anticipated to provide access to a range of healthcare and wellbeing facilities which will support healthy and active members of the community. Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) is identified as the worst performing option under health and wellbeing, education and economy and employment given that this approach will disperse development, making it more difficult for residents to easily and sustainably access healthcare, education and jobs.

B.3.1.11 Overall, Option 6 (New Settlement) emerges as the most frequent best performing option across the SA Objectives, although it should be acknowledged that this strategy would face significant challenges in terms of securing the necessary infrastructure, overcoming

planning and land acquisition constraints, and delivering growth within the Plan period. Similarly well-performing options include Option 3 (Witney Focus) (although Option 3 has also been identified as worst performing for two SA Objectives), Option 7 (Public Transport Focus), and Option 8 (Hybrid Approach) that notably performs second-best or amongst the top performing options across the SA Framework. Whereas, Option 5 (Dispersed Growth) has been identified to perform the worst across the widest range of SA Objectives.

Table B.3.1: *Overall impact matrix table of the eight spatial strategy options*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Spatial strategy option	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
1 – Hierarchical Approach	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	++	++	0	+	++
2 – Main Service Centre Focus	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	++	+	+	++
3 – Witney Focus	+	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	++	++	+	+	++
4 – Carterton Focus	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	++	+	+	++
5 – Dispersed Growth	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	++	-	-	0	+
6 – New Settlement	++	0	-	0	0	0	-	-	++	++	++	+	++
7 – Public Transport Focus	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	++	++	++	+	++
8 – Hybrid Approach	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	++	++	+	++

Appendix C: Site Assessment Methodology and Assumptions

Contents

Tables

C.1 Introduction

C.1.1 Overview

C.1.1.1 This appendix provides additional context to **Chapter 2** of the main Regulation 18 SA Report regarding the methodology used to assess reasonable alternative sites within the emerging WODC Local Plan.

C.1.1.2 Topic-specific methodologies have been established which reflect the differences between the SA Objectives and how different receptors should be considered in the appraisal process for reasonable alternative sites. There are also a number of assumptions and limitations noted within each of the following sections, which should be borne in mind when considering the assessment findings.

C.1.1.3 The topic-specific methodologies set out in **Table C.2.1** to **Table C.14.1** explain how the likely impact per receptor has been identified in line with the local context and the impact symbols presented in **Table 2.4** of the main Regulation 18 SA (see **Volume 1**).

C.1.1.4 All distances stated in site assessments are measured 'as the crow flies' from the closest point of the site/receptor in question, unless otherwise stated.

C.1.1.5 **Appendix D** sets out the appraisal of the reasonable alternative strategic sites, and **Appendix E** the appraisal of reasonable alternative non-strategic sites, which have been identified, described, and evaluated at the Regulation 18 stage. The appraisal evaluates the likely significant effects of each reasonable alternative against the 13 SA Objectives.

C.1.1.6 Post-mitigation assessments have been carried out, drawing on the provisions of emerging Local Plan policies, and presented in **Appendix G**.

C.1.1.7 The level of detail that can be expressed through the SA assessments depends on the level of detail provided associated with the part of the plan in question.

C.1.2 Using the SA Framework

C.1.2.1 The SA Framework, which is presented in its entirety in **Appendix A**, is comprised of the following SA Objectives:

1) **Climate change mitigation:** Minimise West Oxfordshire District's contributions towards the causes of climate change.
2) **Climate change adaptation:** Adapt to the anticipated levels of climate change.
3) **Biodiversity and geodiversity:** Conserve, enhance and restore the district's biodiversity and geodiversity
4) **Landscape:** Conserve, enhance and manage the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes.
5) **Cultural heritage:** Conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets and support the effective management of the historic environment.
6) **Air quality:** Protect and improve air quality, creating cleaner and healthier air.
7) **Water:** Maintain and improve water quality and ensure efficient use of water resources.
8) **Natural resources and waste:** Ensure efficient use of the district's soil and mineral resources and reduce waste.
9) **Housing and equality:** Provide affordable, high quality and environmentally sound housing for all, whilst reducing crime and social deprivation.

10) **Health and wellbeing:** Safeguard and improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities in health.
11) **Transport and accessibility:** Improve accessibility, increase the proportion of travel by sustainable modes, and reduce the need to travel.
12) **Education:** Increase access to education and improve attainment to develop and maintain a skilled workforce.
13) **Economy and employment:** Ensure sufficient employment land and premises are available to develop and support innovative and sustainable economic growth.

C.2 SA Objective 1: Climate Change Mitigation

C.2.1.1 The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate). It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. **Table C.2.1** sets out the proposed methodology to appraise the reasonable alternative options against SA Objective 1: Climate Change.

C.2.2 Increase in GHG emissions

C.2.2.1 The estimated carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions for WODC in 2023 was 448.1 kilo tonnes, with per capita emissions of 3.8 tonnes according to UK local authority CO_2 emissions data[1]. The majority of CO_2 emissions in West Oxfordshire arise from transport and domestic sources. Smaller proportions of other GHGs are recorded (61.9 kt CO_2e methane and 44.2 kt CO_2e nitrous oxide), the majority of which are attributable to agricultural sources and therefore largely outside of the scope of the Local Plan.

C.2.2.2 It is likely that new development proposed through the Local Plan will result in an increase in local GHG emissions due to the increase in the local population and the number of operating businesses. The increase in GHG emissions caused by new developments is often associated with impacts of the construction phase, the occupation and operation of homes and businesses, fuel consumption and increases in local road transport with associated emissions. This impact is considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

C.2.2.3 It should be noted that the appraisal of reasonable alternative sites is limited in its assessment of carbon / GHG emissions. The extent of impacts arising from development sites proposed for employment or non-residential end use will be dependent on the site-specific proposals and the nature of development, which is unknown at the time of assessment.

C.2.2.4 In the absence of site-specific carbon footprint data, and at this stage of the assessment process, the likely emissions arising from each reasonable alternative site is uncertain.

C.2.2.5 The incorporation of green infrastructure (GI) within developments presents several opportunities to mitigate climate change, for example, through providing natural cooling to combat the 'urban heat island' effect, reducing the effects of air pollution and providing more pleasant outdoor environments to encourage active travel[2]. Such opportunities will be evaluated through the policy assessments (see **Appendix F** of this document, and Appendix C of the Preferred Policy Options SA[3]).

[1] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2023. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023 [Date accessed: 06/08/25]

[2] TCPA (2023) What is Green Infrastructure? Available at: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/ [Date accessed: 25/11/24]

3 Lepus Consulting (2025) Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041: Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qi1puvnm/sustainability-appriasal-of-the-west-oxfordshire-local-plan-preferred-options-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

C.2.2.6 Climate change can also be assessed through looking at indicators such as potential increased congestion on roads, promoting sustainable and active modes of transport, and increased habitat fragmentation. These are assessed in other objectives such as biodiversity (SA Objective 3), air quality (SA Objective 6) and transport (SA Objective 11).

C.2.2.7 According to the Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment and Strategy (2016)[4], there are four large scale renewable energy generating facilities operating in the district including nine solar farms and one anaerobic digestion facility that are either operational or have been approved. This will significantly help to reduce emissions from new development in West Oxfordshire should this be incorporated into development proposals.

Table C.2.1: *SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation methodology*

SA1 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Likely impact on carbon emissions.	N/A	N/A	N/A	The likely emissions arising from each reasonable alternative site is uncertain	N/A	N/A

[4] LDA Design (2016) Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment and Strategy for West Oxfordshire, October 2016. Available at: www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ys2okqht/renewable-energy-and-low-carbon-energy-assessment-2016.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.3 SA Objective 2: Climate Change Adaptation

C.3.1.1 **Table C.3.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 2: Climate change adaptation.

C.3.1.2 It is assumed that development proposals will be in perpetuity, and it is therefore likely that development will be subject to the impacts of flooding at some point in the future, should it be situated on land at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, including through the Sequential Test.

C.3.1.3 Flood risk has potential to be mitigated through the incorporation of open spaces, multi-functional GI and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which reintroduce a natural water cycle pattern into urban environments. These systems provide vegetation and man-made channels which provide areas for floodwater to drain, slow runoff, and guide water to nearby watercourses, which can largely prevent the risk of flooding within areas of urban development.

C.3.2 Fluvial flooding

C.3.2.1 The level of fluvial flood risk present across the Plan area has been determined based on the Environment Agency's flood risk information[5], using the latest available national data[6], such that:

- **Flood Zone 3:** 1% or greater chance of flooding each year;
- **Flood Zone 2:** Between 0.1% - 1% chance of flooding each year; and
- **Flood Zone 1:** Less than 0.1% chance of flooding each year.

C.3.2.2 No data has been available at the time of writing to indicate the extent of Flood Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain) within West Oxfordshire. It is recommended that this is defined via a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) process, the outputs of which can be used to inform the SA at later stages.

C.3.2.3 It should be noted that the assessment is limited in terms of considering the impact of climate change on flood risk. At this stage, no data has been made available to inform the assessment of reasonable alternative sites regarding extents of flood risk in the future. It is recommended that the potential impacts of climate change and flood risk on development sites is considered through an SFRA.

[5] Environment Agency (2022) Flood risk and coastal change. Available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[6] Environment Agency (2025) Flood Map for Planning – Flood Zones. Available at: https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/04532375-a198-476e-985e-0579a0a11b47 [Date accessed: 13/05/25]

C.3.3 Surface water flooding

C.3.3.1 The level of surface water flood risk (SWFR) present across the Plan area has been determined based on Environment Agency data[7], such that:

- **High risk:** more than a 3.3% chance of flooding each year;
- **Medium risk:** between 1% and 3.3%; and
- **Low risk:** between 0.1% and 1% chance.

C.3.3.2 Areas determined to be at very low risk of flooding (less than 0.1% chance) would be expected to result in a negligible impact on surface water flooding for the purposes of this assessment.

C.3.3.3 Climate change has the potential to increase the frequency and severity of storm events and lead to increases in all forms of flood risk including fluvial (rivers), surface water, groundwater, sewers and impounded water bodies (reservoirs and canals) which should also be explored where relevant.

Table C.3.1: *SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation methodology*

SA2 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Fluvial flood zone	N/A	Development proposals which are located wholly within Flood Zone 1.	N/A	N/A	Development proposals where more than 1% but less than 10% of the site area coincides with Flood Zones 2 or 3.	Development proposals where 10% or more of the site area coincides with Flood Zones 2 or 3.
Surface water flood risk	N/A	Development proposals which include the integration of GI, open space, SUDS or other surface water flood risk alleviating measures.	Development proposals where less than 1% of the site area coincides with low, medium or high SWFR, or the site lies in areas of very low SWFR.	N/A	Development proposals where more than 1% but less than 50% of the site area coincides with low SWFR and/or more than 1% but less than 10% medium SWFR.	Development proposals where 50% or more of the site area coincides with areas at low SWFR, 10% medium SWFR, and/or 1% high SWFR.

[7] Environment Agency (2013) Risk of flooding from surface water – understanding and using the map. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flood-risk-maps-for-surface-water-how-to-use-the-map [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.4 SA Objective 3: Biodiversity and geodiversity

C.4.1.1 The biodiversity objective considers the potential impacts of the proposed development at a landscape-scale. It focuses on an assessment of proposed development on a network of designated and undesignated sites, wildlife corridors and individual habitats within the Plan area.

C.4.1.2 **Table C.4.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 3: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.

C.4.1.3 Data for European sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), ancient woodlands, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and priority habitats is available from Natural England[8]. Data for Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and Local Geological Sites (LGSs) has been provided by WODC via the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC).

C.4.2 European sites

C.4.2.1 European sites (sometimes referred to as Habitats sites) provide valuable ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered and/or vulnerable natural habitats and species of exceptional importance within Europe. These sites consist of SACs, designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive), and SPAs, classified under European Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive). Additionally, paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires that sites listed under the Ramsar Convention (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat) are to be given the same protection as fully designated European sites.

C.4.2.2 The area within which development proposals could potentially have direct, indirect and in-combination impacts on the integrity of a European site is referred to as the Zone of Influence (ZOI). This is determined through an identification of sensitive receptors at each European site (its qualifying features) and pathways via which the Local Plan may have an impact. At this stage of the plan making process, there are no formally identified ZOIs for the European sites in proximity to West Oxfordshire. However, as part of the (now ceased) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 evidence base, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report was prepared that defined distance-based risk zones for Plan development including an inner 2km zone for recreation, and outer precautionary 10km zone[9]. These indicative zones have been used to inform the assessment of reasonable alternative sites, highlighting potential for adverse effects arising from development within these zones. At this stage, the potential effects of reasonable alternative sites outside of these buffers are uncertain.

[8] Natural England (2024) Natural England Open Data Geoportal. Available at: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[9] Ricardo (2019) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment: Distance-based risk-zones for Plan Development. Report for the Oxfordshire Plan Team. Available at: https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s60849/Appendix%207C%20HRA%20Distance-Based%20Risk%20Zones%20Nov%202019%20FINAL.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

C.4.2.3 The impact of proposed sites on European sites will be tested through the HRA process alongside the preparation of WODC's Local Plan, the findings of which will be used to inform the SA when available. The HRA will provide further detail relating to potential impacts on European sites within and surrounding the Plan area, and via a range of impact pathways.

C.4.2.4 The HRA Screening[10] indicated potential for likely significant effects on Oxford Meadows SAC in terms of physical damage and habitat loss, air pollution, water quality/quantity and recreational pressure, as well as Cothill Fen SAC for air pollution, and Little Wittenham SAC for water quality/quantity. These impacts will be explored further in a re-screening of policies and site allocations, followed by an Appropriate Assessment.

C.4.3 Biodiversity and geodiversity designations

C.4.3.1 Where a site is coincident with, adjacent to or located in close proximity to an ecological receptor, it is assumed that negative effects associated with development will arise to some extent. These negative effects include those that occur during the construction phase and are associated with the construction process and construction vehicles (e.g. habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, habitat degradation, noise, air, water and light pollution) and those that are associated with the operation/occupation phases of development (e.g. public access associated disturbances, increases in local congestion resulting in a reduction in air quality, changes in noise levels, visual disturbance, light pollution, impacts on water levels and quality etc.).

C.4.3.2 Negative impacts would be expected where the following ecological designations may be harmed or lost as a result of proposals: SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites, SSSIs, ancient woodlands, NNRs, LNRs, LWSs, LGSs, as well as priority habitats protected under the 2006 NERC Act[11]. The assessment is largely based on a consideration of the proximity of a site to these ecological receptors. For SSSIs, the assessment has used Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) information[12].

C.4.4 Priority habitats, species and ecological networks

C.4.4.1 For the purposes of this assessment, impacts on priority habitats have been considered in the context of Natural England's publicly available Priority Habitat Inventory database[13]. It is acknowledged this may not reflect current local site conditions in all instances.

[10] LUC (2025) West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan (Regulation 18) HRA Screening Report. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cu2pcxiq/local-plan-2041-hra-screening-report-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

[11] Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[12] IRZs are a Geographical Information System (GIS) tool developed by Natural England which allow a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: SSSIs, SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.

[13] Natural England (2024) Priority Habitat Inventory (England). Available at: https://data.gov.uk/dataset/4b6ddab7-6c0f-4407-946e-d6499f19fcde/priority-habitat-inventory-england [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.4.4.2 It is assumed that construction and occupation of previously undeveloped greenfield land would result in a net reduction in vegetation cover in the Plan area. This would also be expected to lead to greater levels of fragmentation and isolation for the wider ecological network, such as due to the loss of stepping-stones and corridors. This will restrict the ability of ecological receptors to adapt to the effects of climate change. The loss of greenfield land is considered under the Natural Resources (SA Objective 8) in this assessment (see **Chapter C.9**).

C.4.4.3 It should be noted that no detailed ecological surveys have been completed by Lepus to inform the assessments made in this report.

C.4.4.4 Protected species survey information is not available for the sites within the Plan area. It is acknowledged that data is available from the local biological records centre. However, it is noted that this data may be under recorded in certain areas. This under recording does not imply species absence. As a consequence, consideration of this data on a site-by-site basis within this assessment would have the potential to skew results – favouring well recorded areas of the Plan area. As such impacts on protected species have not been assessed on a site-by-site basis.

C.4.4.5 It is anticipated that the Council will require detailed ecological surveys and assessments to accompany future planning applications. Such surveys will determine on a site-by-site basis the presence of priority species and priority habitats protected under the NERC Act.

C.4.4.6 It is assumed that mature trees and hedgerows will be retained where possible.

Table C.4.1: *SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity methodology*

SA3 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
European site (SAC, SPA, Ramsar)	N/A	N/A	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on European sites.	It is uncertain whether the proposed development would affect a European site.	Development proposal is located within a recognised Zone of Influence (ZoI) relative to a European site, including 2km inner / 10km outer buffer.	Development proposal coincides with, or is located in close proximity to, a European site. Likelihood of direct impacts.
SSSI and IRZ	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance features of an SSSI.	Development within an IRZ which does not indicate the proposed development need to consult with Natural England.	N/A	Within an IRZ which indicates proposed development should be consulted on with Natural England. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development coincides with, or is located adjacent to, an SSSI. Likelihood of direct impacts.
NNR	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance or create an NNR.	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on NNRs.	N/A	Development could potentially result in adverse impacts on an NNR. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development coincides with an NNR. Likelihood of direct impacts.

SA3 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Ancient Woodland	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance ancient woodland.	Development proposal would not be anticipated to impact ancient woodland.	N/A	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a stand of ancient woodland. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development proposal coincides with a stand of ancient woodland. Likelihood of direct impacts.
Local Nature Reserve	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance or create an LNR.	Development proposal not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LNR.	N/A	Development proposal could potentially result in adverse impacts on an LNR, such as those which are located in close proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development proposal anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on an LNR, such as those which coincide. Likelihood of direct impacts.
Local Wildlife Site	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance or create an LWS.	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LWS.	N/A	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LWS, such as those which are located adjacent or in close proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development proposal anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on an LWS, such as those which coincide. Likelihood of direct impacts.
Local Geological site	N/A	Development proposals which would enhance an LGS.	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LGS.	N/A	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LGS, such as those which are located adjacent or in close proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.	Development proposal anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on an LGS, such as those which coincide. Likelihood of direct impacts.
Priority habitat	N/A	Development proposals which enhance or create a priority habitat.	Development proposal does not coincide with a priority habitat.	N/A	Development proposal coincides with a priority habitat.	N/A

C.5 SA Objective 4: Landscape

C.5.1.1 Impacts on landscape are often determined by the specific layout and design of development proposals, as well as the site-specific landscape circumstances, as experienced on the ground. Detailed designs for each development proposal are unknown at this stage of the assessment. This assessment comprises a desk-based exercise which has not been verified in the field. Therefore, the nature of the potential impacts on the landscape are, to an extent, uncertain. There is a risk of negative effects occurring, some of which may be unavoidable. As such, this risk has been reflected in the assessment as a negative impact where a development proposal is located in close proximity to sensitive landscape receptors. The level of impact has been assessed based on the nature and value of, and proximity to, the landscape receptor in question.

C.5.1.2 **Table C.5.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 8: Landscape.

C.5.2 National Landscape

C.5.2.1 The Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), formerly known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), encompasses a large portion of the northern west of the district. The Cotswolds is the largest National Landscape in England recognised by its flower-rich limestone grasslands, ancient broadleaved woodland, limestone buildings and the undulating topography of the Cotswold Hills[14]. Development located within, adjacent to or within short or long-reaching views of the CNL is likely to detract from the high-quality of the landscape and its views. According to the CNL Management Plan 2023-2025[15], development proposals should "*positively contribute to the purposes of protected landscape designation"* including *"conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the CNL"*.

C.5.2.2 The CNL Landscape Character Assessment[16] identified 19 landscape character types across the CNL, within which there are 68 distinct character areas. The CNL Landscape Strategy and Guidelines[17] highlights key characteristics and sensitivities for each area that have been drawn upon in this assessment.

C.5.2.3 It is assumed that any future development would be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) or Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to consider any potential for adverse impacts.

[14] Cotswolds National Landscape (2024) Special qualities of the Cotswolds – A National Treasure. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-landscape-2/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[15] Cotswolds National Landscape (2023) Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/CNL_Management-Plan-2023-25_final.pdf. [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[16] Cotswolds National Landscape (no date) Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[17] Cotswolds National Landscape (2016) Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-strategy-and-guidelines/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

C.5.3 Landscape Character

C.5.3.1 The West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment[18] was produced in 1998 to support the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, as well as to assist the District Council and serve as a guide for different stakeholder such as landowners, farmers, private developers, community organisations and local interest groups.

C.5.3.2 The assessment defines 13 Landscape Character Areas, further divided into 24 Landscape Types, each with distinctive features and characteristics. Where development proposals have potential to be discordant with the characteristics set out in the assessment a potential minor negative effect is identified. Where development proposals are unlikely to be discordant with the characteristics as set out in the assessment a negligible score has been identified. Where development proposals might protect or enhance the features of the landscape a minor positive score has been identified.

C.5.4 Landscape Sensitivity

C.5.4.1 West Oxfordshire is a rural district with a well preserved predominantly agricultural landscape.

C.5.4.2 For the three main settlements in West Oxfordshire (Witney[19], Carterton[20] and Chipping Norton[21]) landscape assessments have been produced to update and expand on previous studies relating to landscape sensitivity and visual importance. These studies divide the areas surrounding each settlement with a corresponding level of landscape sensitivity/ visual importance.

C.5.4.3 Additionally, a Landscape and Visual Assessment[22] was produced for sites around Eynsham allocated in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan[23]. This assessment looked at two strategic development areas on the periphery of Eynsham and identified their level of sensitivity. These two sites have been considered as reasonable alternatives in this SA report, known as 'West Eynsham SDA' (Site EW2) and 'Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village' (Site EW1), identified by WODC as 'carried forward' sites from the previous local plan.

C.5.4.4 Based on this evidence base sensitivity categories are defined as the following:

- High sensitivity: The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change.
- Moderate to high: The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.

[18] Atlantic Consultants (1998) West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cpqn2fj0/west-oxfordshire-landscape-assessment-1998.pdf [Date accessed: 03/02/25]

[19] AHLC (2007) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Witney Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2mdjjkg4/witney-landscape-assessment-2007-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[20] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Carterton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/gykgnexu/carterton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[21] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qwrkoffm/chipping-norton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[22] LUC (2019) Oxfordshire Cotswold Garden Village West Eynsham Strategic Development Area: Landscape and visual assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/pvop3sag/eynsham-landscape-report.pdf [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

[23] West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan (2031). Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/feyjmpen/local-plan.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

- Moderate: Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
- Moderate to low: Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
- Low: They key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are unlikely to be subject to change.

C.5.4.5 Using this evidence base for landscape sensitivity, for the purpose of this SA, development sites in areas of high and moderate to high sensitivity are identified to have a potential major negative impact on landscape sensitivity. Development sites in areas which are in areas of moderate and moderate to low sensitivity are identified to have a minor negative impact on landscape sensitivity. Development sites which fall in an area of low sensitivity are identified to have a negligible impact on landscape sensitivity. Development sites which do not fall in areas covered by the above assessments have been scored as uncertain as the impact of these sites on landscape sensitivity cannot be determined based on the current available information.

C.5.5 Green Belt

C.5.5.1 In order to inform the potential for the Green Belt to accommodate sustainable forms of development within the six Oxfordshire authorities, Oxfordshire County Council commissioned a Green Belt Assessment[24]. The purpose of the Green Belt Assessment was to provide the Councils with an objective, evidence-based and independent assessment of how the land parcels contributes to the five purposes of Green Belt set out in the NPPF:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

C.5.5.2 Green Belt designations do not necessarily relate to high quality or sensitive landscapes. The Green Belt Assessment classified land parcels as having a ‘low’, ‘medium’ or ‘high’ performance in relation to each of the purposes of the Green Belt independently.

C.5.5.3 At this stage of the assessment process, WODC has not identified any reasonable alternative sites located within the Green Belt, and as such this has not been assessed as a receptor in the SA.

C.5.6 Views

C.5.6.1 Development proposals which may alter views of a predominantly rural or countryside landscape experienced by users of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network would be expected to have a minor negative impact on the landscape objective.

[24] LUC (2015) Oxford Green Belt Study. Available at: https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/communityandliving/partnerships/GrowthBoard/OxfordGreenBeltStudySummary.pdf [Date accessed: 26/11/24]

C.5.6.2 In order to consider potential visual effects of development, it has been assumed that the proposals would broadly reflect the character of nearby development of the same type.

C.5.6.3 Views have been identified through the use of aerial photography and Google Maps[25]. Potential positive impacts would be dependent upon the current views, and level of detail of the proposed development. Data for PRoWs has been provided by the Council.

C.5.7 Coalescence

C.5.7.1 Development proposals which are considered to reduce the separation between existing settlements and increase the risk of the coalescence of settlements would be expected to have a potential minor negative impact on the landscape objective.

C.5.8 TPOs

C.5.8.1 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are protected for amenity purposes, including their biodiversity, landscape and townscape qualities. It is anticipated that development proposals which coincide with trees which are registered under TPOs could have adverse impacts on these trees and their protected status, resulting in a minor negative impact for this objective due to potential impacts on landscape settings. Data for TPOs has been provided by the Council.

Table C.5.1: *SA Objective 5 – Landscape methodology*

SA4 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL)	N/A	Development proposals would enhance views from the CNL.	Development proposals unlikely to alter views from the CNL.	The potential impact on the CNL is uncertain.	Development proposals which have potential to detract from the special qualities, setting of or views from the CNL.	Development proposals which are likely to significantly detract from the special qualities or setting of the CNL (including those within the CNL).
Landscape character	N/A	Development proposals which would protect or enhance features of the landscape as identified within the Landscape Assessment.	Development proposals unlikely to be discordant with the guidelines and characteristics as set out in the Landscape Assessment. Development proposals located in the urban area outside of the Landscape Assessment study area.	Development proposals not located in an area considered as part of the Landscape Assessment.	Development proposals which could potentially be discordant with the key characteristics as set out in the Landscape Assessment.	N/A

[25] Google Maps (2025) Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/maps

SA4 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Landscape sensitivity	N/A	NA	Development proposals within areas defined as 'Low' or 'N/A' for sensitivity within published landscape sensitivity assessments.	Development proposals located in areas where no published landscape sensitivity assessment information is available.	Development proposals within areas defined as 'Moderate' or 'Moderate to low' sensitivity within published landscape sensitivity assessments.	Development proposals within areas defined as 'High' or 'Moderate to high' sensitivity within published landscape sensitivity assessments.
Alter views from the PRoW network	N/A	Development proposals which could potentially improve the views experienced from the nearby PRoW network.	Development proposals are not considered to significantly alter views experienced by users of the PRoW network.	N/A	Development proposals which may alter views of a predominantly rural or countryside landscape experienced by users of the PRoW network.	N/A
Coalescence	N/A	N/A	Development proposals are not considered to significantly reduce the separation between existing settlements or contribute to encroachment into the open countryside	N/A	Development proposals which are considered to increase the risk of the coalescence of settlements or contribute to encroachment into the open countryside	N/A
TPOs	N/A	N/A	Development proposals which do not coincide with or are adjacent to TPOs.	N/A	Development proposals which coincide with or are adjacent to TPOs.	N/A

C.6 SA Objective 5: Cultural Heritage

C.6.1.1 **Table C.6.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 5: Cultural Heritage.

C.6.2 Designated heritage assets

C.6.2.1 Impacts on heritage assets will be largely determined by the specific layout and design of development proposals, as well as the nature and significance of the heritage asset. There is a risk of adverse effects occurring, some of which may be unavoidable. As such, this risk has been reflected in the assessment as a negative impact where a site is in close proximity to heritage assets.

C.6.2.2 Adverse impacts on heritage assets are predominantly associated with impacts on the existing setting of the asset and the character of the local area, as well as adverse impacts on views of, or from, the asset. Development which could potentially be discordant with the local character or setting, for example, due to design, layout, scale or type, would be expected to adversely impact the setting of nearby heritage assets[26] that are important components of the local area.

C.6.2.3 Adverse impacts are recorded for development proposals which could potentially affect the setting of sensitive heritage designations, including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments (SM), Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG), and Conservation Areas (CA). The Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (WHS) includes a Grade I Listed Building and RPG also located within the east of the district.

C.6.2.4 Heritage features identified on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register may be identified as being at risk for a number of reasons, for example, due to dilapidation of the building fabric or other sources of risk such as coastal erosion, cultivation or scrub encroachment[27]. Where Heritage at Risk assets could potentially be affected by the proposed development, this has been stated.

C.6.2.5 Data for heritage assets[28], including the Heritage at Risk Register[29], are available from Historic England.

C.6.2.6 No specific mapped information regarding the setting of heritage assets has been available to inform the assessments; it is recommended that site-specific evaluations are carried out by qualified professionals to determine this and inform any development proposals.

[26] Setting is taken to mean the surroundings in which a heritage asset may be experienced, which does not relate solely to distance from proposed developments to heritage assets. Historic England (2017) The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition). Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/ [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

[27] Historic England Heritage at Risk Register. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

[28] Historic England (2025) Download Listing Data. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[29] Historic England (2025) Search the Heritage at Risk Register. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.6.3 Non-statutory and locally designated heritage assets

C.6.3.1 Many historic buildings and infrastructure such as roads, waterways and railways are of historic interest even if they are not listed. Likewise, not all nationally important archaeological remains are scheduled. There are also likely to be numerous unrecorded archaeological artefacts in the area, which have not yet been discovered.

C.6.3.2 In West Oxfordshire District, identified non-designated heritage assets includes 'locally listed buildings'[30] that make a contribution towards the appearance of Conservation Areas. While a site-specific assessment of potential impacts on locally listed buildings has not been carried out in the SA, these features have been considered within the wider 'Conservation Area' receptor.

C.6.3.3 The Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Oxfordshire County Council provides a comprehensive source of data on known heritage records[31]. At this stage of assessment, specialist information has not been available to inform the SA in terms of implications of potential development sites on non-designated heritage assets, historic landscapes, or other features described in the HER on a site-by-site basis. It is recommended that site-specific evaluations are carried out by qualified professionals to determine this and inform future stages of assessment.

C.6.3.4 It is anticipated that WODC will require a Heritage Statement or Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to be prepared to accompany future planning applications, where appropriate.

[30] WODC (2025) Listed Buildings: Historic buildings that are not listed. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/historic-buildings-and-conservation/listed-buildings/ [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

[31] Oxfordshire County Council (2025) Historic Environment Record. Available at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/historic-environment-record [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

Table C.6.1: *SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage methodology*

SA5 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Grade I Listed Buildings	N/A	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade I Listed Building or its setting.	Development proposal is not considered likely to affect the setting or character of a Grade I Listed Building.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within the wider setting of a Grade I Listed Building.	Development proposal coincides with, is located adjacent to, or could significantly impact the setting of, a Grade I Listed Building.
Grade II* Listed Buildings	N/A	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade II* Listed Building or its setting.	Development proposal not considered likely to impact a Grade II* Listed Building or its setting.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within the setting of a Grade II* Listed Building.	Development proposal coincides with, or could significantly impact the setting of, a Grade II* Listed Building.
Grade II Listed Buildings	N/A	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade II Listed Building or its setting.	Development proposal not considered likely to impact a Grade II Listed Building or its setting.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within the setting of a Grade II Listed Building.	Development proposal coincides with a Grade II Listed Building.
Conservation Areas	N/A	Development proposals which could potentially enhance the character or setting of a Conservation Area.	Development proposal not considered to impact a Conservation Area or its setting.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within a Conservation Area or potentially within the setting of a Conservation Area.	N/A
Scheduled Monuments	N/A	Development proposal which could potentially enhance an SM or its setting.	Development proposal not considered to impact an SM or its setting.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within the setting of a SM.	Development proposal coincides with a SM.
Registered Parks and Gardens (including Blenheim Palace WHS)	N/A	Development proposal which could potentially enhance an RPG or its setting.	Development proposal not considered likely to impact an RPG or its setting.	The effect of the proposed development on a nearby receptor is uncertain.	Development proposal located within the setting of an RPG.	Development proposal coincides with an RPG. Development likely to impact the views or setting of Blenheim Palace WHS.

C.7 SA Objective 6: Air Quality

C.7.1.1 **Table C.7.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 6: Air Quality.

C.7.2 Exposure to sources of air pollution

C.7.2.1 Exposure of new residents to air pollution has been considered in the context of the development proposal location in relation to established Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and main roads (motorways and A-roads). It is widely accepted that the effects of air pollution from road transport decreases with distance from the source of pollution i.e. the road carriageway[3233]. The Department for Transport in their Transport Analysis Guidance consider that "*beyond 200m from the link centre, the contribution of vehicle emissions to local pollution levels is not significant*"[34]. This statement is supported by Highways England and Natural England based on evidence presented in a number of research papers[3536].

C.7.2.2 There are two AQMAs in West Oxfordshire including Chipping Norton AQMA and Witney AQMA, both of which are declared due to exceedances in nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) pollutants. Development proposals located within 200m of a main road or AQMA would be expected to have a minor negative impact on site end users' exposure to air pollution. Development proposals located over 200m from an AQMA, or main road would be expected to have a negligible impact on site end users' exposure to air pollution.

C.7.2.3 AQMAs and main roads have been assessed as three independent receptors. The assessments have used UK AQMA data available from Defra[37], road data available from the Ordnance Survey[38].

C.7.3 Generation of air pollution

C.7.3.1 It is likely that new development would result in an increase in traffic and thus traffic-generated air pollution. Both existing and future site users would be exposed to this change in air quality.

[32] Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (2024) LA 105 Air Quality. Available at: www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/af7f4cda-08f7-4f16-a89f-e30da703f3f4 [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[33] Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (2020) LA 104 Environmental assessment and monitoring. Available at: www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/0f6e0b6a-d08e-4673-8691-cab564d4a60a [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[34] Department for Transport (2024) TAG unit A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/tag-unit-a3-environmental-impact-appraisal [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[35] Bignal, K., Ashmore, M & Power, S. 2004. The ecological effects of diffuse air pollution from road transport. English Nature Research Report No. 580, Peterborough.

[36] Ricardo-AEA, 2016. The ecological effects of air pollution from road transport: an updated review. Natural England Commissioned Report No. 199.

[37] Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2024) UK Air Information Resource. Available at: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/maps/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[38] Ordnance Survey (2023) OS Open Roads. Available at: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/products/os-open-roads [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.7.3.2 It should be noted that the appraisal of reasonable alternative sites is limited in its assessment of air pollution. In the absence of site-specific emissions data or information relating to the number of cars likely to be associated with new development sites, at this stage of the assessment process the likely air pollution impacts arising from each reasonable alternative site is uncertain.

C.7.3.3 Proposals which would help to reduce the number of cars used, promote the use of low emission vehicles, public transport and active travel and reduce congestion on nearby roads would help to reduce air pollution and improve air quality. Such opportunities will be evaluated through the policy assessments (see **Appendix F** of this document, and Appendix C of the Preferred Policy Options SA[39]

Table C.7.1: *SA Objective 6 – Air Quality*

SA6 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
AQMA	N/A	Development proposals will improve air quality within AQMAs.	Development proposals are located over 200m from an AQMA.	N/A	Development proposals are located within 200m of, an AQMA.	Development proposals which coincide with an AQMA.
Main road	N/A	Development proposals will improve air quality in proximity to main roads.	Development proposals located over 200m from a main road.	N/A	Development proposals located within 200m of a main road.	N/A

39 Lepus Consulting (2025) Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041: Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qi1puvnm/sustainability-appriasal-of-the-west-oxfordshire-local-plan-preferred-options-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

C.8 SA Objective 7: Water

C.8.1.1 **Table C.8.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 7: Water.

C.8.1.2 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) aims to protect and improve the water environment. Under the WFD there is a requirement for all waterbodies to meet 'Good Ecological Status or Potential' by 2027. The Plan must ensure that proposals do not jeopardise the current status of a WFD element or cause deterioration to a receiving waterbody.

C.8.2 Water resources

C.8.2.1 Thames Water is responsible for water supply across West Oxfordshire. Forecasts in the latest Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)[40] highlight potential shortfalls in water up to 2041 and beyond. The Water Cycle Study (WCS) Scoping Report[41] highlights a number of water network upgrades which may help to address these shortfalls. At this stage there is no data available to evaluate on a site-by-site basis the implications for water supply/demand.

C.8.3 Water quality

C.8.3.1 Construction activities in or near watercourses have the potential to cause pollution, impact upon the bed and banks of watercourses and impact on the quality of the water[42]. A 10m buffer zone from a watercourse in which no works, clearance, storage or run-off should be permitted has been used as per available guidance[43][44]. As such, a 10m zone has been applied in this assessment, using watercourse mapping data available from Ordnance Survey[45].

C.8.3.2 It should be noted that development beyond 10m from a watercourse still have potential to lead to adverse effects such as those resulting from runoff; each development site would need to be evaluated according to land use type, size of development and exact location. Where detailed information is not available to inform the SA assessments, there is uncertainty in the identification of effects in this regard.

[40] Thames Water (2024) Revised Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024. Available at: https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/water-resources [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[41] WHS (2025) West Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study Scoping Report. July 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxuf3hnd/whs10174-wodc-scoping-water-cycle-study_v2-0.pdf [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[42] World Health Organisation (1996) Water Quality Monitoring - A Practical Guide to the Design and Implementation of Freshwater Quality Studies and Monitoring Programmes: Chapter 2 – Water Quality.

[43] DAERA (2019) Advice and Information for planning approval on land which is of nature conservation value. Available at: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/advice-and-information-planning-approval-land-which-nature-conservation-value [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[44] Wild Trout Trust. Buffer Zones. Available at: www.wildtrout.org/content/buffer-zones#:~:text=A%20healthy%20riparian%20zone%20will,grazing%20and%20the%20river%2Dbank. [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[45] Ordnance Survey (2023) OS Open Rivers. Available at: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-government/products/open-map-rivers [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.8.3.3 The WCS Scoping Report[46] highlights that the majority of watercourses in West Oxfordshire have 'poor' ecological status and 'fail' with regard to chemical status. The WCS also notes uncertainty with regard to the headroom available at sewage treatment works (STWs) serving the Plan area. Upgrades to the sewer network are likely to be required to ensure that the current status of watercourses improves and to reduce risk of storm overflows.

C.8.4 Groundwater

C.8.4.1 The vulnerability of groundwater to pollution is determined by the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil and rocks, which control the ease with which an unprotected hazard can affect groundwater. Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) indicate the risk to groundwater supplies from potentially polluting activities and accidental releases of pollutants. As such, any site that is located within a groundwater SPZ could potentially have an adverse impact on groundwater quality.

C.8.4.2 Groundwater source catchments are divided into three zones:

- **Inner Zone (Zone I)** – 50-day travel time from any point below the water table to the source;
- **Outer Zone (Zone II)** – 400-day travel time; and
- **Total Catchment (Zone III)** – within which all groundwater recharge is presumed to be discharged at the source.

C.8.4.3 Development proposals located within the total catchment (Zone III) or outer zone (Zone II) of an SPZ would be likely to have a minor negative impact on groundwater quality. Development proposals located within the inner zone (Zone I) of an SPZ would be likely to have a major negative impact on groundwater quality.

C.8.4.4 SPZ data is available from the Environment Agency[47].

***Table C.8.1:** SA Objective 7 – Water*

SA7 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Water quality	Development proposals which demonstrate that the development improves the Ecological Status of a waterbody under the WFD.	Development proposal includes integration of GI or the naturalisation of watercourses.	N/A	Development proposals located over 10m from a watercourse.	Development proposals located within 10m of a watercourse.	N/A
Groundwater SPZ	N/A	N/A	Development proposal does not coincide with a groundwater SPZ.	N/A	Development proposal coincides with Zone II or III of a groundwater SPZ.	Development proposal coincides with Zone I of a groundwater SPZ.

[46] WHS (2025) West Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study Scoping Report. July 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxuf3hnd/whs10174-wodc-scoping-water-cycle-study_v2-0.pdf [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[47] Environment Agency (2024) Source Protection Zones. Available at: https://data.gov.uk/dataset/09889a48-0439-4bbe-8f2a-87bba26fbbf5/source-protection-zones-merged [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.9 SA Objective 8: Natural resources and waste

C.9.1.1 This SA Objective recognises the economic and environmental benefits of conserving natural resources and material assets. The Local Plan should seek to conserve the best and most versatile agricultural land, seeking opportunities for remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, as well as supporting a reduction in waste generation and promote increased recycling and reuse of materials.

C.9.1.2 **Table C.9.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 4: Natural Resources and Waste.

C.9.2 Previously developed land

C.9.2.1 Assessment of sites comprising previously developed land is in accordance with the definitions in the NPPF[48]. Assessment of current land use and potential environmental value has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps. It should be noted that this may not reflect the current status of the site, and the nature of development within the site boundary is unknown, so a degree of uncertainty remains.

C.9.2.2 In accordance with the core planning principles of the NPPF, development on previously developed land is recognised as an efficient use of land. Development of an existing brownfield site would be expected to contribute positively to safeguarding greenfield land in West Oxfordshire.

C.9.2.3 Development of previously undeveloped land and greenfield sites is not considered to be an efficient use of land. Development proposals situated on previously undeveloped land would be expected to pose a threat to soil within the site perimeter due to excavation, compaction, erosion and an increased risk of pollution and contamination during construction.

C.9.2.4 In addition, development proposals which would result in the loss of greenfield land would be expected to contribute towards a cumulative loss of ecological habitat. This would be expected to lead to greater levels of habitat fragmentation and isolation for the local ecological network restricting the ability of ecological receptors to adapt to the effects of climate change. The loss of greenfield land has therefore been considered to have an adverse effect.

[48] The NPPF (2024) defines previously developed land as follows:

"*Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape*."

C.9.2.5 Contaminated land is land that has been polluted and is therefore potentially unsafe for development unless the contamination is removed. It is assumed that the Council will ensure appropriate remediation of all development sites with contamination issues, prior to occupancy. As such, for the purposes of this assessment, a major positive impact would be expected where proposed sites coincide with previously developed and contaminated land, providing opportunities for remediation, improving soil quality and resulting in an efficient use of land. It is assumed that historic landfill sites and former industrial sites are likely to have residual ground contamination issues; in West Oxfordshire these are indicated as Environmental Consultation Sites. Data for contaminated land and Environmental Consultation Sites has been provided by WODC.

C.9.3 Agricultural Land Classification

C.9.3.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system classifies land into five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. The top three grades, Grades 1, 2 and 3a, are referred to as the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land[49]. In the absence of site-specific surveys to identify Grades 3a and 3b, and in line with the precautionary principle, ALC Grade 3 is considered as BMV land.

C.9.3.2 Adverse impacts are expected for development proposals which would result in a net loss of agriculturally valuable soils. Development proposals which are situated on Grade 1, 2 or 3 ALC land, and would therefore risk the loss of some of the Plan area's BMV land, would be expected to have a minor negative impact for this objective.

C.9.3.3 Development proposals which are situated on Grade 4 and 5 ALC land, or land classified as 'urban' or 'non-agricultural' and would therefore help prevent the loss of the Plan area's BMV land, would be expected to have a minor positive impact for this objective.

C.9.3.4 For the purpose of this assessment, a 20ha threshold has been used based on available guidance[50]. Development proposals which would result in the loss of less than 20ha of greenfield land which is potentially BMV would be expected to have a minor negative impact on this objective. Development proposals which would result in the loss of 20ha or more of greenfield land which is potentially BMV would be expected to have a major negative impact on this objective.

C.9.4 Mineral Resources

C.9.4.1 Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) designated by minerals planning authorities cover known deposits of minerals which should be safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development. Infrastructure sites used for the processing, handling, and transportation, of minerals are also essential to ensure a steady supply. They should also be safeguarded where non-mineral development might otherwise affect their continued operation.

[49] MAFF. October 1988. Available at Natural England. http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6257050620264448?category=5954148537204736 [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[50] Natural England (2009) Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012 [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

C.9.4.2 Where a development proposal coincides with an identified MSA, as set out in the Minerals and Waste Plan[51], there is potential for sterilisation of the mineral resource as a result of the proposed development, meaning the minerals will be inaccessible for potential extraction in the future. This could therefore result in an adverse impact under the natural resources SA objective. Data for MSAs has been provided by the Council.

C.9.5 Waste

C.9.5.1 Waste management in West Oxfordshire is co-ordinated through the implementation of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Development Scheme[52]. The estimated total household waste produced in West Oxfordshire in 2022/2023 was 41,805 tonnes, according to the UK local authority household waste data[53]. Currently, the Ardley Energy Recovery Facility converts approximately 95% of Oxfordshire's residual waste into electricity[54].

C.9.5.2 It is likely that new development would result in an increase in the local population, and consequently an increase in household waste generation. It is assumed new residents in West Oxfordshire will have an annual waste production of 377kg per person, in line with England average[55].

C.9.5.3 The appraisal of the reasonable alternatives is limited in its assessment against waste. The amount and type of waste produced will vary depending upon the specific site circumstances and end use and may have differing implications for the management of waste; such detail is not available to inform the assessment of reasonable alternative site.

[51] Oxfordshire Council (2022) Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Available at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/planning-minerals-and-waste/MineralsandWasteDevelopmentScheme2021_12thEdition.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[52] Ibid.

[53] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2024) Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics for 2022/2023. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results [Date accessed: 09/01/24]

[54] Viridor (2024) Ardley ERF. Available at: https://www.viridor.co.uk/energy/energy-recovery-facilities/ardley-erf/. [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[55] Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2024) Local authority collected waste management - annual results 2022/23. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202223#:~:text=In%202022%2F23%2C%20total%20local,per%20cent%20from%202021%2F22 [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

Table C.9.1: *SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste*

SA8 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Efficient use of land and soil resources	Previously developed land with opportunities for remediating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.	Development proposal located on previously developed land, or land which is of Grade 4 and 5 ALC / classified as 'urban' or 'non-agricultural'.	Development proposals located on previously undeveloped land with no environmental value.	It is uncertain whether a development proposal would lead to the loss of previously undeveloped or high-quality agricultural land.	Development proposal located on previously undeveloped land of Grade 1, 2 or 3 ALC comprising less than 20ha.	Development proposal located on previously undeveloped land of Grade 1, 2 or 3 ALC comprising 20ha or more.
Mineral Safeguarding Area	N/A	Site proposal is known and will deliver efficient minerals extraction.	Development proposal does not coincide with an MSA.	N/A	Development proposal coincides with an MSA.	Site is in the immediate vicinity of, or within, an existing / allocated mineral site.
Household Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	The likely waste arising from each reasonable alternative site is uncertain.	N/A	N/A

C.10 SA Objective 9: Housing and Equality

C.10.1.1 **Table C.10.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 7: Housing and equality.

C.10.2 Housing provision

C.10.2.1 The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns. Small and medium sized sites can also make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly.

C.10.2.2 When striving for sustainable development, housing density should be considered carefully. High population densities can lead to capacity issues for local key services and facilities such as hospitals, supermarkets and open spaces, including playgrounds and sports fields. High population densities also influence perceptions of safety, social interactions and community stability[56].

C.10.2.3 Estimated housing capacity for each reasonable alternative site has been provided by WODC. Strategic sites comprise those with a capacity of 300 or more homes (based on an assumption of a density of 30 dwellings per hectare).

C.10.2.4 Development proposals which would result in a net loss of housing across the Plan area would be expected to have an adverse impact on WODC's ability to meet the required housing demand. Development proposals which would result in a net gain of housing across the Plan area would be expected to have a positive impact on meeting housing demand. Development proposals which would result in no net change in dwellings would be expected to have a negligible impact on the local housing provision.

C.10.2.5 At this stage of the assessment process, information is not available relating to the specific housing mix / type that would be delivered through each reasonable alternative site, including potential for development of affordable homes. It is assumed that development options will provide a good mix of housing types and tenures. For reasonable alternative strategic sites, general assumptions have been provided by WODC and applied to each strategic development site, including an assumption that each will provide 40% affordable housing and 5% custom-build housing (see **Appendix D** for further details).

C.10.3 Deprivation and community

C.10.3.1 The WODC Local Plan should seek to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

[56] Dempsey. N., Brown. C. and Bramley. G. (2012) The key to sustainable urban development in UK cities? The influence of density on social sustainability. Progress in Planning 77:89-141

C.10.3.2 Development proposals which could result in the loss of existing community facilities, employment space or other services could potentially lead to adverse impacts on community cohesion, with a minor negative impact recorded under this objective.

C.10.3.3 Conversely, development sites which would provide opportunities for delivering new community facilities and services could potentially improve community cohesion and strengthen local identity, and lead to a minor positive impact on this objective.

C.10.3.4 An assessment of current land use has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps[57].

C.10.3.5 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures the relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England[58]. Of the 317 LPAs in England, West Oxfordshire is ranked as the 301st least deprived. Some 22 LSOAs within West Oxfordshire fall within the top 10% least deprived areas in England. However, small pockets of relative deprivation remain in rural areas such as to the east of Witney, and within larger towns such as Witney and Chipping Norton.

C.10.3.6 One domain of the IMD is 'barriers to housing and services', which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services[59]. The indicator falls into two sub-domains which includes 'geographical barriers' which relates to the physical proximity to local services and 'wider barriers' such as housing affordability. In West Oxfordshire, significant proportions of the district fall within the 10% most deprived areas in terms of barriers to housing and services, with extensive areas located in the north and south west of the district. Development proposals which will provide affordable housing or local services and or locate development in the top 10% most deprived areas in regard to barriers to housing and services is likely to result in positive impacts on housing provision, affordability and accessibility.

C.10.3.7 It should be noted that there is a degree of uncertainty in regard to the impacts of each site on deprivation and equality, which will be dependent on site-specific circumstances that are unknown at the time of writing.

[57] Google Maps (2025) Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/maps

[58] MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019 [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[59] MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Technical report. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8b387740f0b609909b5908/IoD2019_Technical_Report.pdf [Date accessed 14/01/25]

Table C.10.1: *SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality*

SA9 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Housing provision	Development proposals resulting in a significant net gain in housing (of 100 dwellings or more).	Development proposals resulting in a minor net gain in housing (of between one and 99 dwellings).	Development proposals would not impact housing provision.	It is uncertain whether the proposed development would result in a net change in housing provision.	Development proposals which result in a minor net decrease in housing.	Development proposals which result in a significant net decrease in housing.
Deprivation	Development proposals including affordable housing or essential services and are located within the top 10% for the IMD domain 'barriers to housing and services'.	Development proposals including affordable housing or essential services and are located outside the top 10% for the IMD domain 'barriers to housing and services'.	Development proposals which do not include affordable housing or provision of essential services.	The effect of a proposed development on access to affordable housing and essential services is uncertain.	N/A	N/A

C.11 SA Objective 10: Health and Wellbeing

C.11.1.1 In order to facilitate healthy and active lifestyles for existing and new residents, it is expected that the Local Plan should seek to ensure that residents have access to NHS hospitals, GP surgeries, leisure facilities and a diverse range of accessible natural habitats and the surrounding PRoW network.

C.11.1.2 The assessments under this objective as set out in **Table C.11.1** apply to sites proposed for residential use / mixed-use including residential only. Sites proposed for employment or non-residential uses would be likely to result in a negligible impact on GP surgeries and leisure facilities within this objective, which residents are most likely to access from home. Access to NHS hospitals with Accident and Emergency (A&E) services and access to greenspace have been considered for both residential and non-residential development, where these are likely to be beneficial to site-end users whether they are at home or at work.

C.11.1.3 It should be noted that healthcare capacity information has not been available; the assessment is based on accessibility alone and does not reflect the reality of difficulties in accessing services (for example, a number of GP surgeries are closed to new patients).

C.11.2 Hospitals and GP surgeries

C.11.2.1 For the purposes of this assessment, accessibility to a hospital has been taken as proximity to an NHS hospital with an A&E service. Distances of sites to other NHS facilities (e.g. community hospitals and treatment centres) or private hospitals has not been taken into consideration in this assessment. There are no NHS hospitals providing an A&E service within West Oxfordshire, with the nearest being the John Radcliffe Hospital approximately 10km east of the district boundary, Horton General Hospital approximately 9km north of the district boundary and the Great Western Hospital approximately 17km south of the district boundary.

C.11.2.2 Additionally, a total of 13 GP surgeries are located across the Plan area. It is desirable for new residents to be situated within walking distance of a GP surgery. Data for GP surgeries has been provided by WODC.

C.11.2.3 Access to leisure centres can provide local residents with opportunities to facilitate healthy lifestyles through exercise. Data for leisure facilities has been provided by WODC.

C.11.2.4 Hospitals, GP surgeries and leisure centres have been assessed and three independent receptors. In line with Barton *et al*.'s sustainable distances[60], development proposals located within 5km of one of these hospitals, 800m of a GP surgery, or 1.5km of a leisure centre, would be expected to have a minor positive impact on site end users' access to emergency health services. Development proposals located over 5km from these hospitals, over 800m from a GP surgery, or over 1.5km from a leisure centre would be likely to have a minor negative impact on site end users' access to healthcare.

[60] Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

C.11.3 Access to open space and public greenspace

C.11.3.1 Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities.

C.11.3.2 Data for open and green spaces has been provided by the Council, as well as the OS Open Greenspace dataset[61]. This includes: allotments; amenity greenspace; cemeteries and churchyards; green corridors; natural and semi-natural greenspace; parks and gardens; and provision for children and teenagers.

C.11.3.3 In line with Barton *et al*.'s sustainable distances[62], development proposals within 600m from an open space or greenspace are likely to have a minor positive impact of access to greenspace, whereas development proposals outside of a 600m from an open space or greenspace are likely to have a minor negative impact on access to greenspace.

C.11.4 Access to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and the Thames National Trail

C.11.4.1 New development sites have been assessed in terms of their access to the local PRoW network. PRoW data has been provided by WODC. National Trails data is available from Natural England[63]. The target distance of 600m to a footpath has been used in line with Barton *et al*. sustainable distances[64].

[61] OS (2024) Open Greenspace. Available at: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/products/os-open-greenspace [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[62] Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

[63] Natural England (2024). National Trails. November 2024. Available at: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/ac8c851c-99a0-4488-8973-6c8863529c45/national-trails1 [Date accessed: 13/01/25]

[64] Ibid.

Table C.11.1: *SA Objective 10 – Health and Wellbeing*

SA10 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
NHS hospital with A&E	The majority of the development proposal is located within 5km of an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.	Part of the development proposal is located within 5km of an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.	The development proposals are located between 5-8km from an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.	N/A	Development proposals located over 8km from an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.	N/A
GP surgery	The majority of the development proposal is located within 800m of a GP surgery.	Part of the development is located within 800m of a GP surgery.	The development proposals are located between 800m-1km from a GP surgery. Non-residential development locations.	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located beyond the sustainable distance of 1km to a healthcare location.	Potential for loss of healthcare facilities.
Leisure facilities	The majority of the development proposal is located within 1.5km of a leisure facility.	Part of the development proposal is located within 1.5km of a leisure facility.	The development proposals are located within 1.5-2km from a leisure facility. Non-residential development proposals.	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located beyond the sustainable distance of 1.5km from a leisure facility.	N/A
Access to open / green space	Development proposals where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 600m of a public greenspace or include the provision of green infrastructure or a new country park.	Part of the site is located within 600m of a public greenspace.	Development proposals within 600-800m of a public greenspace.	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located over 800m from a public greenspace.	Development proposals which are likely to result in a loss of greenspace.
Access to PRoW and national trail	The majority of the site is located within 600m of the PRoW network.	Part of the site is located within 600m of the PRoW network.	Development proposals within 600m – 800m of the PRoW network.	N/A	Development proposals which are located over 600m from a PRoW	N/A

C.12 SA Objective 11: Transport and accessibility

C.12.1.1 **Table C.12.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 11: Transport and Accessibility.

C.12.2 Bus stops and train stations

C.12.2.1 It is desirable for site end users to be situated within a sustainable distance of a bus stop or a railway station, which have been assessed as two independent receptors. For the purposes of assessment, only bus stops with frequent services have been considered, which has been defined as a bus service every two hours.

C.12.2.2 Bus service frequency and destination information was obtained from Google Maps[65]. Bus stop data has been obtained from National Public Transport Access Nodes (NaPTAN) data[66]. Train station data has been obtained from Ordnance Survey[67].

C.12.2.3 In line with Barton *et al*.'s sustainable distances[68], development proposals located within 400m of a bus stop, or 2km of a railway station are likely to result in a minor positive impact on transport. Development proposals located outside of 400m from a bus stop, or 2km from a railway station, are likely to result in a minor negative impact on transport.

C.12.3 Access to local services

C.12.3.1 It is desirable for new residents to be situated within walking distances of local services, which has been considered to include convenience stores, newsagents, supermarkets and other food stores. According to Barton *et al*.'s sustainable distances[69], development that is located within 600m of local services is expected to be able to provide set-end users with access to essential services. Data on food stores has been obtained from Google Maps[70].

C.12.4 Access to pedestrian/cycle network

C.12.4.1 New development sites have been assessed in terms of their access to the surrounding footpath network. Positive impacts with regard to pedestrian access are recorded where safe access for pedestrians is available to and from the site e.g., footpath or PRoW. Safe access is determined to be that which is suitable for wheelchair users and pushchairs.

[65] Live departure boards available from Google Maps have been used to assess the frequency of services at bus stops within the Plan area. These are obtained from local bus timetables.

[66] National Public Transport Access Nodes (2024). Available at: https://beta-naptan.dft.gov.uk/download/la [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[67] OS (2024) OS Data Hub. Available at: https://osdatahub.os.uk/ [Date accessed: 09/01/25]

[68] Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

[69] Ibid.

[70] Google Maps (2025) Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/maps

C.12.4.2 Development proposals which would be expected to provide site end users with adequate access to the surrounding footpath network would be expected to have a minor positive impact on pedestrian access. Development proposals which would not be anticipated to provide adequate access would be expected to result in a minor negative impact on pedestrian access.

C.12.4.3 New development sites have also been assessed in terms of their access to the local cycle network. Development proposals which would be expected to provide site end users with adequate access to the surrounding cycle network, i.e., where a cycle route is located adjacent to the site, or in close proximity and accessible via a safe route, would be expected to have a minor positive impact on cycle access. Development proposals which would not be anticipated to provide adequate access would be expected to result in a minor negative impact on cycle access.

C.12.4.4 Assessment of proximity to existing footpaths has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps[71]. Data for PRoWs has been provided by the Council.

C.12.4.5 Data for local cycle routes has been provided by the Council and considered alongside national cycle route data available from Sustrans[72].

Table C.12.1: *SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility*

SA11 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Access to bus services	The majority of the development proposal is located within 400m of a bus stop providing frequent services.	Development proposals are partially located within 400m of a bus stop providing frequent services.	N/A	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located over 400m from a bus stop providing a frequent service.	N/A
Access to train station	The development proposal is within 1.6km of a national network railway station.	The development proposals located within 2km of a national network railway station.	N/A	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located over 2km from a national network railway station.	
Access to local services	The majority of the development proposal is located within 600m of a food store.	Development proposals are partially located within 600m of a food store.	Development proposals are located within 600-800m of a food store.	N/A	Development proposals where the site is located beyond 800m to local services.	N/A
Access to pedestrian/ cycle network	Development proposals where the site is located adjacent to a pedestrian and cycle route.	Development proposals where the site is located adjacent to a pedestrian or cycle route.	N/A	N/A	Development proposals where the site is not located adjacent to a pedestrian or cycle route.	N/A

[71] Ibid.

[72] Sustrans Open Data Portal. Available at: https://data-sustrans-uk.opendata.arcgis.com/

C.13 SA Objective 12: Education

C.13.1.1 **Table C.13.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 12: Education.

C.13.2 Access to schools and education

C.13.2.1 It is assumed that new residents in the Plan area require access to primary and secondary education services to help facilitate good levels of education, skills and qualifications of residents. This includes further educational facilities where the UK Government requires all 16–18-year-olds to be in education or training. Sites proposed for non-residential use are not anticipated to require access to educational facilities and have therefore not been assessed against this SA Objective.

C.13.2.2 In line with Barton *et al*.'s sustainable distances[73], for the purpose of this assessment, 800m is assumed to be the target distance for travelling to a primary school. A 1.5km distance has been used regarding access to secondary schools, and a distance of 3km has been used regarding access to further educational facilities.

C.13.2.3 It should be noted that school capacity information has not been available; the assessment is based on accessibility alone.

C.13.2.4 It is recognised that not all schools within West Oxfordshire are accessible to all pupils. For instance, independent, academically selective schools, and single sex schools may not be accessible to all. This has been considered within the assessment with distances drawn to state funded non-selective schools, or where development proposals are located in areas with sustainable access to schools providing for both sexes.

[73] Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010.

Table C.13.1: *SA Objective 12 – Education*

SA12 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Access to primary schools	Residential development proposals where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 800m to a primary school. Development proposals that include the development of a new primary school.	Residential development proposals where part of the site is located within 800m to a primary school.	Development proposals located within 800m-1km of a primary school. Development proposals for non-residential use.	N/A	Residential development proposals where the site is located beyond 1km to a primary school.	Development proposals that would result in the loss of an existing primary school.
Access to secondary schools	Residential development proposals where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 1.5km to a secondary school. Development proposals that include the development of a new secondary school.	Part of the site is located within 1.5km to a secondary school.	Development proposals located within 1.5km-2km of a secondary school. Development proposals for non-residential use.	N/A	Residential development proposals where the site is located beyond 2km to a secondary school.	Development proposals that would result in the loss of an existing secondary school.
Access to further education	Development proposals where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 3km of a further educational facility.	Part of the site is located within 3km of a further educational facility.	Development proposals for non-residential use, or outside of 3km to a further educational facility.	N/A	N/A	Development proposal that would result in the loss of a further education facility.

C.14 SA Objective 13: Economy and Employment

C.14.1.1 Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

C.14.1.2 **Table C.14.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 13: Economy.

C.14.2 Provision of employment floorspace

C.14.2.1 Development proposals which would result in a significant net increase in employment floorspace would be expected to have a major positive impact on the local economy. For the purpose of this assessment, a threshold of 1,000m^2 employment floorspace, or 1ha employment site, has been taken as 'significant' in line with the NPPF definition of 'major development'. Reasonable alternative sites proposed for employment use and comprising less than 1ha would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the local economy, and those comprising 1ha or more would be expected to have a major negative impact on the local economy. Development proposals which could result in a minor net decrease in employment floorspace (less than 1ha) would be expected to have a minor negative impact on the local economy.

C.14.2.2 Development proposals for employment uses that currently comprise employment floorspace would be likely to have an overall negligible impact on the economy objective. Assessment of current land use has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps[74].

C.14.3 Access to existing employment opportunities

C.14.3.1 In addition, major employment areas have been identified using spatial data provided by WODC, including town centres. It is assumed that, in line with Barton *et al.*'s sustainable distances[75], new residents should be situated within 5km of major employment areas to ensure they have access to a range of employment opportunities capable of meeting their needs. Major employment areas identified, to name a few, include Station Lane Industrial Area, Long Hanborough Business Park, Lakeside Industrial Estate, Windrush Industrial Estate and Brize Norton Royal Air Force (RAF) Base.

[74] Google Maps (2025) Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/maps

[75] Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

Table C.14.1: *SA Objective 13 – Economy and Employment*

SA13 Receptor	++	+	0	+/-	-	--
Provision of employment floorspace	Development proposals which result in a significant net increase in employment floorspace.	Development proposals which result in a minor net increase in employment floorspace.	Development proposals would not impact employment floorspace.	It is uncertain whether the proposed development would result in a net change in employment floorspace.	Development proposals which result in a minor net decrease in employment floorspace.	Development proposals which result in a significant net decrease in employment floorspace.
Access to existing employment opportunities	Residential development proposals where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 5km of two or more major employment locations or town centres.	Residential development proposals where the site is located partially or wholly within 5km of a major employment location or town centre.	Residential development proposals located beyond 5km but less than 8km from a major employment location. Development proposals for non-residential use.	N/A	Residential development proposals where the site is located over 8km from a major employment location.	N/A

Appendix D: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Strategic Sites (Pre-mitigation)

Appendix D Contents

Tables

Figures

D.1 Introduction

D.1.1 Overview

D.1.1.1 A total of 29 reasonable alternative strategic sites have been identified by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) during the preparation of the Regulation 18 Preferred Spatial Options version of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

D.1.1.2 Strategic sites as identified by the Council are considered to be those promoted for residential use with a capacity for over 300 dwellings. Sites submitted to WODC have undergone a high level filtering process to identify reasonable alternatives to rule out strategic sites within the Green Belt and those with major constraints (such as significant areas of flood risk, amongst others) and to retain focus for strategic growth around Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements.

D.1.1.3 The location of the reasonable alternative strategic sites is shown in **Figure D.1.1**, and their details are identified in **Table D.1.1.**

D.1.1.4 Each site has been assessed for likely impacts on each of the 13 SA Objectives, as outlined in the SA Framework (see **Appendix A**). Likely sustainability impacts have been set out in **Tables D.2.1 – D.13.1** within each SA Objective chapter, in accordance with the receptor-led site assessment methodology set out in **Appendix C**, as well as the general methodology information set out in **Chapter 2** of the main SA Report.

D.1.1.5 Due to their large scale and capacity, strategic sites are often capable of providing a range of supporting infrastructure alongside the core land use. Many are accompanied by masterplans that present a proposed layout and location of different land uses within the red line boundary, as well as evidence which underpins proposals at the site. The availability of site-specific information varies across the reasonable alternatives, and as such detailed evidence and mitigation has not been factored into the assessments that would bias the results. However, general assumptions have been provided by WODC to apply to each site, irrespective of any available supporting masterplan information to ensure sites are evaluated on a comparable basis. All strategic sites are assumed to provide:

- 40% affordable housing and 5% custom-build housing;
- Contribution towards healthcare, education and public transport;
- Provision of Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP);
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- Landscaping; and
- 10% biodiversity net gain.

D.1.1.6 Sites with capacity for 700 or more homes will additionally provide:

- One-form primary school;
- Convenience retail;
- Sports pitch;
- Allotments; and
- Through-site public transport.

D.1.1.7 All assessments remain at a high level and rely on available secondary data provided by the Council.

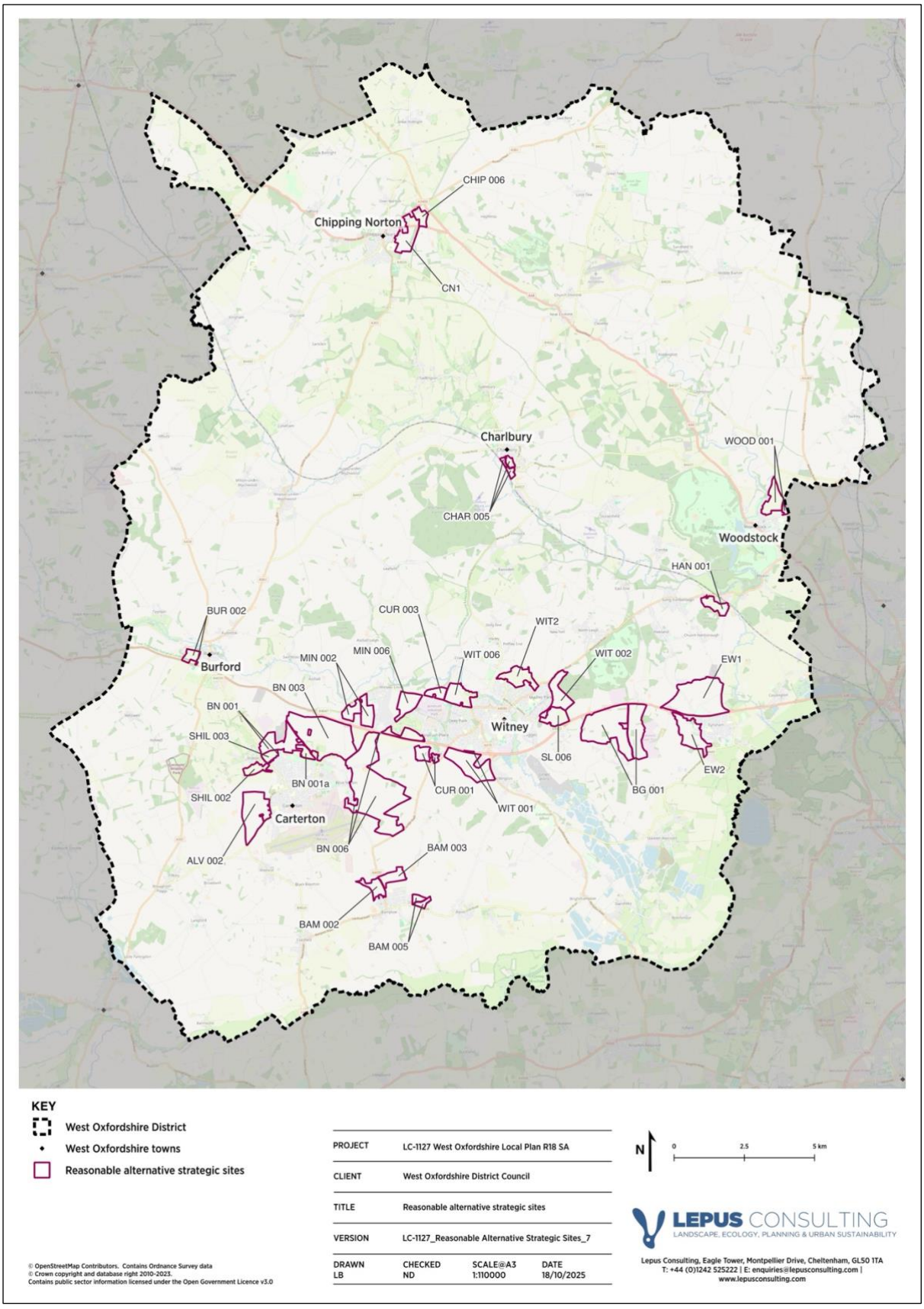

Figure D.1.1: *Location of the 29 reasonable alternative strategic sites within West Oxfordshire*

Table D.1.1: *Reasonable alternative strategic sites within West Oxfordshire*

Site reference	Site name	Proposed site use	Gross area (ha)	Net area (ha)	Estimated housing capacity (30 dph)
ALV002	Land west of Carterton	Mixed use (residential and community)	125.30	75.18	2,255
BAM002	Land west of Station Road	Residential	33.20	19.92	598
BAM003	Land east of Station Road	Residential	34.10	20.46	614
BAM005	Land north of Aston Road	Residential	20.70	12.42	373
BG001	Land at Barnard Gate	Mixed use (residential and employment)	303.10	181.86	5,456
BN001	Kilkenny Farm - Upper Norton	Mixed use (residential and community)	114.50	68.70	2,061
BN001a	Kilney Farm (Phase 1) - Middle Norton	Residential	17.10	10.26	308
BN003	Land north of Brize Norton and Carterton - Foxbury Farm	Mixed use (residential and employment)	255.20	153.12	4,594
BN006	Land east of Brize Norton	Mixed use (residential and community)	391.70	235.02	7,051
BUR002	Land south of Sheep Street	Residential	20.50	12.30	369
CHAR005	Land south and west of Charlbury	Residential	21.40	12.84	385
CHIP006	Land adjacent to East Chipping Norton SDA	Residential	22.70	13.62	409
CN1	East Chipping Norton SDA	Residential	70.37	42.22	450-550
CUR001	Land at Curbridge	Residential	30.90	18.54	556
CUR003	Land at Curbridge Downs Farm	Residential	23.20	13.92	418
CUR008	Land west of Downs Road	Residential	33.20	19.92	598
EW1	Salt Cross (Oxfordshire Cotswolds) Garden Village	Mixed use (residential, employment and community)	215.30	129.18	2,125
EW2	West Eynsham SDA	Residential	88.02	52.81	950
HAN001	Land at Hanborough Station	Residential	34.80	20.88	626
MIN002	Land west of Minster Lovell	Mixed use (residential, employment and community)	70.00	42.00	1,260
MIN006	Land west of Witney, south of Downs Road	Mixed use (residential, employment and community)	51.40	30.84	925
SHIL002	Land west of Shilton Road	Residential	25.20	15.12	454
SHIL003	Land north of Price Way	Residential	17.90	10.74	322
SL006	Land at Shores Green	Mixed use (residential and community)	45.50	27.30	819
WIT001	Land at South Witney	Mixed use (residential, employment and community)	107.90	64.74	1,942
WIT002	Land East of Witney	Mixed use (residential and community)	66.92	66.92	1,204
WIT006	Land north of Burford Road	Residential	61.40	36.84	1,105
WIT2	North Witney SDA	Mixed use (residential and community)	59.80	35.88	1,250
WOOD001	Land north and east of Banbury Road	Residential	58.90	35.34	1,060

D.2 SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation

D.2.1 Increase in GHG emissions

D.2.1.1 The estimated carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions for West Oxfordshire in 2023 was 448.1 kilo tonnes, with per capita emissions of 3.8 tonnes, according to UK local authority CO_2 emissions data[1]. It is likely that new development as a result of the Local Plan will increase local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the construction phase, the occupation and operation of homes and businesses, energy and water consumption and increases in local road transport with associated emissions. This impact is considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

D.2.1.2 The incorporation of green infrastructure (GI) presents several opportunities to mitigate climate change, for example through encouraging active travel through the provision of more attractive places and consequently reducing air pollution[2]. All strategic sites will provide on-site GI, which is expected to help offset climate change impacts to some extent. Additionally, all 29 strategic sites are likely to provide access to a range of sustainable transport options (See **Chapter D.12 – SA Objective 11**), potentially helping to reduce congestion and associated transport related emissions.

D.2.1.3 There may be further opportunities for strategic developments to reduce GHG emissions and reliance on fossil fuels and lead to positive effects on climate change, including via the provision of low carbon technologies such as solar panels, heat pumps, energy efficient layout and design, and provision of electric vehicle infrastructure. However, irrespective of such provisions there remains potential for a net increase in GHG emissions, due to the overall large quantum of growth expected through these sites.

D.2.1.4 Overall, the appraisal of all reasonable alternatives strategic sites is limited in its assessment of carbon emissions, due to an absence of site-specific carbon footprint data. Furthermore, the nature and scale of any on-site non-residential development and the extent of positive effects associated with the provision of renewable or low-carbon energy supply is unknown. Consequently, the carbon emissions likely to be generated as a result of development is currently uncertain. A more detailed carbon footprinting exercise could allow for more meaningful evaluation.

[1] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2023. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023 [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[2] TCPA (2023) What is Green Infrastructure? Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/ [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

Table D.2.1: Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation

Site reference	GHG emissions
ALV002	+/-
BAM002	+/-
BAM003	+/-
BAM005	+/-
BG001	+/-
BN001	+/-
BN001a	+/-
BN003	+/-
BN006	+/-
BUR002	+/-
CHAR005	+/-
CHIP006	+/-
CN1	+/-
CUR001	+/-
CUR003	+/-
CUR008	+/-
EW1	+/-
EW2	+/-
HAN001	+/-
MIN002	+/-
MIN006	+/-
SHIL002	+/-
SHIL003	+/-
SL006	+/-
WIT001	+/-
WIT002	+/-
WIT006	+/-
WIT2	+/-
WOOD001	+/-

D.2.2 Ranking

D.2.2.1 Based on the current available information at this stage of the Plan making process, a ranking exercise under SA Objective 1 – Climate Change Mitigation is not possible.

D.2.2.2 Climate change is an over-arching theme throughout many of the SA Objectives, including sustainable transport within SA Objective 11; see **Chapter D.12** for ranking which considers proximity to public transport, active travel routes and local services.

D.3 SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation

D.3.1 Flood Zones

D.3.1.1 The district is affected to varying degrees by fluvial (river) flooding and groundwater flooding. A small proportion of the district lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3, predominantly along the River Thames that comprises the southern border of the district. Flood risk will be expected to increase as a result of climate change impacts.

D.3.1.2 The majority (16) of the strategic sites are located wholly within Flood Zone 1 and will situate development in areas at low risk of fluvial flood risk. A minor positive impact on flood risk is identified for these 16 strategic sites.

D.3.1.3 The remaining 13 sites (ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN006, CUR001, CUR008, EW1, EW2, SHIL002, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006 and WIT2) are largely or partially located within Flood Zone 2 and 3. Sites ALV002, BG001, BN006, CUR001, CUR008, EW1, WIT002 and WIT2 are located in areas where more than 1% but less than 10% of the site area is within Flood Zone 2 and/or 3. Sites BAM002, EW2, SHIL002, WIT001 and WIT006 are located in areas where 10% or more of the site area coincides with Flood Zones 2 and/or 3. Information provided by WODC indicates that all 29 strategic sites will incorporate measures to reduce the risk of flooding, including the provision of SuDS, as well as GI that may provide opportunities for multi-functional benefits including for flood risk. However, for the purpose of this pre-mitigation assessment, and in accordance with the precautionary principle, it is considered that development at Sites ALV002, BG001, BN006, CUR001, CUR008, EW1, WIT002 and WIT2 has the potential to result in a minor negative impact on flooding and development at Sites BAM002, EW2, SHIL002, WIT001 and WIT006 has the potential to result in a major negative impact on flooding. Site end users at these 13 sites could potentially be located in areas at high risk of fluvial flooding.

D.3.2 Surface water flood risk

D.3.2.1 Small areas of surface water flood risk (SWFR) can be found within the district, primarily along watercourses in the south east and north of the district.

D.3.2.2 Some 14 strategic sites (ALV001, BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BG001, BN001a, BN006, EW1, EW2, HAN001, MIN006, WIT001, WIT002 and WIT2) are located in areas where more than 1% of the site area coincides with an area of high SWFR. Depending on the specific location of development within the gross site area, development at these 14 sites has potential to result in major negative effects associated with the location of site end users in areas of high flood risk and potential to exacerbate SWFR in the surrounding locations.

D.3.2.3 Additionally, a further three sites (CUR008, SL006 and WIT006) coincide with areas of low and/or medium SWFR, where more than 1% but less than 50% of these sites coincide with low SWFR and/or more than 1% but less than 10% in areas of medium SWFR. Depending on the specific location of development within the gross site area, development at these four sites has potential to result in a minor negative impact on SWFR.

D.3.2.4 The remaining 12 sites (BN001, BN003, BUR002, CHAR005, CHIP006, CN1, CUR001, CUR003, MIN002, SHIL002, SHIL003 and WOOD001) where less than 1% of the site

coincides with low, medium or high SWFR are identified to have a negligible impact on surface water flooding.

D.3.2.5 Information provided by WODC indicates that all 29 strategic sites will incorporate SuDS and GI, which could help to prevent or reduce runoff by capturing rainwater, allowing it to filter into the earth where it can be stored and reused. However, for the purpose of this pre-mitigation assessment, and in accordance with the precautionary principle, it is considered that potential remains for adverse effects notwithstanding these measures.

Table D.3.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation*

Site reference	Flood Zones	Surface Water Flood Risk
ALV002	-	--
BAM002	--	--
BAM003	+	--
BAM005	+	--
BG001	-	--
BN001	+	0
BN001a	+	--
BN003	+	0
BN006	-	--
BUR002	+	0
CHAR005	+	0
CHIP006	+	0
CN1	+	0
CUR001	-	0
CUR003	+	0
CUR008	-	-
EW1	-	--
EW2	--	--
HAN001	+	--
MIN002	+	0
MIN006	+	--
SHIL002	--	0
SHIL003	+	0
SL006	+	-
WIT001	--	--
WIT002	-	--
WIT006	--	-
WIT2	-	--
WOOD001	+	0

D.3.3 Ranking

D.3.3.1 **The best performing strategic sites** with regard to climate change adaptation (SA Objective 2) are those located wholly in Flood Zone 1 and in areas with the lowest risk of surface water flooding, which includes Sites BUR002, CHAR005, CHIP006, MIN002, SHIL003 and WOOD001 where less than 1% of the site areas are located in areas of low, medium or high SWFR.

D.3.3.2 **The worst performing strategic site** is identified as Site BAM002 which contains the highest proportion of land within Flood Zone 2 (10%) and Flood Zone 3 (24%) of the strategic sites, with approximately 7.5% of the site also in areas of SWFR (see **Figure D.3.1**). Sites WIT001 and EW2 were also identified to result in major negative effects for both fluvial and surface water flood risk, though to a lesser extent than BAM002. Site WIT001 has some 5% of its area in Flood Zone 2, 6% in Zone 3, and over 6% in areas of high SWFR; Site EW2 has some 14% in Flood Zone 2, 16% in Zone 3, and 5% in areas of SWFR). Additionally, although Site BAM005 is entirely located in Flood Zone 1, it is notably affected by SWFR with some 12.3% of the site area at high risk.

D.3.3.3 It should be noted that other potential sources of flood risk, such as sewer flood risk, should also be explored and quantified where specific data has not been available to inform the SA assessments. Furthermore, following guidance from the Environment Agency[3], nature-based solutions should be explored through the design and layouts of the sites, which could include planting trees and hedges and improve soil cover to increase water absorption, catch rainfall and slow down surface water run-off.

[3] Environment Agency (2021). Use nature-based solutions to reduce flooding in your area. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-nature-based-solutions-to-reduce-flooding-in-your-area [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

Figure D.3.1: *Fluvial and surface water flood risk at Site BAM002*

D.4 SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

D.4.1 European sites

D.4.1.1 The only European site within West Oxfordshire is Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is partially located within the east of the district, with the remainder of the designated site falling in the adjacent City of Oxford. Oxford Meadows SAC is designated for its lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis*) and creeping marshwort (*Apium repens*). The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) notes the SAC is vulnerable to hydrological changes and invasive species[4]. While not mentioned explicitly in the SIP, the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (2025)[5] has screened in Oxford Meadows SAC for habitat loss, air pollution and recreational pressure in addition to hydrological changes.

D.4.1.2 The emerging HRA will provide more detailed analysis of likely impacts and identification of impact pathways to this SAC and other European sites outside of the Plan area. The HRA Screening indicated potential for likely significant effects on Oxford Meadows SAC in terms of physical damage and habitat loss, air pollution, water quality/quantity and recreational pressure, as well as Cothill Fen SAC for air pollution, and Little Wittenham SAC for water quality/quantity. These impacts will be explored further in a re-screening of policies and site allocations, followed by an Appropriate Assessment.

D.4.1.3 At this stage of the plan making process, there are no formally identified Zones of Influence (ZOIs) for the European sites in proximity to West Oxfordshire. However, as part of the (now ceased) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 evidence base, an HRA Report was prepared that defined distance-based risk zones for Plan development including an inner 2km zone for recreation, and outer precautionary 10km zone[6].

D.4.1.4 None of the strategic sites lie within the 2km zone, however eight sites lie within 10km of Oxford Meadows SAC and/or Cothill Fen SAC. Based on available evidence at this stage, the proposed development at these eight sites has greater potential to result in a minor negative impact on the integrity of these SACs. For the remaining 21 strategic sites, the impact of development upon European sites is currently uncertain.

D.4.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

D.4.2.1 A total of 30 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lie within the Plan area, two of which ('Wychwood' and 'Chimney Meadows') are also designated as Nature Reserves (NNRs), and one of which ('Saltway') is designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Natural

[4] Natural England (2014). Site Improvement Plan for the Oxford Meadows SAC. Available at:https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4942743310696448 [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[5] LUC (2025) West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan (Regulation 18) HRA Screening Report. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cu2pcxiq/local-plan-2041-hra-screening-report-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 31/07/25]

[6] Ricardo (2019) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment: Distance-based risk-zones for Plan Development. Report for the Oxfordshire Plan Team. Available at: https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s60849/Appendix%207C%20HRA%20Distance-Based%20Risk%20Zones%20Nov%202019%20FINAL.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

England have developed Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for each SSSI in the country, in order to allow for a rapid assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals.

D.4.2.2 Site MIN002 is located adjacent to 'Worsham Lane' SSSI to the south of the site (see **Figure D.4.1**). Worsham Lane SSSI consists of an ancient track and is designated for the presence of a very rare plant species 'downy woundwort' (*Starchys germanica*)[7]. The SSSI is in favourable condition, with 51 downy woundwort plants counted in July 2024[8]. Depending on the specific layout of built development Site MIN002 and accompanying GI provisions, there is potential to significantly impact the special features of Worsham Lane SSSI. The site is located within an IRZ which requires consultation with Natural England. In line with the precautionary principle a major negative impact cannot be ruled out at this stage of assessment.

D.4.2.3 A further 16 sites (ALV001, BG001, BN001, BN006, CHAR005, CHIP006, CN1, CUR008, EW1, EW2, HAN001, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WOOD001 and WIT2) fall within an IRZ which indicates that consultation may be required with Natural England, reflected in the assessments at this stage as a potential minor negative impact. This includes IRZs where residential development of 50 or 100 units could result in recreational impacts on an SSSI or where development which includes any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 20m³/day to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water. GI and ecological enhancements alongside the development proposals could help to reduce adverse effects on SSSIs. However, this would need to be confirmed through consultation with Natural England and more detailed site appraisals to understand the sensitivities of surrounding SSSIs and potential impacts arising from new development.

D.4.2.4 The remaining 12 sites do not lie in proximity to any SSSIs or within an IRZ which indicates the proposed use as a threat to any SSSIs. These 12 sites are therefore likely to result in a negligible impact on SSSIs.

D.4.3 National Nature Reserves

D.4.3.1 There are two NNRs within West Oxfordshire, including 'Wychwood' NNR located within the centre of the district north of Witney and 'Chimney Meadows' NNR located within the south of the district.

D.4.3.2 Wychwood NNR is one of Oxfordshire's largest areas of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland, covering 262ha. The reserve is primarily made up of oak and ash woodland, providing a rich habitat for a variety of plant and animal species[9]. Site CHAR005 is located approximately 2km north east of Wychwood NNR, and the proposed development of 385 dwellings has potential to result in a minor negative impact on the NNR through increased visitor pressures from development.

[7] Natural England (1986). Worsham Lane SSSI. Available at: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1001186.pdf [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[8] Ibid

[9] Natural England (2014). Oxfordshire's National Nature Reserve. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxfordshires-national-nature-reserves/oxfordshires-national-nature-reserves [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

D.4.3.3 The remaining 28 sites are located further away from NNRs where it is less likely that development will affect NNRs, although visitor surveys could help to identify any further potential for cumulative adverse effects across the district as a whole.

D.4.4 Ancient Woodland

D.4.4.1 West Oxfordshire supports a significant amount of ancient woodland, with large proportions located within the Wychwood NNR including 'Churchill Copse', 'Hawknest Copse' and 'Fiveoak Copse'.

D.4.4.2 Site BN006 coincides with approximately 4.5ha of ancient woodland named 'Ten Acres Copse' and 'Hucks Copse' (see **Figure D.4.2**), and Site MIN002 coincides with a small proportion of an unnamed woodland approximately 0.3ha in size. Although it is likely that the areas of ancient woodland within the site boundaries can be safeguarded, at this stage of assessment, a major negative impact on ancient woodland through habitat loss and fragmentation and potential adverse effects associated with air pollution and recreational disturbance cannot be ruled out. Development in these locations may inhibit nature recovery efforts associated with the emerging Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)[10].

D.4.4.3 Site BUR001 is located adjacent to 'Priory Wood', Site HAN001 is located adjacent to 'Pinsley Wood' and Site WIT002 is located adjacent to 'Cogges Wood'. It is likely that buffer zones excluding development in immediate proximity to these ancient woodlands, in line with Natural England's guidance[11], can be incorporated into the site layouts to avoid significant impacts. However, irrespective of potential buffer zones, increased recreational pressures and pollution impacts could be expected to some extent as a result of the introduction of large-scale development in close proximity to the woodlands. Additionally, two sites lie in close proximity to 'Maggots Grove': Site CUR003 approximately 180m to the north, and Site WIT006 approximately 70m to the south. At this stage of the assessment process, a minor negative impact is identified for these five sites.

D.4.4.4 The remaining 22 strategic sites are located away from areas of ancient woodland where adverse effects are less likely. Therefore, a negligible impact is identified.

D.4.5 Local Nature Reserves

D.4.5.1 There are two LNRs located within the district, 'Saltway' LNR and 'Crecy Hill' LNR. None of the 29 strategic sites are located in close proximity to an LNR and therefore development is likely to result in a negligible impact on LNRs.

D.4.6 Local Wildlife Sites

D.4.6.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) maintains a 'living list' of the Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in each local authority area in Berkshire and Oxfordshire[12].

[10] Oxfordshire County Council (2024) LNRS Draft Local Habitat Map. Available at: https://oxfordshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8d1906c05f1941f585491fd63ee06e92 [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[11] Natural England (2022). Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions#:~:text=Buffer%20zone%20recommendations&text=For%20ancient%20or%20veteran%20trees,15%20times%20the%20tree's%20diameter. [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[12] TVERC (2024) LWS 'living list' and locations. Available at: https://www.tverc.org/cms/LWSLivingLists [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

Some 103 LWS lie wholly or partially within West Oxfordshire District, covering a range of habitat types including grassland, woodland and ponds.

D.4.6.2 Site BN006 wholly coincides with 'Huck's Copse' LWS (See **Figure D.4.2**). The development of 7,051 dwellings through Site BN006 is likely to result in significant impacts on the features of the LWS, which includes ancient woodland habitat, and therefore a major negative impact cannot be ruled out at this stage of assessment. Development through Site BN006 will benefit from following Oxfordshire County Council's guidance[13] on local biodiversity assets within West Oxfordshire.

D.4.6.3 Seven sites (ALV002, CUR003, EW1, HAN001, MIN002, WIT002 and WIT006) are located adjacent to an LWS. There is potential for development at these locations to result in increased disturbance, recreation or pollution at these LWSs during construction and occupation, with adverse implications for the biodiversity they support. Although GI and ecological enhancements alongside the proposed development could help to avoid or reduce adverse effects on LWS, at this stage of the assessment process a minor negative impact is identified.

D.4.6.4 The remaining 21 sites are not located in proximity to an LWS and are therefore likely to result in a negligible impact on this biodiversity asset.

D.4.7 Geological site

D.4.7.1 There are 16 Local Geological Sites (LGS) which are located wholly or partially in the district designated by the Oxfordshire Geology Trust, which exhibit important geological and geomorphological features[14]. The proposed development at all strategic sites is likely to have a negligible impact on geological sites as they do not coincide with any local geological sites.

D.4.8 Priority habitat

D.4.8.1 Priority habitats present in the district include good quality semi-improved grassland, found scattered throughout the north, and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh along the River Windrush and the River Thames corridors in the centre and south east, as well as some areas of traditional orchard throughout the district. Smaller proportions of lowland habitats are also present (calcareous grassland, dry acid grassland, fens, meadows).

D.4.8.2 Some 15 strategic sites coincide with a priority habitat, including deciduous woodland, traditional orchard, good quality semi-improved grassland and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh (ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN001, BN003, BN006, CHAR005, CN1, EW1, EW2, HAN001, MIN002, WIT001, WIT006 and WIT2). The majority of these sites coincide with small areas of priority habitat, covering less than 5% of the site area. Site WIT006 is located where over 24% of the site area comprises priority habitat (good quality semi-improved grassland; and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh). While it is likely that some or all of these habitats could be retained alongside development, at this stage there

[13] Oxfordshire County Council (2014). Biodiversity and planning. Local sites and priority habitats and species. Available at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/countryside-access/oxon_bioandplanning_section3.pdf [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[14] TVERC (2024) Local Geological Sites. Available at: https://www.tverc.org/cms/content/local-geological-sites [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

remains potential for minor negative impacts across all 15 sites (particularly at WIT006) due to possible loss or degradation of these valuable habitats.

D.4.8.3 The remaining 14 sites do not coincide with any identified priority habitat; therefore, the proposed development at these sites will be likely to have a negligible impact on the overall presence of priority habitats.

Table D.4.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity*

Site reference	European Sites	SSSIs	NNRs	Ancient woodland	LNRs	LWS	Geological sites	Priority habitats
ALV002	+/-	-	0	0	0	-	0	-
BAM002	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
BAM003	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM005	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BG001	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
BN001	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
BN001a	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BN003	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
BN006	+/-	-	0	--	0	--	0	-
BUR002	+/-	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
CHAR005	+/-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-
CHIP006	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
CN1	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
CUR001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR003	+/-	0	0	-	0	-	0	0
CUR008	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
EW1	-	-	0	0	0	-	0	-
EW2	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
HAN001	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
MIN002	+/-	--	0	--	0	-	0	-
MIN006	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHIL002	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHIL003	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SL006	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT001	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
WIT002	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	0
WIT006	+/-	0	0	-	0	-	0	-
WIT2	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
WOOD001	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.4.9 Ranking

D.4.9.1 Uncertainty remains in the assessment of strategic sites in terms of impacts on European sites at this stage of the assessment process, in absence of the HRA conclusions.

D.4.9.2 Sites BAM003, BAM005, BN001a, CUR001, MIN006, SHIL002 and SHIL003 could be identified as the **best performing strategic sites**. These seven sites are not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on any identified biodiversity assets within the Plan area, based on the available information at this stage.

D.4.9.3 Site BN006 could be identified as the **worst performing strategic site** with regard to biodiversity and geodiversity (SA Objective 3). Development at Site BN006 has potential to result in significant adverse impacts on ancient woodland named 'Ten Acres Copse' and 'Hucks Copse' which is also designated as an LWS (see **Figure D.4.1**). There is also potential for loss or degradation of priority habitats, as it contains several areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchards spread across the site. New development could disrupt the sensitive biodiversity that relies on these habitats, as well as any potential for delivery of the LNRS in this area where corridors between designated biodiversity sites are vital. While Site MIN002 was also identified to result in a potential major negative effect against two receptors (SSSI and ancient woodland), the smaller scale of the site compared to BN006 and location of the Worsham Lane SSSI at the periphery of the site (see **Figure D.4.2**) means that there is likely to be greater scope to avoid significant effects at Site MIN002 overall.

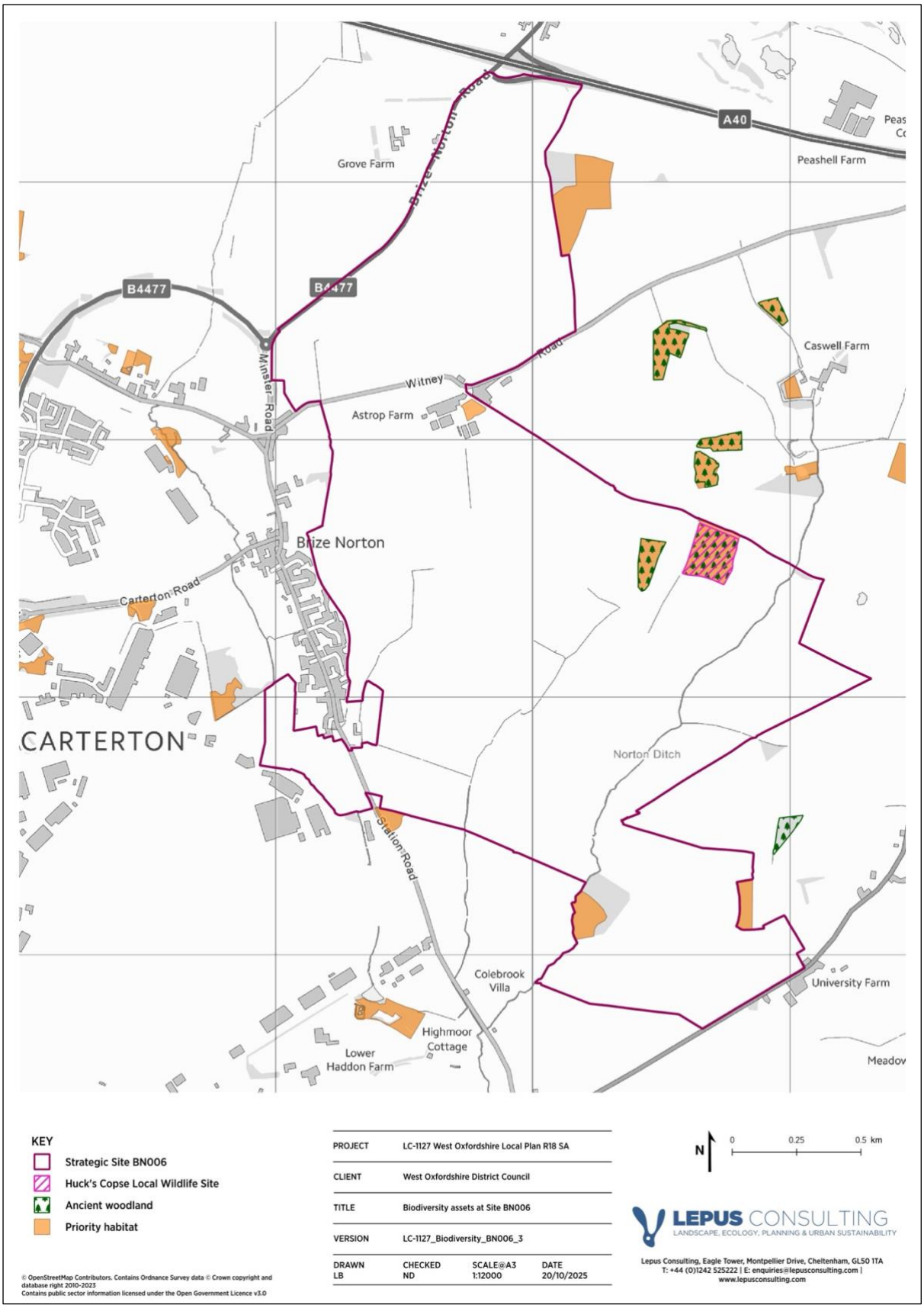

Figure D.4.1: *Biodiversity designations in and around Site BN006*

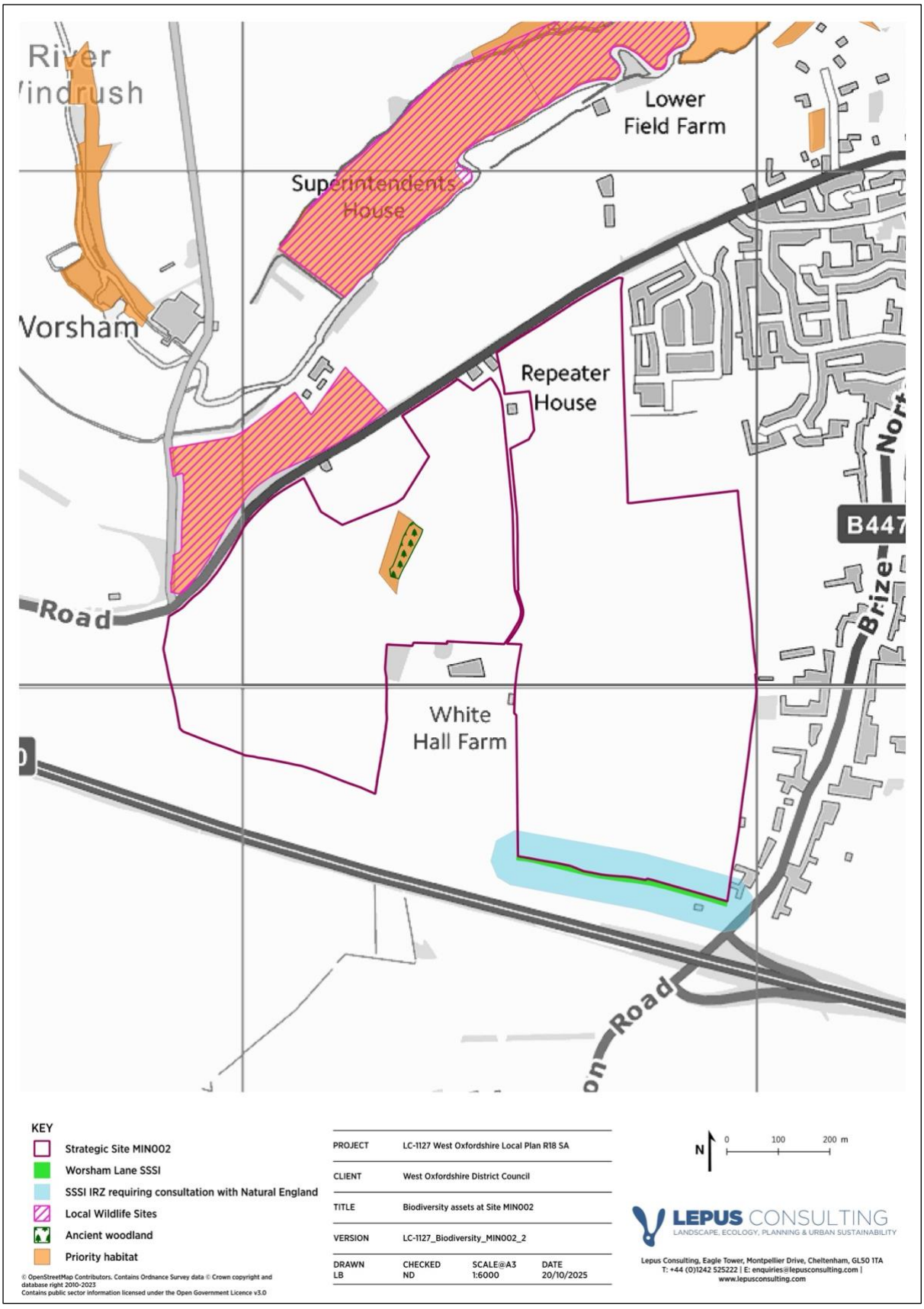

Figure D.4.2: *Biodiversity designations in and around Site MIN002*

D.5 SA Objective 4 – Landscape

D.5.1 Cotswold National Landscape

D.5.1.1 The Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), formerly known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), encompasses a large portion of the northern west of the district. The Cotswolds is the largest National Landscape in England and is recognised by its rich, diverse and high-quality landscape encompassing flower-rich limestone grasslands and ancient broadleaved woodland[15]. The CNL Landscape Character Assessment[16] identified 19 landscape character types across the CNL, within which there are 68 distinct character areas. The CNL Landscape Strategy and Guidelines[17] highlights key characteristics and sensitivities for each area that have been drawn upon in this assessment.

D.5.1.2 Sites BUR002 and CHAR005 are wholly located within the CNL and wholly comprise undeveloped land (see **Figure D.5.1**). Site BUR002 is largely located within the 'Lower Windrush Valley' character area and a small area within the south of the site is located within the 'South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands' character area. Development at Site BUR002 could result in the loss of key features of the character areas including fields defined by hedgerows and stone walls which are located both within and adjacent to the site and the use of post and wire fences throughout the site. Site CHAR005 is wholly located within the 'Lower Evenlode Valley' character area. Development at Site CHAR005 could result in the loss of key features of the character area including fields defined by hedgerows, stone walls and the use of post and wire fences. Without information on the site layout and design, a significant adverse impact on the special qualities and character of the CNL cannot be ruled out. Site-specific landscape assessments to identify any sensitivities should be undertaken for both sites to explore opportunities to mitigate adverse impacts.

D.5.1.3 Sites CN1, CHIP006 and MIN002 are located adjacent to the CNL. Site MIN002 lies on the western side of the existing settlement of Minster Lovell, and Sites CN1 and CHIP006 on the eastern side of the existing settlement of Chipping Norton, where there may be limited intervisibility with the site and the CNL in some areas depending on the specific layout, density and design of new buildings. However, owing to the large-scale development proposed at the site that would significantly expand Minster Lovell and Chipping Norton respectively, a major negative impact on the CNL is identified for the three sites at this stage. Further site-specific landscape evaluation should be undertaken to confirm the potential for adverse effects and any opportunities to minimise or mitigate such effects.

D.5.1.4 Seven further sites (BN001, BN003, BN006, CUR003, HAN001, MIN006 and WIT006) are located in close proximity to the CNL, extending out from existing settlements of Carterton, Long Hanborough, Minster Lovell and Witney. Owing to the scale of the proposed

[15] Cotswolds National Landscape (2024) Special qualities of the Cotswolds – A National Treasure. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-landscape-2/ [Date accessed: 29/01/25]

[16] Cotswolds National Landscape (no date) Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[17] Cotswolds National Landscape (2016) Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-strategy-and-guidelines/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

development at these sites, and depending on the specific layout and location of development within the indicative site boundaries, there is potential for development at these locations to detract from the setting or views of the CNL. It is recommended that further site-specific landscape evaluation is undertaken to confirm the potential for adverse effects, given that intervisibility between land parcels and the CNL is likely to vary based on topography and presence of existing landscape detractors.

D.5.1.5 The remaining 17 strategic sites which are located at a greater distance from the CNL, or are already located in an urbanised area, are unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts and a negligible impact is recorded against this landscape receptor.

D.5.2 Landscape character

D.5.2.1 Baseline data on Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Types (LT) within the Plan area are derived from the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998)[18]. All 29 strategic sites are located on undeveloped land and are large scale in nature, as such all strategic sites could potentially lead to loss or degradation of key landscape features or contradict with the guidelines of the LCA in question. Furthermore, 17 sites are located within a visually exposed LT which is particularly sensitive to development, including the 'open limestone wold' LT at 15 sites and 'open rolling vale farmland' LT at three sites.

D.5.2.2 The provision of GI and landscaping areas alongside the core land uses could reduce the impact of development on landscape character by retaining existing natural features such as woodlands, grasslands, and hedgerows. GI can also create green corridors and help soften the visual impacts of developments. Overall, at this stage of the assessment a minor negative impact on the landscape character cannot be ruled out for all 29 sites.

D.5.3 Landscape sensitivity

D.5.3.1 Baseline data on landscape sensitivity has been drawn on from published landscape assessments around Witney[19], Carterton[20] and Chipping Norton[21], and on a landscape and visual assessment around Eynsham[22], insofar as these relate to land parcels within which the reasonable alternative strategic sites lie.

D.5.3.2 Out of the 29 strategic sites, 15 sites (ALV002, BN001, CHIP006, CN1, CUR003, CUR008, EW1, MIN006, SHIL002, SHIL003, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006 and WIT2) fall within areas of 'moderate to high' and/or 'high' sensitivity and as such have been identified as having a major negative impact on sensitive landscapes. Sites WIT002 and SL006 lie in

[18] Atlantic Consultants (1998) West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cpqn2fj0/west-oxfordshire-landscape-assessment-1998.pdf [Date accessed: 03/02/25]

[19] AHLC (2007) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Witney Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2mdjjkg4/witney-landscape-assessment-2007-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[20] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Carterton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/gykgnexu/carterton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[21] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qwrkoffm/chipping-norton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 12/05/25]

[22] LUC (2019) Oxfordshire Cotswold Garden Village West Eynsham Strategic Development Area: Landscape and visual assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/pvop3sag/eynsham-landscape-report.pdf [Date accessed: 14/05/25]

north east Witney, where the Landscape and Visual Review (2015)[23] recommended to avoid development owing to the sensitivity of the landscape in this area, high visibility and its important role in the setting of Cogges Wood. The same study recommended that for south Witney, where WIT001 lies, substantial landscape and visual buffers will be needed to maintain separation of Curbridge and Ducklington. A Landscape and Visual Review of land east of Chipping Norton (2014)[24], where CHIP006 lies, recommended a reduced development area that includes an urban-rural landscaped transition zone. The Landscape and Visual Review of land around Carterton and Witney (2012)[25] highlighted that development is unlikely to be possible without significant change to the landscape character and disruption to views; this affects a number of sites around Carterton (ALV002, SHIL002, SHIL003, BN001, BN003, BN006) and Witney (WIT001, WIT2, WIT002, WIT006, MIN006, CUR001, CUR003, CUR008). The study states that landscape and visual buffers would be essential to maintain separation with surrounding settlements including Shilton, Brize Norton and Alvescot (around Carterton – including where Sites SHIL002 and SHIL003 are located) and Hailey, Poffley End, Minster Lovell, Curbridge and High Cogges (around Witney – including where Sites MIN006, CUR003 and CUR008 are located).

D.5.3.3 Two sites (BN001a and EW2) fall within areas of 'moderate' and 'moderate to low' sensitivity and are identified as having a minor negative impact on landscape sensitivity.

D.5.3.4 The remaining 12 sites (BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BG001, BN003, BN006, BUR002, CHAR005, CUR001, HAN001, MIN002 and WOOD001) fall outside of areas which are covered by the landscape sensitivity data. The potential impact of development at these locations on sensitive landscapes is uncertain, based on available information at this stage.

D.5.3.5 It is likely that the provision of GI at each site could reduce the impact of development on particularly sensitive landscape areas by retaining existing natural features such as woodlands, grasslands, and hedgerows. GI can also create green corridors and help soften the visual impacts of developments. At this stage however, this does not rule out the possibility of major or minor negative on sensitive landscapes.

D.5.3.6 It is strongly recommended that the Council carry out further landscape studies in order to have a full picture on the likely impacts of development sites on West Oxfordshire's landscape, particularly for large-scale developments such as strategic sites. It is likely that some locations outside the scope of currently published evidence studies are likely to be particularly sensitive, such as Charlbury.

[23] Kirkham Landscape Planning (2015) West Oxfordshire Local Plan. Landscape and Visual Review of two additional submissions for Witney Strategic Development Options. January 2015. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ayznfizd/landscape-and-visual-review-of-two-additional-submissions-for-witney-strategic-development-options-kirkham-landscape-planning-january-2015.pdf [Date accessed: 22/08/25]

[24] Kirkham Landscape Planning (2014) West Oxfordshire Local Plan. Landscape and Visual Review of Chipping Norton Strategic Site Option 204. 27 May 2014. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oj5ll2x0/landscape-and-visual-review-of-chipping-norton-strategic-site-option.pdf [Date accessed: 22/08/25]

[25] Kirkham Landscape Planning (2012) West Oxfordshire Local Plan. Landscape and Visual Review of Submissions for Carterton and Witney Strategic Development Options. October 2012. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1jihezps/kirkham-landscape-and-visual-review-of-strategic-site-options-2012.pdf [Date accessed: 22/08/25]

D.5.4 Public Rights of Way Network

D.5.4.1 There is an extensive Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network within West Oxfordshire, although this is more fragmented within the urban and the most rural areas.

D.5.4.2 The proposed development at 27 strategic sites could potentially alter the views of open countryside currently experienced by users of the PRoW network, and result in a minor negative impact on the landscape. For instance, Site BG001 includes various PRoW throughout the site. There is potential for the proposed development to include the introduction of new pedestrian links, and to enhance and/or retain the PRoW within the proposed development, however these measures are unlikely to address the visual impacts associated with the development.

D.5.4.3 The remaining two sites (CUR003 and SL006) are separated from PRoWs by existing vegetation and strong field boundaries. Development at these two sites will be unlikely to significantly alter views and are both assessed as negligible.

D.5.5 Increase risk of coalescence

D.5.5.1 The risks of coalescence and urbanisation of the countryside are key considerations for development proposals within West Oxfordshire. Owing to their large scale and comprising of undeveloped land, many of the strategic sites have potential to give rise to adverse effects in regard to coalescence.

D.5.5.2 Nine strategic sites (BAM005, BN001, BN003, BN006, CUR008, MIN006, SHIL002, SHIL003 and WIT001) are likely to increase coalescence between existing settlements. This includes reducing separation between Bampton and Aston through Site BAM005; Carterton and Shilton through Sites BN001, SHIL002 and SHIL003; Carterton and Minster Lovell through Site BN003 and BN006; Witney and Minster Lovell through Sites CUR008 and MIN006; and Ducklington, Curbridge and Witney through Site WIT001. Although there may be potential for the layout of the sites to retain landscape buffers between settlements, at this stage of the assessment process, a minor negative impact is identified at these sites.

D.5.5.3 A negligible impact is identified for the remaining 20 strategic sites which are located in rural settings or are located in areas unlikely to increase the risk of coalescence.

D.5.6 Tree protection orders

D.5.6.1 Tree protection orders (TPOs) are assigned to specific trees or groups of trees whose preservation is considered necessary to protect local amenity. A TPO prohibits the damage or destruction of trees without the written consent of the local planning authority[26].

D.5.6.2 Nine strategic sites (CHIP006, CN1, CUR001, CUR003, EW1, SHIL002, WIT001, WIT002 and WIT006) coincide or are located adjacent to a tree protected by a TPO. The proposed development at these sites could result in potential adverse impacts in the form of structural damage to the tree, soil disruption which could impact surrounding ecosystems, and further implications to the appearance and character of the local landscape. A minor negative impact on TPOs is identified for these sites. It is likely that adverse effects can be avoided or mitigated through careful site layout and design.

[26] MHCLG (2014). Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas. Guidance. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

Table D.5.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 4 – Landscape*

Site reference	Cotswolds National Landscape	Landscape character	Landscape sensitivity	Views from the PRoW network	Coalescence	TPO
ALV002	0	-	--	-	0	0
BAM002	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BAM003	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BAM005	0	-	+/-	-	-	0
BG001	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BN001	-	-	--	-	-	0
BN001a	0	-	-	-	0	0
BN003	-	-	+/-	-	-	0
BN006	-	-	+/-	-	-	0
BUR002	--	-	+/-	-	0	0
CHAR005	--	-	+/-	-	0	0
CHIP006	--	-	--	-	0	-
CN1	--	-	--	-	0	-
CUR001	0	-	+/-	-	0	-
CUR003	-	-	--	0	0	-
CUR008	0	-	--	-	-	0
EW1	0	-	--	-	0	0
EW2	0	-	-	-	0	-
HAN001	-	-	+/-	-	0	0
MIN002	--	-	+/-	-	0	0
MIN006	-	-	--	-	-	0
SHIL002	0	-	--	-	-	-
SHIL003	0	-	--	-	-	0
SL006	0	-	--	0	0	0
WIT001	0	-	--	-	-	-
WIT002	0	-	--	-	0	-
WIT006	-	-	--	-	0	-
WIT2	0	-	--	-	0	0
WOOD001	0	-	+/-	-	0	0

D.5.7 Ranking

D.5.7.1 It is difficult to identify best and worst performing sites against landscape (SA Objective 4), owing to the lack of detailed information available at this stage to inform the assessments; for example, landscape sensitivity/capacity information across the district would enable a more robust evaluation.

D.5.7.2 Sites BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BG001, and WOOD001 currently appear to be the **best performing** options, with only two minor negative impacts identified (on landscape character and views from the PRoW network). However, this assessment does not account for landscape sensitivity, which remains uncertain due to the sites being located outside the coverage of published landscape studies.

D.5.7.3 At this stage, Sites BUR002 and CHAR005 are considered the overall **worst performing options**, despite some uncertainty regarding their impact on sensitive landscapes due to

their location outside the coverage of published landscape assessments. However, both sites lie entirely within the CNL and could significantly affect its special qualities and character, as well as alter views of the open countryside currently enjoyed by users of the PRoW network. Sites CN1 and CHIP006 may also be considered poorly performing; both are identified to result in major negative effects on the setting of the CNL, as they are located adjacent to its boundary, and fall within areas identified as having 'high' to 'moderate-high' landscape sensitivity.

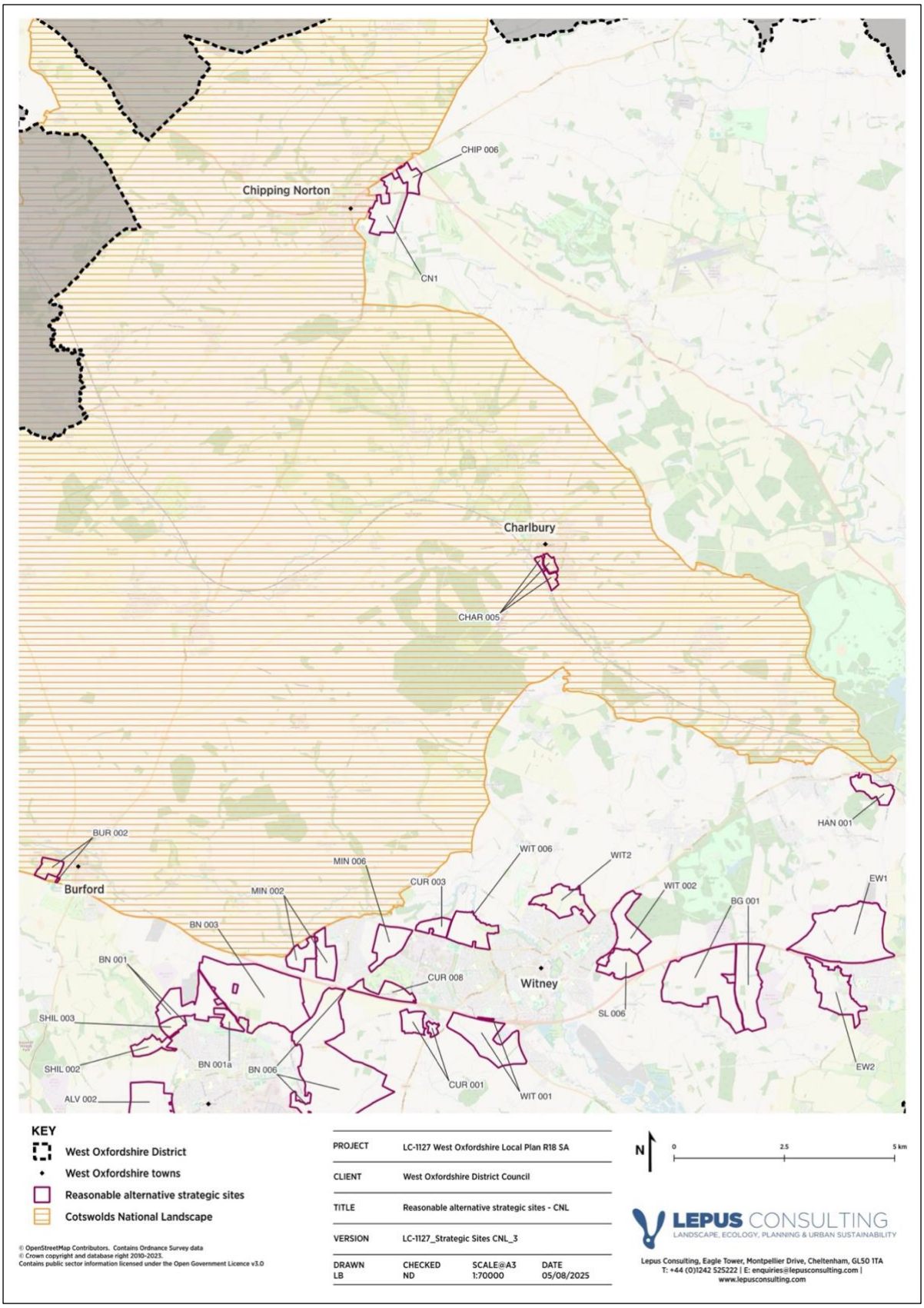

Figure D.5.1: *Cotswolds National Landscape and the strategic sites in its proximity*

D.6 SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage

D.6.1 Grade I Listed Building

D.6.1.1 Within West Oxfordshire there are 42 Grade I Listed Buildings (LB).

D.6.1.2 Site BG001 is located adjacent to the Grade I LB 'St James the Great Church' to the south of the site, which includes a mixture of medieval and Victorian architectural features[27]. The proposed development of 5,456 dwellings through the currently undeveloped site will be expected to result in significant adverse impacts on the setting of this LB; at this stage of the assessment process, a major negative impact is identified for Site BG001.

D.6.1.3 The proposed development at the remaining 28 strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any Grade I LBs, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest LBs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features. A negligible impact is identified.

D.6.2 Grade II* Listed Building

D.6.2.1 There are 214 Grade II* LBs within the district.

D.6.2.2 Site CHAR005 coincides with Grade II* LB 'Lee Place', a small country house that includes features from the 17th and 18th century[28]. The proposed development of 385 dwellings into the current undeveloped site area is likely to significantly impact the setting of this LB, as such without additional information a major negative impact is identified for Site CHAR005.

D.6.2.3 Site SHIL002 is located adjacent to 'Church of the Holy Rood' Grade II* LB and a further three sites are located in close proximity to a Grade II* LB: Sites BN001 and SHIL003 (and SHIL002) within 200m of 'Dovecote about 45m north west of the Old Manor'; and Site BN006 approximately 140m from 'Church of St Brutus'. Development at these four sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on the setting of a Grade II* LB, owing to the large scale of growth in areas comprising of entirely undeveloped land.

D.6.2.4 The proposed development at the remaining 24 strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any Grade II* LBs, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest LBs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features. A negligible impact is identified.

D.6.3 Grade II Listed Building

D.6.3.1 There are 2,950 Grade II Listed Buildings located throughout West Oxfordshire.

D.6.3.2 Four sites (BN006, CHAR005, EW1 and EW2) coincide with multiple Grade II LB. Site BN006 coincides with the Grade II LBs 'Astrop Farmhouse', which was built in the 17th century and is primarily made of limestone rubble[29], and 'Brewhouse', also built in the 17th

[27] Historic England. List entry. Church of St James, Church End. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1199106?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[28] Historic England. List entry. Lee Place. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1284015?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[29] Historic England. List entry. Astrop Farmhouse. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1284280?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

century and includes a gabled stone slate roof[30]. Site CHAR005 coincides with multiple Grade II LB (which are features of Grade II* LB 'Lee Place' as explained in **paragraph D.6.2.2**) including 'Stable Block at Lee Place', 'Pair of Urns at North West End of Terrace at Lee Place' and 'Garden Pavillion'. Site EW1 coincides with multiple Grade II LB associated with the Grade II LB 'City Farmhouse,' an 18th-century farmhouse constructed from limestone with a gabled stone slate roof[31]. The associated Grade II LB include outbuildings, barns, and an attached wall, all contributing to the historic and architectural significance of the farmhouse setting. Site EW2 coincides with 'Chil Bridge' Grade II LB, dating from the late 18th to early 19th century, constructed of limestone rubble with a rendered finish and dressed stone voussoirs[32]. The large quantum of growth proposed through these four sites within currently undeveloped areas is likely to significantly impact the setting of these Grade II LB, as such without additional information a major negative impact is identified for all four sites.

D.6.3.3 Five sites (BG001, HAN001, MIN006, SHIL002 and CN1) are located adjacent to a Grade II LB, with an additional 11 sites located in close proximity to a Grade II LB. There is potential for the proposed strategic development at these sites to result in a minor negative impact on the setting or historic significance of the nearby LBs.

D.6.3.4 The proposed development at the remaining nine strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any Grade II LBs, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest LBs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features. A negligible impact is identified.

D.6.4 Conservation Areas

D.6.4.1 There are 53 conservation areas (CA) located within West Oxfordshire, indicating places of special architectural or historic interest, which have a particular character or appearance worth preserving or enhancing.

D.6.4.2 A small proportion of Site BAM002 coincides with Bampton CA, and Site CHAR005 lies wholly within Charlbury CA. A further five sites are located adjacent to a CA (BN001, SHIL002 and SHIL003 adjacent to Shilton CA; BUR002 adjacent to Burford CA; and EW2 adjacent to Eynsham CA). Five other strategic sites are located in close proximity to a CA where strategic scale development could affect the setting of CAs (CUR003 and MIN006 within 260m of Minster Lovell CA; WIT001 approximately 120m from Ducklington CA; CN1 approximately 50m from Chipping Norton CA; and WOOD001 approximately 180m from Woodstock CA). The proposed development at these 12 sites has potential to result in minor negative impacts on the character and/or setting of these CAs.

D.6.4.3 The remaining 17 strategic sites are less likely to have a significant impact on the setting of any CA, with negligible impacts identified.

[30] Historic England. List entry. Brewhouse approximately 10 metres east of Astrop Farmhouse. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1052450?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[31] Historic England. List entry. City Farmhouse. Available at: Historic England. List entry. Church of St James, Church End. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1199106?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 02/05/25]

[32] Historic England. List entry. Chil Bridge. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1283888?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 02/05/25]

D.6.5 Scheduled Monument

D.6.5.1 There are 139 Scheduled Monuments (SM) within the district.

D.6.5.2 Four sites (CHAR005, WOOD001, CN1 and EW2) coincide with a SM. Site CHAR005 partially coincides with 'Section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch running east from the River Evenlode opposite Cornbury Park', which dates back to the iron age, with the earthworks providing evidence of how the land was used before Roman conquest[33]. Site WOOD001 partially coincides with 'Rectangular earthwork, Hensington'. Site CN1 partially coincides with 'Romano-British rural settlement and Iron Age remains, on the eastern edge of Chipping Norton', dating from the 1st to 4th centuries AD, with potential Iron Age origins. The SM includes rectilinear stone buildings within walled enclosures, with possible features such as shrines, a bathhouse, a cemetery, and associated trackways or roads[34]. Site EW2 partially coincides with 'Sites discovered by aerial photography near Foxley Farm', recorded under an Old County Number (OCN) scheduling record[35] where there is currently limited publicly available information regarding its extent, character, or significance. The large-scale development proposed through all four sites on areas comprising of entirely undeveloped land is likely to result in significant adverse impacts on these SMs through direct impacts to the integrity of these earthworks; as such, without additional information major negative impacts cannot be ruled out at this stage of assessment.

D.6.5.3 Site BN006 is located approximately 14m north of an SM listed as 'Rectangular enclosures north west of Mount Owen Farm'. The large-scale development proposed through this site on areas comprising of entirely undeveloped land is likely to result in adverse impacts on the features and setting of the SM, as such without additional information a minor negative impact is likely.

D.6.5.4 All other strategic sites are not located in close proximity to any SMs, and as such, the proposed development at these sites is not expected to significantly impact the features or setting of any SMs.

D.6.6 Registered Parks and Gardens (including Blenheim Palace WHS)

D.6.6.1 Within the district there are 17 Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs) including Blenheim Palace which is also designated as a World Heritage Site (WHS). Blenheim Palace was designated as a WHS in 1987 due to its architectural significance and landscape design, marking a turning point in English architecture[36].

D.6.6.2 Site HAN001 is located approximately 300m south of Blenheim Palace WHS (see **Figure D.6.1**). 'Pinsley Wood' is located adjacent to Site HAN001 to the south, which is identified

[33] Historic England. List entry. Section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch running east from the River Evenlode opposite Cornbury Park. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1012902?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[34] Historic England. List entry. Romano-British rural settlement and Iron Age remains, on the eastern edge of Chipping Norton. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1486619?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 02/05/25]

[35] Historic England. List entry. Sites discovered by aerial photography, near Foxley Farm. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1006333?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 02/05/25]

[36] Historic England. List entry. Blenheim Palace. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000091?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

within the Setting Study of the Blenheim Palace WHS Management Plan[37] as being important to the overall setting of the WHS. The proposed development at Site HAN001 could result in adverse impacts through loss and degradation of this woodland and therefore detract from the setting of the WHS. Although there may be opportunities to ensure landscape buffers and appropriate design and layout to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the setting of Blenheim Palace, without site specific heritage assessments, a minor negative impact cannot be ruled out at this stage of the assessment for Site HAN001. Site WOOD001 is located approximately 580m east of Blenheim Palace WHS (see **Figure D.6.1**). The WHS Setting Study[38] identifies areas of intervisibility between Site WOOD001 and the WHS within the south of the site. Without additional information regarding the design and layout of development, adverse impacts are likely on the setting of the WHS, which could diminish its value or integrity, and further minor negative impacts are likely through increased pressure from visitors, which could result in heavy foot traffic and deterioration of parkland within the site. Development at Site HAN001 and WOOD001 should make use of the WHS Management Plan[39] to consider ways in which growth as a result of the proposed development can alleviate existing pressures and support management objectives.

D.6.6.3 Site CHAR005 is located adjacent to Cornbury Park which comprises a 16th and 17th century country house with garden, bordered by Wychwood Forest to the west and pastureland sloping down to the River Evenlode to the east[40]. The main entrance to Cornbury Park is off the lane from Finstock to Charlbury to the north east of the RPG, which Site CHAR005 is located adjacent to. Site BG001 is located 110m south of Eynsham Hall which comprises a country house surrounded by 18th century parkland, with the setting largely made up of agricultural and rural land[41]. At this stage of assessment, development through Sites CHAR005 and BG001 is likely to result in minor negative impacts as a result of increase pressures from visitors, which could result in heavy foot traffic and deterioration and damage to sensitive areas of the parkland.

D.6.6.4 The remaining 25 strategic sites are not located in close proximity to any RPG, as such negligible impacts have been identified.

[37] Historic Landscape Management Ltd (2017). Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. Revised Management Plan 2017. Appendix III: Setting Study. Available at: https://www.blenheimpalace.com/assets/files/images/downloads/blenheim/Blenheim-UNESCO-Management-Plan-2017-Appendix3.pdf [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[38] Historic Landscape Management Ltd (2017). Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. Revised Management Plan 2017. Appendix III: Setting Study. Available at: https://www.blenheimpalace.com/assets/files/images/downloads/blenheim/Blenheim-UNESCO-Management-Plan-2017-Appendix3.pdf [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[39] Historic Landscape Management Ltd (2017). Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. Revised Management Plan 2017. Available at: https://www.blenheimpalace.com/worldheritagesite/downloads/2017/Blenheim%20WHS%20Management%20Plan%202017.pdf [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[40] Historic England. List entry. Cornbury Park. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1001092?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

[41] Historic England. List entry. Eynsham Hall. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1001288?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 30/01/25]

Table D.6.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage*

Site reference	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden
ALV002	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM002	0	0	-	-	0	0
BAM003	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM005	0	0	0	0	0	0
BG001	--	0	-	0	0	-
BN001	0	-	-	-	0	0
BN001a	0	0	0	0	0	0
BN003	0	0	-	0	0	0
BN006	0	-	--	0	-	0
BUR002	0	0	-	-	0	0
CHAR005	0	--	--	-	--	-
CHIP006	0	0	-	0	0	0
CN1	0	0	-	-	--	0
CUR001	0	0	-	0	0	0
CUR003	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR008	0	0	-	0	0	0
EW1	0	0	--	0	0	0
EW2	0	0	--	-	--	0
HAN001	0	0	-	0	0	-
MIN002	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIN006	0	0	-	-	0	0
SHIL002	0	-	-	-	0	0
SHIL003	0	-	-	-	0	0
SL006	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT001	0	0	-	-	0	0
WIT002	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT006	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT2	0	0	-	0	0	0
WOOD001	0	0	-	-	--	-

D.6.7 Ranking

D.6.7.1 No single strategic site can be identified as the **best performing site** with regard to cultural heritage (SA Objective 5). Eight sites have been identified to result in negligible impacts on heritage assets based on the high-level desk-based evaluation, and could be identified as the best performing sites with regard to cultural heritage (ALV002, BAM003, BAM005, BN001a, MIN002, SL006, WIT002 and WIT006). However, impacts on locally important heritage assets / archaeological features are likely owing to the large scale of development at all strategic sites and should be explored further.

D.6.7.2 **Site CHAR005 could be identified as the worst performing site** with regard to cultural heritage. Site CHAR005 coincides with an SM and is likely to result in significant adverse impacts on this SM, as well as the Grade II* LB 'Lee Place' and multiple Grade II LBs which

also coincide with the site (see **Figure D.6.2**). Site CHAR005 is also likely to result in minor negative impacts on Charlbury CA and Cornbury Country Park.

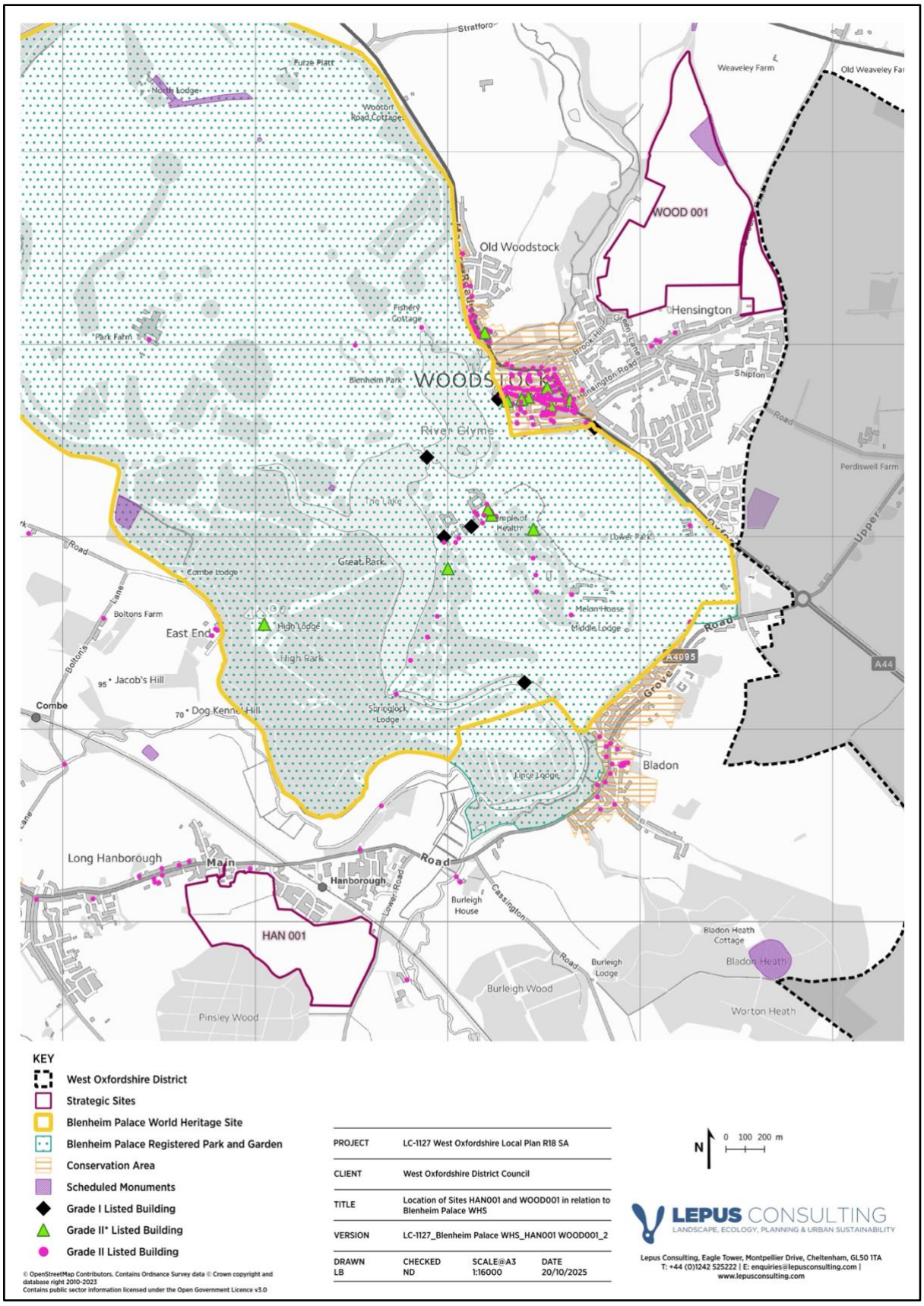

Figure D.6.1: *Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site and proximity to Sites HAN001 and WOOD001*

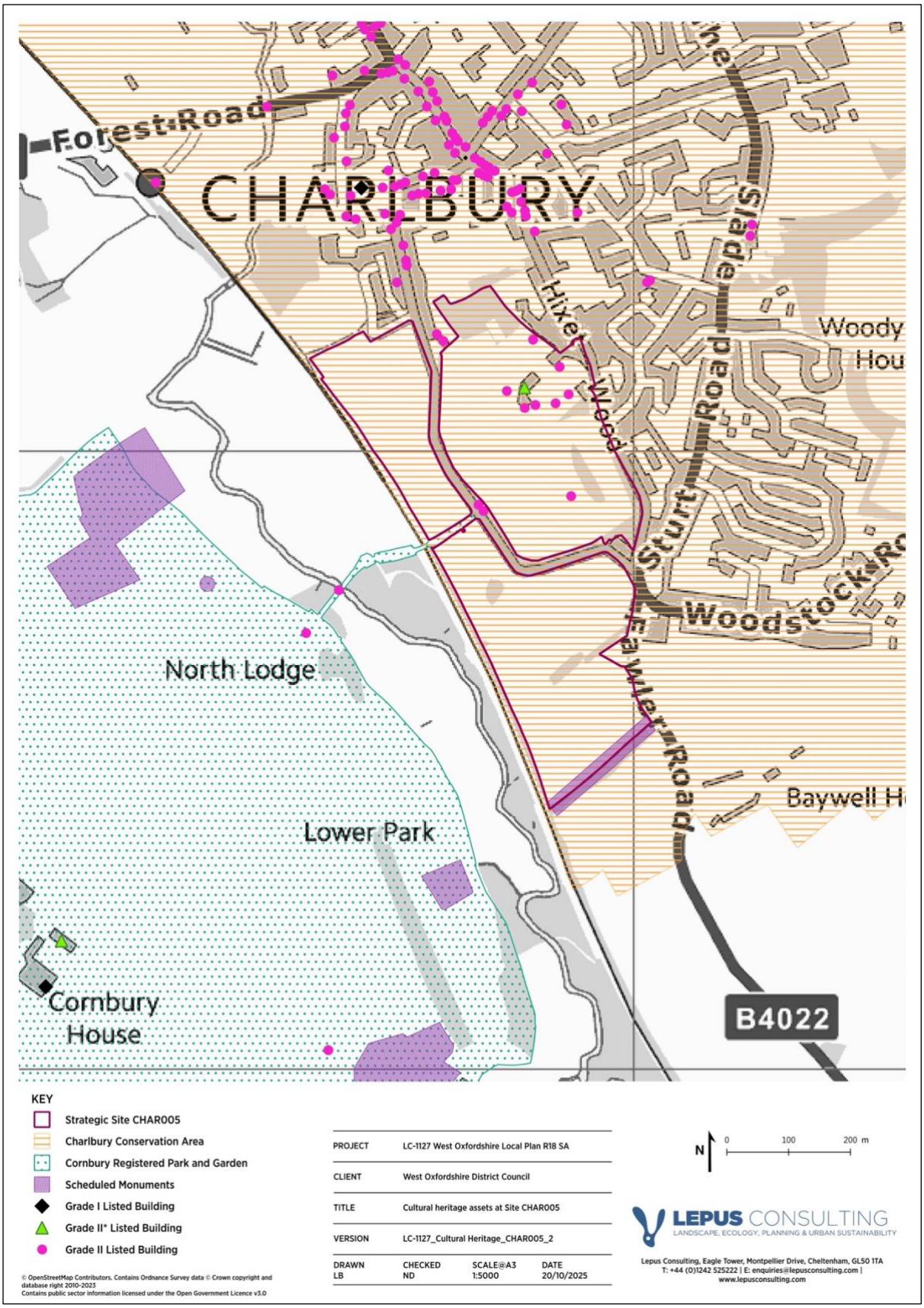

Figure D.6.2: *Heritage assets in and around Site CHAR005*

D.7 SA Objective 6 – Air quality

D.7.1 Air Quality Management Area

D.7.1.1 There are two small Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within West Oxfordshire, including the Chipping Norton AQMA and Witney AQMA. These are located along sections of main roads where national air quality objectives are unlikely to be met. No sites are located wholly or partially within 200m of an AQMA. These sites are likely to have a negligible impact on AQMAs in West Oxfordshire, although it is acknowledged that cumulative air quality effects could occur across the Plan area as a whole.

D.7.2 Main Road

D.7.2.1 West Oxfordshire is relatively isolated from the strategic road network, but there are a number of important routes that pass through the district , including the A40, A44 and the A424. Most of the strategic sites (19 sites) are located within 200m of a main road. The proposed development at these 19 sites could potentially expose site end users to higher levels of transport associated air and noise pollution. Traffic using these main roads could potentially have a minor negative impact on air quality and noise at these sites.

D.7.2.2 Impacts of air pollution could be avoided or reduced through the layout and design of future development. Development at all strategic sites is expected to include landscaping, which could help to reduce exposure of site end users to sources of air pollution through introducing green buffers and GI that will aid the filtration of airborne pollutants. The largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes (e.g., ALV002, BG001, BN001, BN003, BN006, MIN002, MIN006, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006, WOOD001, EW1, WIT2, CN1 and EW2) are also expected to provide new through-site public transport that could help to discourage use of private vehicles, with associated positive effects associated with reduced transport emissions. However, at this stage of the assessment process, details of these schemes are not available, and as such a minor negative impact is identified.

D.7.2.3 The proposed development at the remaining 10 sites which are over 200m from a main road are expected to have a negligible impact on air and noise pollution from transportation associated with main roads.

Table D.7.1: Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 6 – Air quality

Site reference	AQMA	Main road
ALV002	0	0
BAM002	0	-
BAM003	0	-
BAM005	0	0
BG001	0	-
BN001	0	0
BN001a	0	0
BN003	0	-
BN006	0	-
BUR002	0	-
CHAR005	0	0
CHIP006	0	-
CN1	0	-
CUR001	0	-
CUR003	0	0
CUR008	0	-
EW1	0	-
EW2	0	-
HAN001	0	-
MIN002	0	-
MIN006	0	0
SHIL002	0	0
SHIL003	0	0
SL006	0	-
WIT001	0	-
WIT002	0	-
WIT006	0	-
WIT2	0	-
WOOD001	0	0

D.7.3 Ranking

D.7.3.1 **The best performing strategic sites** with regard to air quality (SA Objective 6) are those located outside of an AQMA and over 200m from a main road. This includes Sites ALV002, BAM005, BN001, BN001a, CHAR005, CUR003, MIN006, SHIL002, SHIL003 and WOOD001.

D.7.3.2 **The worst performing strategic sites** are those located within 200m from a main road, specifically the 10 sites (BG001, BN003, BN006, BUR002, CUR008, EW1, EW2, MIN002, SL006 and WIT001) that will locate development within 200m of the A40 and contribute to additional traffic, worsening existing air quality issues.

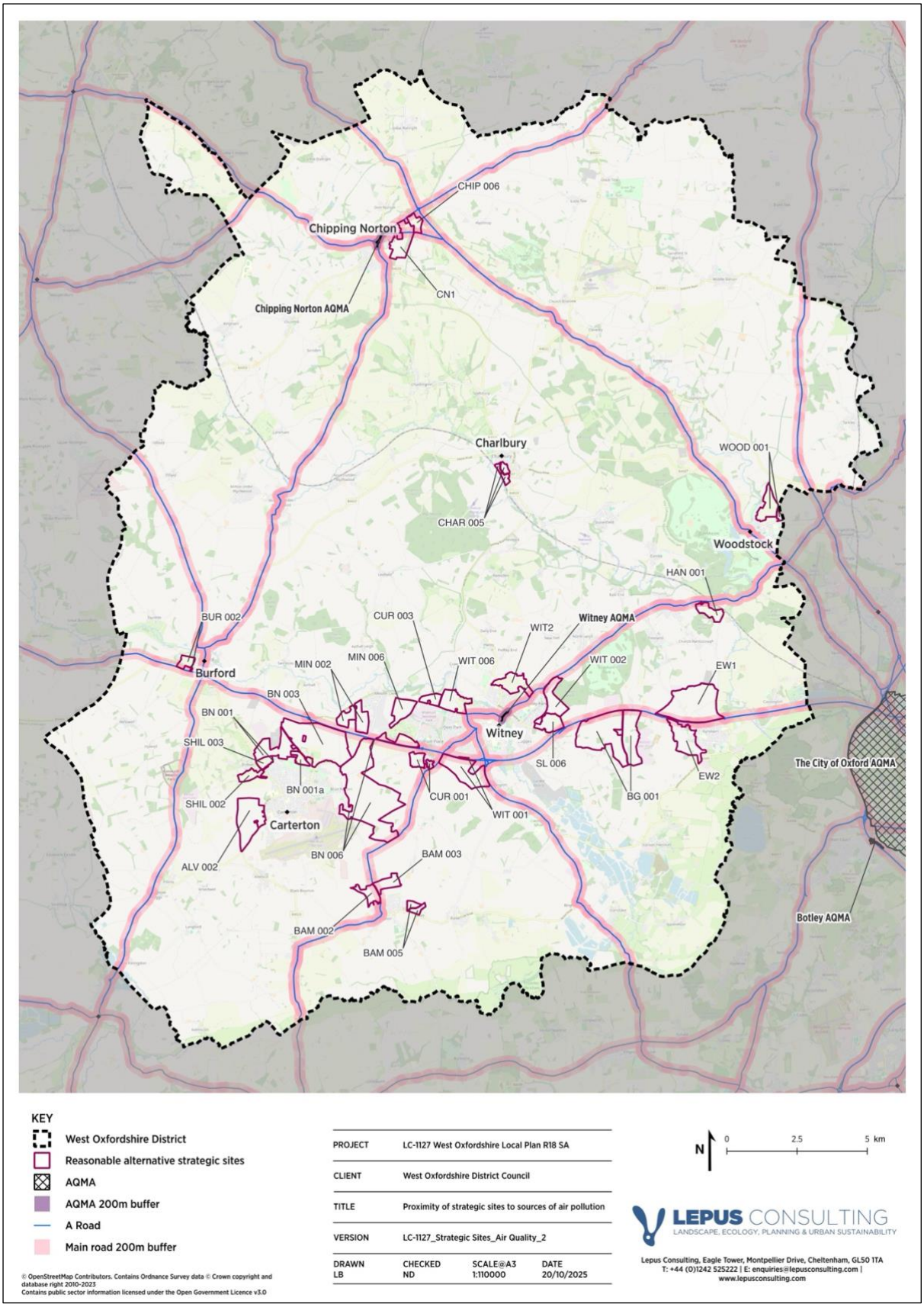

Figure D.7.1: *Location of main roads and AQMAs in and around West Oxfordshire*

D.8 SA Objective 7 – Water

D.8.1 Watercourse

D.8.1.1 West Oxfordshire's watercourse network comprises the River Thames and its tributaries. The River Thames runs through a small section of the south-east of the district and along the south-western district boundary. The River Windrush, a tributary of the River Thames, runs through Witney town centre, whereas the majority of small watercourses run through the peri-urban and rural areas throughout the district.

D.8.1.2 Eight sites (ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN006, EW1, SHIL002, WIT001 and WIT006) coincide with, or are located within 10m, of various watercourses. All 29 strategic sites are expected to incorporate measures to reduce the risk of water pollution, including the provision of SuDS and GI which can prevent or reduce the likelihood of contaminants entering water bodies through slowing down runoff and can filter pollutants through capturing and treating water before it reaches watercourses. Despite these protective water quality measures, the proposed development at these sites could potentially increase the risk of contamination of these watercourses and therefore have a minor negative impact on water quality.

D.8.1.3 Sites which are located over 10m from watercourses are less likely to have significant impact on the quality of watercourses. However, each site would need to be evaluated according to land use type, size of development and exact location. At this stage, the potential effects of these 21 sites on water quality are uncertain and would depend upon implementation.

D.8.2 Groundwater Source Protection Zone

D.8.2.1 There is one Source Protection Zones (SPZs) for groundwater within West Oxfordshire, which is located to the north of the district, to the east of Chipping Norton. SPZs are grouped from 1 to 3 based on the level of protection that the groundwater requires.

D.8.2.2 Site CN1 is wholly located within SPZ 3 and the majority of Site CHIP006 (85%) is located within SPZ 3. Consequently, development at these sites have the potential to contribute to the pollution of groundwater sources and therefore result in a minor negative impact on groundwater quality.

D.8.2.3 The remaining 27 strategic sites do not coincide with the catchment of any SPZ, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites may have a negligible impact on groundwater quality.

Table D.8.1: *Strategic sites matrix for SA Objective 7 – Water*

Site reference	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ
ALV002	-	0
BAM002	-	0
BAM003	+/-	0
BAM005	+/-	0
BG001	-	0
BN001	+/-	0
BN001a	+/-	0
BN003	+/-	0
BN006	-	0
BUR002	+/-	0
CHAR005	+/-	0
CHIP006	+/-	-
CN1	+/-	-
CUR001	+/-	0
CUR003	+/-	0
CUR008	+/-	0
EW1	-	0
EW2	+/-	0
HAN001	+/-	0
MIN002	+/-	0
MIN006	+/-	0
SHIL002	-	0
SHIL003	+/-	0
SL006	+/-	0
WIT001	-	0
WIT002	+/-	0
WIT006	-	0
WIT2	+/-	0
WOOD001	+/-	0

D.8.3 Ranking

D.8.3.1 It is not possible to identify a best performing strategic site with regard to water (SA Objective 7) at this stage of the assessment process, owing to the limited information available to inform the evaluation.

D.8.3.2 **The worst performing strategic sites** could be identified as those within 10m of a watercourse or within a groundwater SPZ: ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN006, CHIP006, CN1, EW1, SHIL002, WIT001 and WIT006 (see **Figure D.8.1**). However, cumulative effects on water pollution can arise from all sites. Additionally, there is further potential for impacts on water quality, water resources/supply and wastewater infrastructure at any strategic site, especially given West Oxfordshire's location in an area of 'serious water stress'. As recommended in the Water Cycle Study (WCS) Scoping Report (July 2025)[42],

[42] WHS (2025) West Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study Scoping Report. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxuf3hnd/whs10174-wodc-scoping-water-cycle-study_v2-0.pdf [Date accessed: 16/10/25]

liaison with Thames Water will be required to determine whether the location and size of potential allocations can be aligned with infrastructure upgrades to meet demands.

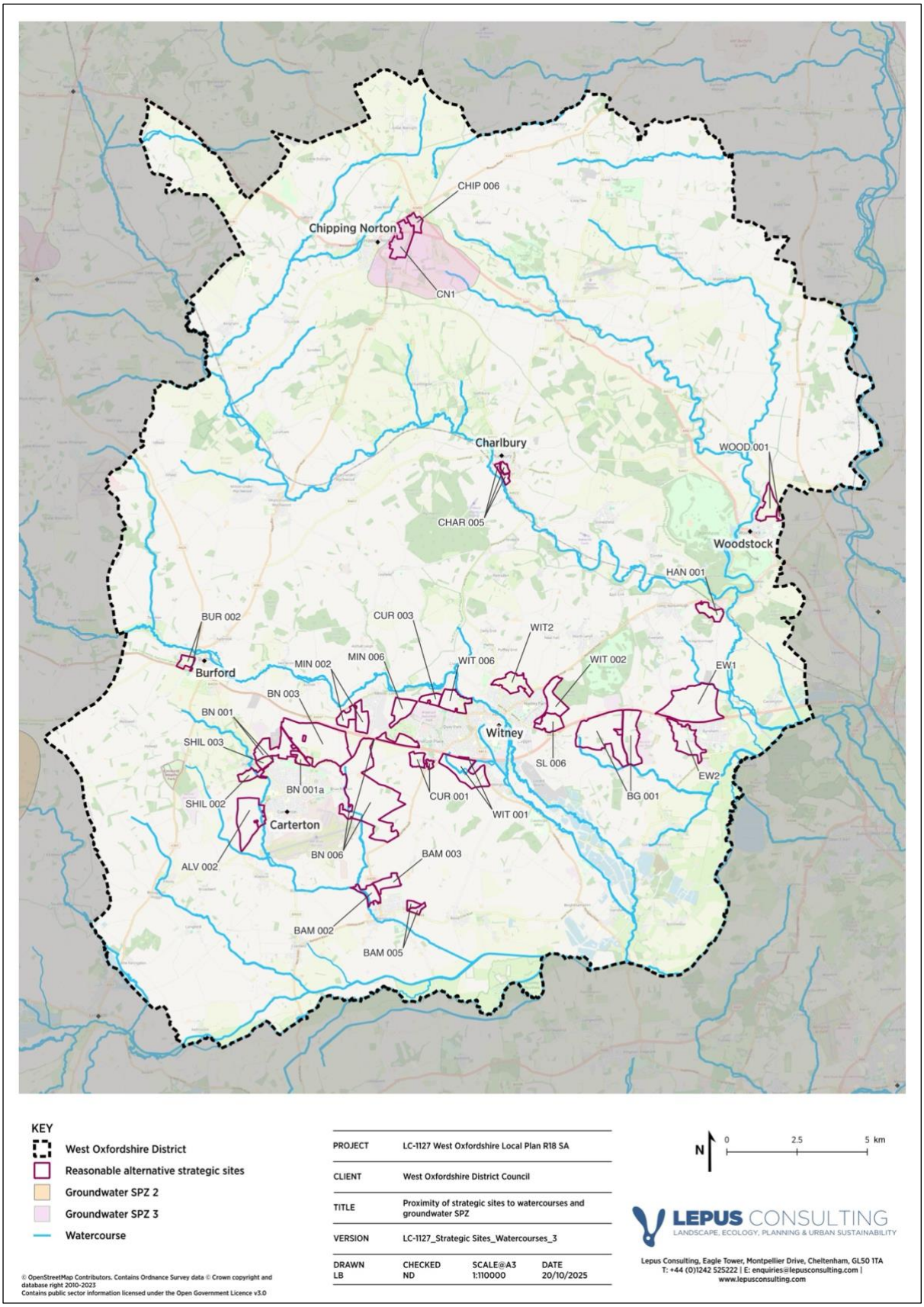

Figure D.8.1: *Watercourses and groundwater source protection zones in West Oxfordshire*

D.9 SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste

D.9.1 Previously undeveloped land / land with environmental value

D.9.1.1 West Oxfordshire is primarily a rural district, with a built-up area to the south of the Plan area, comprising of settlements such as Witney and Carterton. Rural areas span the remainder of the district, with interspersed settlements including Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Long Hanborough and Woodstock.

D.9.1.2 All 29 strategic sites comprise (either wholly, or majority) previously undeveloped land or land with environmental value, likely to contain hedgerows, trees and scrub that have potential to be lost to development. All sites will include areas of GI and landscaping, however it is likely that large proportions of undeveloped land will still be lost at these 29 sites. Therefore, the proposed development at all sites is identified to have a minor negative impact on natural resources due to the potential loss of ecologically or environmentally valuable soil resources.

D.9.1.3 Five sites (ALV002, CN1, EW1, SL006, WIT002) include areas of contaminated land. Some 12 sites also coincide with environmental consultation areas (ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN006, EW1, EW2, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006, WIT2 and WOOD001). There is potential for localised positive effects associated with the remediation of despoiled, degrade, derelict, contaminated or unstable land at these sites prior to development. However, all these sites largely comprise undeveloped land, and as such, minor negative effects are identified overall.

D.9.2 Agricultural Land Classification

D.9.2.1 The land within West Oxfordshire consists of Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 agricultural land, as well as areas classified as ‘non-agricultural’ and ‘urban’ according to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC). The majority of the land in the district is Grade 3, with the south exhibiting greater variation in classification (see **Figure D.9.1**).

D.9.2.2 Some 17 strategic sites have a net area greater than 20ha and contain land which is classed as ALC Grades 2 and/or 3 (Sites ALV002, BG001, BN003, BN006, HAN001, MIN002, MIN006, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006, WOOD001, EW1, WIT2, CN1 and EW2). Grade 1, 2 and potentially 3 represent the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. All sites will include GI provision, with potential to reduce the loss of high quality soils to some extent; however, the proposed development at these locations could potentially result in a major negative impact on BMV land due to the significant loss of this important natural resource. Site specific soil studies will be needed to confirm whether Grade 3 represents sub-grade 3a (BMV) or 3b (lower quality).

D.9.2.3 The remaining 12 strategic sites are located on ALC Grade 1, 2 and 3 land, comprising less than 20ha of the potentially developed area (BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BN001a, BUR002, CHAR005, CHIP006, CUR001, CUR003, CUR008, SHIL002 and SHIL003). The proposed developments at these sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on BMV land in terms of the conservation of agricultural land.

D.9.3 Waste

D.9.3.1 The estimated total household waste produced in West Oxfordshire in 2023/2024 was 43,160 tonnes, of which some 57% was sent for recycling/composting/re-use, according to the UK local authority household waste data[43]. Residential-led development is likely to result in an increase in household waste generation, to some extent. Given the large scale of housing growth proposed at the residential-led strategic sites, there is potential for a significant increase in household waste to be generated, although this will depend on availability and implementation of sustainable waste measures and the behaviour of site end users.

D.9.3.2 Sites proposed for mixed use which will include employment land and additional supporting infrastructure such as educational facilities, may present further negative effects on waste production; however, this would be dependent on the site-specific proposals and the nature of development, which is unknown at the time of assessment.

D.9.3.3 The waste likely to be generated as a result of each strategic development site is currently uncertain.

D.9.4 Mineral Safeguarding Areas

D.9.4.1 Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) are predominantly located to the south of the district and one at the north eastern district boundary. These are predominantly sharp sand and gravel resources situated to the south and south east of the district.

D.9.4.2 Six strategic sites (BAM005, BN001, BN001a, BN003, EW1 and HAN001) wholly or partially coincide with MSAs. These sites are identified as having a minor negative impact on mineral resources, due to the potential sterilisation of underlying mineral resources.

D.9.4.3 The remaining 23 sites do not coincide with MSAs and are therefore expected to result in a negligible impact on mineral resources.

[43] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025) Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics for 2023/2024. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results [Date accessed: 06/08/25]

Table D.9.1: Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 8 – Natural resources

Site reference	Land with environmental value	BMV land	Waste	MSA
ALV002	-	--	+/-	0
BAM002	-	-	+/-	0
BAM003	-	-	+/-	0
BAM005	-	-	+/-	-
BG001	-	--	+/-	0
BN001	-	--	+/-	-
BN001a	-	-	+/-	-
BN003	-	--	+/-	-
BN006	-	--	+/-	0
BUR002	-	-	+/-	0
CHAR005	-	-	+/-	0
CHIP006	-	-	+/-	0
CN1	-	--	+/-	0
CUR001	-	-	+/-	0
CUR003	-	-	+/-	0
CUR008	-	-	+/-	0
EW1	-	--	+/-	-
EW2	-	--	+/-	0
HAN001	-	--	+/-	-
MIN002	-	--	+/-	0
MIN006	-	--	+/-	0
SHIL002	-	-	+/-	0
SHIL003	-	-	+/-	0
SL006	-	--	+/-	0
WIT001	-	--	+/-	0
WIT002	-	--	+/-	0
WIT006	-	--	+/-	0
WIT2	-	--	+/-	0
WOOD001	-	--	+/-	0

D.9.5 Ranking

D.9.5.1 **The best performing strategic site** with regard to natural resources (SA Objective 8) is identified to be Site CUR001. Although the site comprises previously undeveloped land, it is predominantly located upon lower-quality ALC Grade 4 land and is not located within an MSA.

D.9.5.2 **The worst performing strategic site** could be identified as Site BN003, which has a net area of 153ha, wholly upon land of ALC Grade 3 (potential BMV land), and coincides with an MSA. However, it should be noted that all sites are likely to contribute to cumulative adverse effects associated with significant loss of soil and pressure on natural resources across the Plan area. Soil studies would allow a further analysis in terms of the quality of soil that may be lost associated with development at each site.

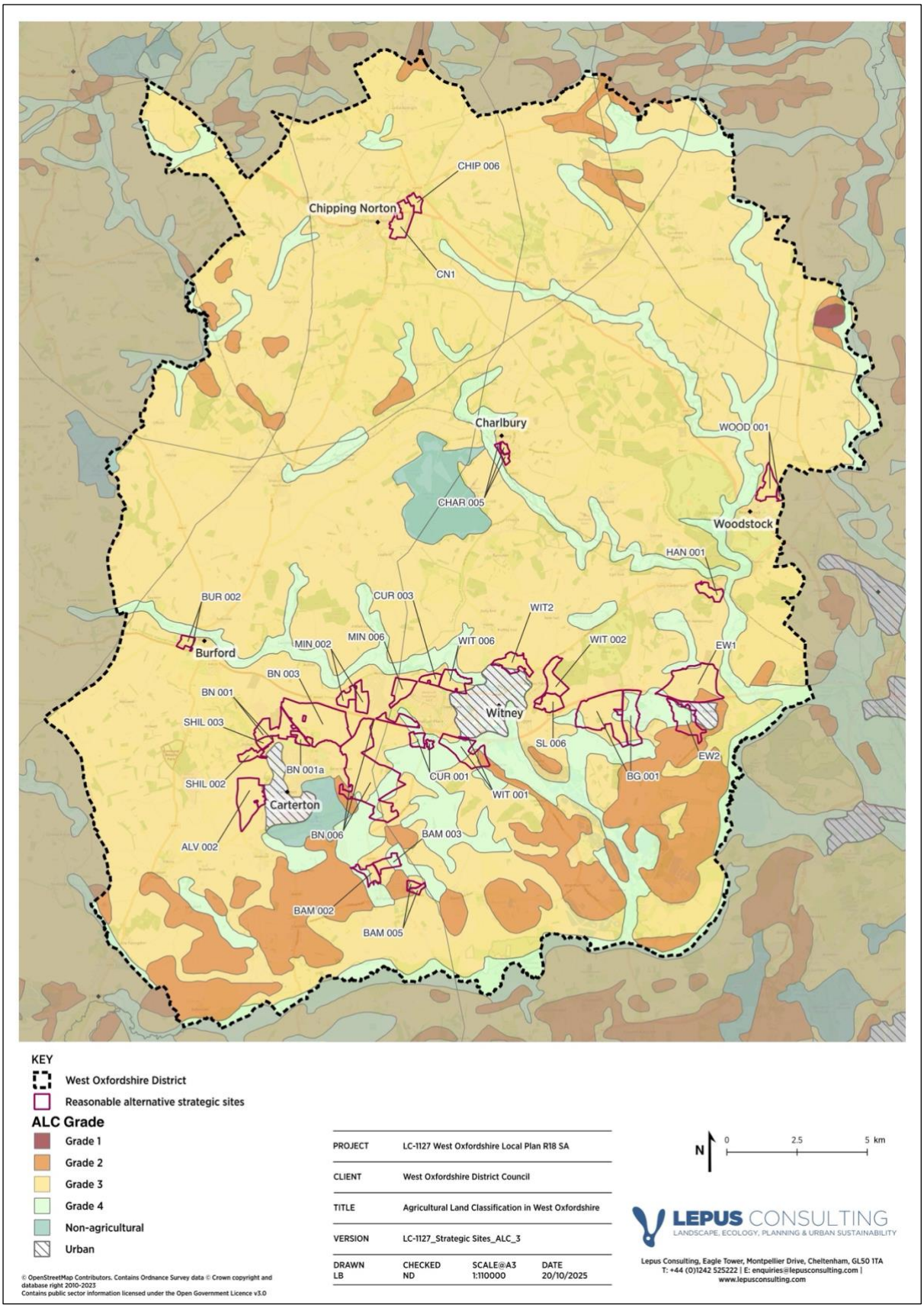

Figure D.9.1: *Agricultural Land Classification in West Oxfordshire*

D.10 SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality

D.10.1 Housing provision

D.10.1.1 Residential-led development is likely to result in a net gain in housing. All 29 strategic sites are proposed for residential or mixed use and are therefore expected to result in major positive impacts under this objective, given that all strategic sites include the development of 300 or more homes. The proposed development through these 29 sites will be likely to make a significant contribution towards meeting West Oxfordshire's identified housing need.

D.10.1.2 It is expected that residential development will include a mix of housing type and density. Furthermore, information provided by WODC indicates that all 29 strategic sites will provide 40% affordable housing to meet the needs of future residents.

D.10.2 Indices of multiple deprivation

D.10.2.1 One domain of the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) is 'barriers to housing and services', which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services[44]. Within West Oxfordshire, a significant proportion of the district falls within decile one of this domain, which represents the 10% most deprived areas, which are those facing the greatest constraints with regard to access to affordable housing and essential services.

D.10.2.2 Information provided by WODC indicates that all 29 strategic sites will provide 40% affordable housing, and 15 sites are expected to provide improved access to local facilities such as convenience stores (the sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes e.g., ALV002, BG001, BN001, BN003, BN006, MIN002, MIN006, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006, WOOD001, EW1, WIT2, CN1 and EW2). Therefore, the 21 strategic sites located within the top 10% of this domain will be expected to result in a major positive impact with regard to access to affordable housing or essential services and the remaining eight sites that are located outside the top 10% of this domain will result in a minor positive impact.

[44] MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Technical report. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8b387740f0b609909b5908/IoD2019_Technical_Report.pdf [Date accessed 14/01/25]

Table D.10.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality*

Site reference	Housing provision	Equality
ALV002	++	++
BAM002	++	+
BAM003	++	+
BAM005	++	+
BG001	++	++
BN001	++	++
BN001a	++	++
BN003	++	++
BN006	++	++
BUR002	++	+
CHAR005	++	++
CHIP006	++	++
CN1	++	+
CUR001	++	++
CUR003	++	++
CUR008	++	++
EW1	++	++
EW2	++	++
HAN001	++	+
MIN002	++	+
MIN006	++	+
SHIL002	++	++
SHIL003	++	++
SL006	++	++
WIT001	++	++
WIT002	++	+
WIT006	++	+
WIT2	++	++
WOOD001	++	+

D.10.3 Ranking

D.10.3.1 **Site BN006 could be identified as the best performing strategic site** with regard to housing (SA Objective 9), potentially providing the highest number of residential dwellings (indicative capacity of 7,051 dwellings) and providing affordable housing and essential services in areas that are the most constrained to housing and essential services.

D.10.3.2 **Site BN001a could be identified as the worst performing strategic sites** with regard to housing (SA Objective 9), providing the lowest number of residential dwellings (indicative capacity of 308 dwellings).

D.10.3.3 It should be noted this ranking does not factor in potential localised benefits that might be achieved in terms of delivery of new homes in areas of highest demand, where such details are not available at this stage of assessment.

D.11 SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing

D.11.1 Access to NHS hospital with A&E department

D.11.1.1 There are no NHS hospitals with an Accident & Emergency (A&E) department located within West Oxfordshire. The nearest A&E NHS hospitals include John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, Horton General Hospital in Banbury and Great Western Hospital in Swindon. All 29 of the strategic sites are located over 8km from an NHS hospital with an A&E department. The proposed development at these sites may have limited sustainable access to emergency healthcare, with a potential minor negative impact on health.

D.11.2 Access to GP Surgery

D.11.2.1 There are 13 GP surgeries in West Oxfordshire serving the existing local communities, located within the settlements of Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Milton-under-Wychwood, Witney and Woodstock.

D.11.2.2 The majority of five strategic sites (BAM002, BUR002, CHAR005, CHIP006 and CN1) are located within 800m of an existing GP surgery, owing to their location within the settlements of Bampton, Burford, Charlbury and Chipping Norton. The proposed development at these five sites will be likely to result in a major positive impact on sustainable access to GP surgeries.

D.11.2.3 Seven strategic sites (ALV002, BAM003, EW1, EW2, SL006, WIT006 and WOOD001) are partially located within 800m of an existing GP surgery. The proposed development at these sites will be likely to result in a minor positive impact on sustainable access to GP surgeries.

D.11.2.4 Two strategic sites (CUR003 and WIT002) are located between 800m and 1km from an existing GP surgery. The proposed development at these two sites could potentially result in a negligible impact on access to GP surgeries.

D.11.2.5 The remaining 15 strategic sites are located over 1km from an existing GP surgery. The proposed development at these sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on access to GP surgeries.

D.11.2.6 Information provided by the Council sets out healthcare contributions by all 29 strategic sites. At this stage of the assessment, the nature of the healthcare contributions is unknown, and further information is required to determine how this will affect the sustainability performance of sites.

D.11.3 Access to leisure facilities

D.11.3.1 There are eight leisure centred in West Oxfordshire, six located to the south of the district, one to the north and one at the eastern district boundary. These include Bartholomew Sports Centre, Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch, Carterton Leisure Centre, Carterton Pavillion, Chipping Norton Leisure Centre, Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney Artificial Turf Pitch and Woodstock Open Air Pool.

D.11.3.2 The majority of 10 strategic sites are majority located within 1.5km of an existing leisure facility, including ALV002, BN001, BN001a, CN1, EW1, EW2, SHIL002, SHIL003, WIT001 and WOOD001). The proposed development at these sites is expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to leisure facilities.

D.11.3.3 Six strategic sites are partially located within 1.5km of an existing leisure facility, including BN003, BN006, CHIP006, SL006, WIT002 and WIT006. The proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to leisure facilities.

D.11.3.4 Two sites (CUR001and WIT2) are located 1.5km to 2km from an existing leisure facility. The proposed development at these two sites is expected to have a negligible impact on sustainable access to leisure facilities.

D.11.3.5 The remaining 11 sites are located over 2km from an existing leisure facility (BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BG001, BUR002, CHAR005, CUR003, CUR008, HAN001, MIN002 and MIN006). The proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on sustainable access to leisure facilities.

D.11.4 Access to public greenspace

D.11.4.1 Greenspaces are distributed throughout West Oxfordshire however are most prevalent within the settlements of Witney and Carterton, including parks, allotments and playing fields.

D.11.4.2 The majority of strategic sites (15) are located where the majority of the site area lies within 600m of existing greenspace and therefore the proposed development at these sites will be likely to result in a major positive impact on access to greenspace, notwithstanding any new greenspaces to be provided.

D.11.4.3 Seven strategic sites are partially located within 600m of an existing greenspace, including ALV002, BAM005, BG001, BN003, BN006, MIN002 and WIT002. According to the information provided by the Council, all 29 strategic sites will include provision of Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP). Furthermore, WODC has indicated that the largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes (which includes all seven of these sites) will also provide new sports pitches on site. Therefore, the proposed development at these sites will be likely to result in a major positive impact on access to greenspace.

D.11.4.4 The remaining seven sites (BAM002, BAM003, CHAR005, WIT001, EW1, CN1 and EW2) coincide with existing greenspace and there could be potential for loss of existing greenspaces on site. Provision of LEAP and NEAP is expected on each strategic site. The largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes (including EW1, EW2, CN1, WIT2 and WIT001) are also expected to provide new sports pitches on site. At this stage of the assessment process, the potential impacts of development at these seven sites are considered negligible. While the exact area and location of greenspace provision is not yet confirmed, it is anticipated that there will be no net loss of greenspace.

D.11.5 Access to Public Rights of Way / National Trails

D.11.5.1 All 29 sites are located within 600m of the PRoW network. The proposed development at these sites will be likely to provide site end users with good pedestrian access and

encourage physical activity, and therefore, have a minor positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents.

Table D.11.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing*

Site reference	NHS Hospital with A&E	Access to GP surgery	Leisure facilities	Access to green space	Access to PRoW
ALV002	-	+	++	++	+
BAM002	-	++	-	0	+
BAM003	-	+	-	0	+
BAM005	-	-	-	++	+
BG001	-	-	-	++	+
BN001	-	-	++	++	+
BN001a	-	-	++	++	+
BN003	-	-	+	++	+
BN006	-	-	+	++	+
BUR002	-	++	-	++	+
CHAR005	-	++	-	0	+
CHIP006	-	++	+	++	+
CN1	-	++	++	0	+
CUR001	-	-	0	++	+
CUR003	-	0	-	++	+
CUR008	-	-	-	++	+
EW1	-	+	++	0	+
EW2	-	+	++	0	+
HAN001	-	-	-	++	+
MIN002	-	-	-	++	+
MIN006	-	-	-	++	+
SHIL002	-	-	++	++	+
SHIL003	-	-	++	++	+
SL006	-	+	+	++	+
WIT001	-	-	++	0	+
WIT002	-	0	+	++	+
WIT006	-	+	+	++	+
WIT2	-	-	0	++	+
WOOD001	-	+	++	++	+

D.11.6 Ranking

D.11.6.1 At this stage of the plan making process, it is difficult to identify a single best or worst performing site with regard to health and wellbeing, as the likely effects will be dependent on implementing new healthcare infrastructure, community facilities and site layout/design that will promote healthy lifestyles.

D.11.6.2 Based on access to existing infrastructure, **the best performing strategic sites** with regard to health and wellbeing (SA Objective 10) could be identified as Sites ALV002, CHIP006, SL006, WIT006 and WOOD001 which will provide a sustainable access for new residents to existing healthcare facilities including a GP surgery, leisure facilities, greenspace and PRoW.

D.11.6.3 **The worst performing strategic sites** are BAM005, BG001, CUR008, HAN001, MIN002 and MIN006. Development at these sites will likely have a negative impact on sustainable access to an NHS A&E hospital, GP surgery and leisure facilities, based on existing facilities.

D.12 SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility

D.12.1 Proximity to bus stop

D.12.1.1 Many bus stops are distributed throughout West Oxfordshire. These are generally expected to provide regular public transport access, with the exception of some rural areas where bus services are more thinly distributed and less regular.

D.12.1.2 Some 11 strategic sites are located where the majority of the site area lies within 400m of a bus stop providing frequent services (CHAR005, CN1, CUR001, CUR003, HAN001, MIN002, SHIL002, SHIL003, SL006, WIT006 and WIT2). The largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes (including MIN002, SL006, WIT006, WIT2 and CN1) are also expected to provide new through-site public transport. The proposed development at these sites is expected to result in a major positive impact on access to sustainable transport options.

D.12.1.3 A further 12 strategic sites lie partially within 400m of bus stops providing frequent services (ALV002, BAM002, BAM005, BN003, BN006, BUR002, CUR008, MIN006, WIT001, WIT002, EW1 and EW2). The largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes are also expected to provide new through-site public transport; this includes Sites ALV002, BN003, BN006, EW1, EW2, MIN006, WIT001 and WIT002. As such, these eight sites are likely to result in a major positive impact on access to sustainable transport options. A minor positive impact is identified for Sites BAM002, BAM005, BUR002, CUR008 and WIT001, where they are likely to provide some access to existing sustainable transport options.

D.12.1.4 Sites BAM003, BG001, BN001, BN001a, CHIP006 and WOOD001 are located where the majority of the site are lies outside of the sustainable distance of 400m to a bus stop providing regular services. However, sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes are expected to provide new through-site public transport, including Sites BG001, BN001 and WOOD001; as such, a minor positive impact is identified for these three sites, reflecting the likely benefits of new transport options but potentially less significant than those sites which are also in proximity to existing infrastructure. The proposed development at the remaining three sites (BAM003, BN001a, and CHIP006) could potentially have a minor negative impact on access to sustainable transport.

D.12.2 Proximity to railway station

D.12.2.1 There are eight railway stations located within West Oxfordshire: Kingham, Shipton, Ascott-under-Wychwood, Charlbury, Finstock, Combe, Hanborough and Tackley. The railway stations are located through the centre of the district, with two strategic sites (CHAR005 and HAN001) located within 1.6km of an existing railway station.

D.12.2.2 Site CHAR005 is located 180m south of Charlbury Station and Site HAN001 is located 110m south of Harborough Station. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a major positive impact on access to rail services.

D.12.2.3 The remaining 27 strategic sites are located over 2km from an existing railway station. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a minor negative impact on access to existing railway services. It is uncertain the extent to which proposed transport

enhancements (including new through-site public transport at the sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes) will improve sustainable access to railway stations.

D.12.3 Access to local services

D.12.3.1 Information provided by the Council indicates the provision of convenience retail stores at sites proposed for over 700 dwellings. Therefore, 15 strategic sites are likely to include the development of new local services, including ALV002, BG001, BN001, BN003, BN006, EW1, EW2, MIN002, MIN006, SL006, WIT001, WIT002, WIT006, WIT2 and WOOD001. These sites are likely to have a major positive impact on access to local services for site end users.

D.12.3.2 A further six strategic sites (BAM002, BN001a, BUR002, CHAR005, HAN001 and CN1) are partially located within 600m of an existing local food store and will therefore provide some sustainable pedestrian access to existing local shops and services. These sites are likely to have a minor positive impact on access to local services for site end users.

D.12.3.3 Two strategic sites (BAM003 and CHIP006) are located between 600m and 800m of an existing local food store. These sites are likely to have a negligible impact on access to local services for site end users.

D.12.3.4 The remaining six sites (BAM005, CUR001, CUR003, CUR008, SHIL002 and SHIL003) are located beyond the sustainable distance of 800m from an existing local food store. The development at these sites is likely to have a minor negative impact on access to local services for site end users.

D.12.4 Pedestrian or cycle access

D.12.4.1 Sites with good pedestrian and cycle access include those with existing pavements, pathways or cycle lanes which are segregated from traffic use in the area. Pedestrian pathways are well distributed in West Oxfordshire's urban areas but are more limited in rural locations. The national cycle network is well distributed across the district, though primary concentrated in the central and northern areas.

D.12.4.2 Nine sites are identified to be well connected to both existing footpaths and cycle networks, including BG001, BUR002, CHAR005, CUR003, HAN001, MIN006, SL006, WIT002 and WIT006. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a major positive impact on local transport and accessibility, by encouraging travel by foot and bicycle, and reducing the requirement for new pedestrian and cyclist access to be created.

D.12.4.3 Some 12 sites are located in areas with pedestrian access but poor access to the existing national cycle network (ALV002, BAM002, BN003, BN006, CHIP006, CN1, CUR001, CUR008, EW2, SHIL003, WIT001 and WIT2). Sites WOOD001 and EW1 are located adjacent to national cycle network routes, however, do not currently have pedestrian access. The proposed development at these 14 sites could potentially have a minor positive impact on local accessibility.

D.12.4.4 The remaining six sites (BAM003, BAM005, BN001, BN001a, MIN002 and SHIL002) are located in areas with neither pedestrian or cycle access based on existing infrastructure. The proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on local accessibility, and pedestrian/cyclist access will need improvement to be considered a viable transport option.

Table D.12.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objectives 11 – Transport and accessibility*

Site reference	Bus stop	Railway station	Pedestrian access to local services	Access to pedestrian/ cycle routes
ALV002	++	-	++	+
BAM002	+	-	+	+
BAM003	-	-	0	-
BAM005	+	-	-	-
BG001	+	-	++	++
BN001	+	-	++	-
BN001a	-	-	+	-
BN003	++	-	++	+
BN006	++	-	++	+
BUR002	+	-	+	++
CHAR005	++	++	+	++
CHIP006	-	-	0	+
CN1	++	-	+	+
CUR001	++	-	-	+
CUR003	++	-	-	++
CUR008	+	-	-	+
EW1	++	-	++	+
EW2	++	-	++	+
HAN001	++	++	+	++
MIN002	++	-	++	-
MIN006	++	-	++	++
SHIL002	++	-	-	-
SHIL003	++	-	-	+
SL006	++	-	++	++
WIT001	++	-	++	+
WIT002	++	-	++	++
WIT006	++	-	++	++
WIT2	++	-	++	+
WOOD001	+	-	++	+

D.12.5 Ranking

D.12.5.1 **The best performing strategic sites** with regard to transport and access (SA Objective 11) are CHAR005 and HAN001, which are identified to provide access to a range of sustainable transport options due to their proximity to existing bus stops, railway network, local services national cycle network and pedestrian routes (see **Figure D.12.1**).

D.12.5.2 **The worst performing strategic site** is BAM003 due to its distance from an existing bus stop, the railway network, cycleways and pedestrian routes as well as only being partially located within 600-800m of an existing local food store.

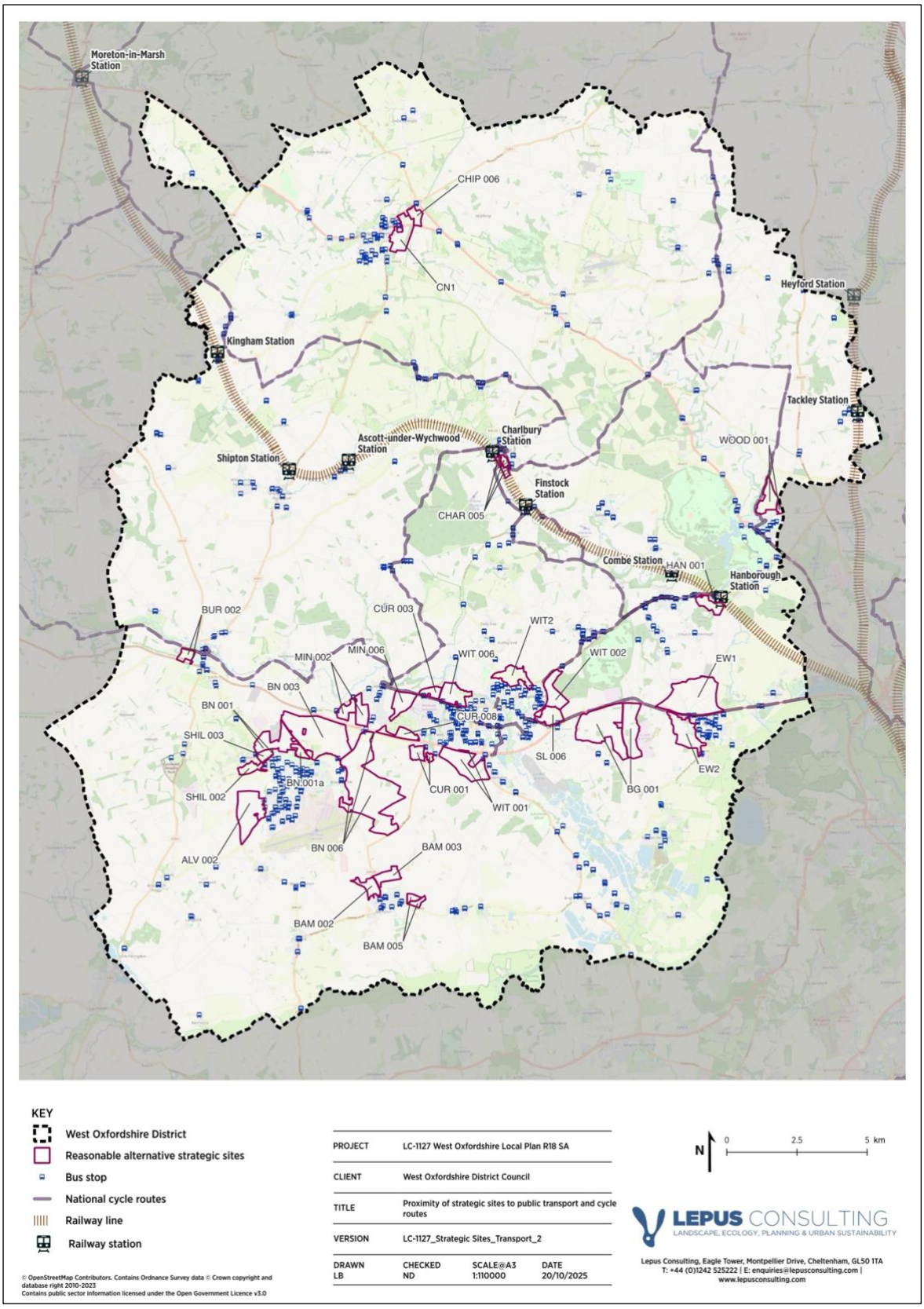

Figure D.12.1: *Proximity of strategic sites to public transport and cycle routes*

D.13 SA Objective 12 – Education

D.13.1 Primary school

D.13.1.1 There are 59 state-funded, non-selective primary schools distributed throughout West Oxfordshire.

D.13.1.2 Sites BAM002, BAM003, BN001a, BUR002, CHAR005, WOOD001 and CN1 are located where the majority of the site area lies within 800m of an existing primary school. Furthermore, the largest scale strategic sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes (including WOOD001 and CN1) are also expected to provide new primary schools on site. These eight sites are likely to have a major positive impact on pedestrian access to primary schools.

D.13.1.3 A further 15 sites are partially located within 800m of an existing primary school. Of these 15 sites, 11 (ALV002, BN001, BN003, BN006, EW1, MIN002, MIN006, SL006, WIT001, WIT002 and WIT006) will provide new primary schools according to information provided by WODC, owing to their indicative capacity over 700 homes. The development of a new primary school could provide residents with modern facilities and access to the most up-to-date technology, promoting digital literacy and innovative learning methods. The remaining four sites (CHIP006, CUR001, CUR008 and HAN001) are likely to have a minor positive impact on pedestrian access to primary schools.

D.13.1.4 However, some areas are likely to have more restricted access, with six sites located over 1km from an existing primary school owing to their peripheral location around settlements, including BAM005, BG001, CUR003, EW2, SHIL002 and SHIL003. However, sites with an indicative capacity over 700 homes are expected to provide new through-site public transport, including Sites BG001 and EW2; as such, a minor positive impact is identified for these two sites, reflecting the likely benefits of new primary schools but potentially less significant than those sites which are also in proximity to existing infrastructure. The remaining four sites (BAM005, CUR003, SHIL002 and SHIL003) which do not indicate the provision of a new primary school and are located outside the sustainable distance of 1km to a primary school are likely to have a minor negative impact on pedestrian access to primary schools.

D.13.1.5 Information provided by the Council sets out education contributions by all 29 strategic sites. At this stage of the assessment, the nature of the contributions is unknown, and further information is required to determine how this will affect the sustainability performance of sites.

D.13.2 Secondary school

D.13.2.1 There are nine state-funded, non-selective secondary schools distributed throughout West Oxfordshire.

D.13.2.2 Sites ALV002, BUR002, CN1, EW1, EW2, SHIL002, SHIL003, SL006, WIT002, WIT2 and WOOD001 and are located where the majority of the site area lies within 1.5km of an existing secondary school. These strategic sites will be likely to have a major positive impact on sustainable development access to secondary schools.

D.13.2.3 Four proposed strategic sites (BN001, BN001a, CHIP006, WIT001) are partially located within 1.5km of an existing secondary school. These strategic sites will be likely to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to secondary schools.

D.13.2.4 Sites BN003 and WIT006 are located 1.5km to 2km from a secondary school and will be likely to have a negligible impact on sustainable access to secondary schools.

D.13.2.5 The majority of the remaining 12 sites are located further than 2km from a secondary school and are likely to have a minor negative impact on sustainable access to secondary schools.

D.13.3 Further education

D.13.3.1 There are several further educational facilities in West Oxfordshire. These include the Witney Campus and Common Leys Campus of Abingdon and Witney College, Carterton Community College, Oxford International College of Beauty and several Sixth Forms.

D.13.3.2 Some 19 sites are located where the majority of the site area lies within 3km of a further education facility. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a major positive impact on access to higher education facilities.

D.13.3.3 A further three sites (BN006, CUR008 and MIN006) are partially located within 3km of a further education facility. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a minor positive impact on access to higher education facilities.

D.13.3.4 The remaining seven sites (BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, CHAR005, HAN001, MIN002 and WOOD001) are located greater than 3km from a further education facility. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have a negligible impact on access to further education.

Table D.13.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objectives 12 – Education*

Site reference	Primary school	Secondary school	Further education
ALV002	++	++	++
BAM002	++	-	0
BAM003	++	-	0
BAM005	-	-	0
BG001	+	-	++
BN001	++	+	++
BN001a	++	+	++
BN003	++	0	++
BN006	++	-	+
BUR002	++	++	++
CHAR005	++	-	0
CHIP006	+	+	++
CN1	++	++	++
CUR001	+	-	++
CUR003	-	-	++
CUR008	+	-	+
EW1	++	++	++
EW1	+	++	++
HAN001	+	-	0
MIN002	++	-	0
MIN006	++	-	+
SHIL002	-	++	++
SHIL003	-	++	++
SL006	++	++	++
WIT001	++	+	++
WIT002	++	++	++
WIT006	++	0	++
WIT2	++	++	++
WOOD001	++	++	0

D.13.4 Ranking

D.13.4.1 **The best performing strategic sites** with regard to education (SA Objective 12) are those identified to provide a major positive impact on sustainable access to education facilities including primary schools, secondary schools and further education facilities, including ALV002, BUR002, SL006, WIT002, EW1, WIT2 and CN1.

D.13.4.2 **The worst performing strategic site** is BAM005, which is located outside of the recommended sustainable distance to primary and secondary schools and further education facilities, where site end users are likely to be reliant on less sustainable modes of transport to access education facilities.

D.14 SA Objective 13 – Economy and employment

D.14.1 Employment floorspace

D.14.1.1 Employment floorspace provision has been assessed with consideration of current land use and the proposed development at each site. All strategic sites are residential-led, however some include mixed uses.

D.14.1.2 Five strategic sites (BG001, BN003, EW1, MIN002 and MIN006) are proposed for mixed uses including employment land. Sites BG001, MIN002 and MIN006 wholly comprise previously undeveloped land, and as such, the proposed employment uses on site are likely to lead to a major positive impact on the provision of new employment floorspace. Site BN003 is largely undeveloped, but also contains the existing 'Crocodiles of the World' zoo, and Site EW1 coincides with existing businesses including 'Kingsley Cars'. It is uncertain whether these facilities will be lost upon development, or whether there will be a net change in employment floorspace or economic value of the sites.

D.14.1.3 Sites BN006, CUR008, CN1 and EW2 are proposed for residential or mixed community uses, but contain existing businesses. This includes 'Astrop Farm' at Site BN006, 'Peashell Farm' at Site CUR008, 'London Road Retail Park' at Site CN1 and 'Polar Technology Management Group' at Site EW2. It is uncertain whether these existing businesses or the employment opportunities they may provide will be retained upon development of the sites.

D.14.1.4 The remaining 20 sites proposed solely for residential/community use are located wholly on previously undeveloped land. The proposed development at these sites is likely to have negligible impact on employment floorspace provision.

D.14.2 Access to existing employment opportunities

D.14.2.1 Major employment areas have been identified using spatial data provided by WODC, in addition to town centres where a range of employment opportunities are likely. Major employment areas identified, to name a few, include Station Lane Industrial Area, Long Hanborough Business Park, Lakeside Industrial Estate, Windrush Industrial Estate and Brize Norton Royal Air Force (RAF) Base.

D.14.2.2 The majority of strategic sites (25) are located within 5km of at least one major employment area. Some 24 of these 25 sites are located within 5km of two or more major employment areas. Development at these 24 sites is likely to locate residents in areas that have good access to existing employment opportunities. As such, a major positive impact on the economy is identified. Development at the remaining site (BAM005) will be located within 5km of one major employment area, and as such a minor positive impact on the economy is identified.

D.14.2.3 Site BUR002 is located 5.7km south east of the nearest major employment area named Ventura Park. Site BUR002 is however located 340m from Burford Town Centre, which is likely to provide residents with sustainable access to a range of employment opportunities. As such, a minor positive impact on access to employment and the economy is identified for Site BUR002.

D.14.2.4 Sites CHAR005, CHIP006 and CN1 are located beyond 8km from a major employment area. The nearest major employment area to Site CHAR005 is Windrush Industrial Estate located 8.2km south of the site in Witney. The nearest major employment area to both Site CHIP006 and CN1 is Minster Industrial Park, located in Witney approximately 16.7km south of Site CHIP006 and 15.9km south of Site CN1. However, Site CHAR005 is located within 5km of Charlbury Town Centre and both CHIP006 and CN1 are located within 5km of Chipping Norton Town Centre and will be likely to provide residents with sustainable access to employment opportunities. Overall, a minor positive impact on access to employment and the economy is identified for Sites CHAR005, CHIP006 and CN1.

Table D.14.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 13 – Economy*

Site reference	Employment floorspace	Access to existing employment opportunities
ALV002	0	++
BAM002	0	++
BAM003	0	++
BAM005	0	+
BG001	++	++
BN001	0	++
BN001a	0	++
BN003	+/-	++
BN006	+/-	++
BUR002	0	+
CHAR005	0	+
CHIP006	0	+
CN1	+/-	+
CUR001	0	++
CUR003	0	++
CUR008	+/-	++
EW1	+/-	++
EW2	+/-	++
HAN001	0	++
MIN002	++	++
MIN006	++	++
SHIL002	0	++
SHIL003	0	++
SL006	0	++
WIT001	0	++
WIT002	0	++
WIT006	0	++
WIT2	0	++
WOOD001	0	++

D.14.3 Ranking

D.14.3.1 The ranking for economy and employment (SA Objective 13) focuses on access to employment opportunities. The ranking does not consider potential employment provision, nor does it include the potential for residents at all strategic sites to work remotely from home.

D.14.3.2 All 29 strategic sites are located within sustainable distance to either a major employment area or a town centre, however Sites MIN006, CUR003 and WIT006 are each located adjacent to a cluster of major employment sites including Windrush Industrial Estate, Minster Industrial Park and Range Road and within 5km of Station Lane Industrial Area, located to the south of Witney. Furthermore, the three sites are located within 5km to Witney Town Centre, providing sustainable access to a wide range of employment opportunities. As such, these three sites could be identified as the **best performing strategic sites** with regard to the economy.

D.14.3.3 **The worst performing strategic sites** are CHAR005, CHIP006 and CN1, although positive effects were nonetheless identified. Whilst these three sites are located within 5km to a town centre, the three sites are the only strategic sites located beyond 8km from a major employment location.

D.15 Conclusions

D.15.1 Overview

D.15.1.1 **Table D.15.1** presents a summary of the assessment findings for the reasonable alternative sites against each SA Objective, indicating the 'worst-case' score of the receptor assessments as presented within **Tables D.2.1 – D.14.1**. The ranking of the strategic sites against each individual SA Objective is explained within **sections D.2 – D.14** above and summarised within **Table D.15.2** below.

Table D.15.1: *Impact matrix table of the reasonable alternative strategic sites, pre-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy
ALV002	+/-	--	-	--	0	0	-	--	0	-	-	++	++
BAM002	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	-	-	++
BAM003	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	++
BAM005	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	+
BG001	+/-	--	-	-	--	-	-	--	0	-	-	-	++
BN001	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	++
BN001a	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	++	++
BN003	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	+/-
BN006	+/-	--	--	-	--	-	-	--	0	-	-	-	+/-
BUR002	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	++	+
CHAR005	+/-	+	-	--	--	0	+/-	-	0	-	++	-	+
CHIP006	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	++	+
CN1	+/-	+	-	--	--	-	-	--	-	-	-	++	+/-
CUR001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	-	++
CUR003	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	-	--	-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	-	+/-
EW1	+/-	--	-	--	--	-	-	--	0	-	-	++	+/-
EW2	+/-	--	-	-	--	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	+/-
HAN001	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	+/-	--	-	-	++	-	++
MIN002	+/-	+	--	--	0	-	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	++
MIN006	+/-	--	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	++
SHIL002	+/-	--	+/-	--	-	0	-	-	0	-	-	-	++
SHIL003	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	++
SL006	+/-	-	-	--	0	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	++
WIT001	+/-	--	-	--	-	-	-	--	0	-	-	++	++
WIT002	+/-	--	-	--	0	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	++
WIT006	+/-	--	-	--	0	-	-	--	0	-	-	++	++
WIT2	+/-	--	-	--	-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	++
WOOD001	+/-	+	-	-	--	0	+/-	--	0	-	-	++	++

D.15.1.2 Any attempt to accurately predict a best performing strategic site is limited because of the high-level assessment carried out based on the information available at the time of assessment and without incorporation of detailed mitigation. The ranking reflects performance levels across the SA Objectives, which can only be interpreted loosely, as individual sustainability topics are not necessarily interchangeable.

D.15.1.3 Given the lack of currently available information and the uncertainty with regard to the impacts of all 29 sites on GHG emissions, the overall ranking does not factor climate change mitigation (SA Objective 1).

D.15.1.4 It is difficult to identify a single best performing option. Site ALV002 emerges as the most frequently best performing site, identified as among the best for cultural heritage, air quality, health and wellbeing, and education (SA Objectives 5, 6, 10, and 12). However, Site ALV002 is also identified as among the worst performing for water (SA Objective 7).

D.15.1.5 In contrast, the most frequently best performing sites that are not identified as worst performing for any SA Objective, and therefore **could be identified as the overall best performing,** are **Sites SHIL003 and WOOD001**, each performing well against three SA Objectives:

- Site SHIL003 performs well for: climate change adaptation, biodiversity and geodiversity, and air quality (SA Objectives 2, 3, and 6).
- Site WOOD001 performs well for: climate change adaptation, air quality, and health and wellbeing (SA Objectives 2, 6, and 10).

D.15.1.6 It is difficult to identify a single worst performing option. However, based on the relative performance of each strategic reasonable alternative site against the SA Objectives, Sites CHAR005, BG001 and BN006 each perform poorly against three SA Objectives:

- Site CHAR005 is the worst performing site for cultural heritage (SA Objective 5), and among the worst for landscape and economy (SA Objectives 4 and 13).
- Site BG001 is among the worst performing sites for air quality, water, and health and wellbeing (SA Objectives 6, 7, and 10).
- Site BN006 is the worst performing site for biodiversity (SA Objective 3), and among the worst for air quality and water (SA Objectives 6 and 7).

D.15.1.7 However, both CHAR005 and BN006 also perform well in some areas, with Site CHAR005 among the best performing sites for climate change adaptation, air quality, and transport (SA Objectives 2, 6, and 11) and Site BN006, with a proposed development of 7,051 dwellings (including affordable homes in an area with known housing barriers per the IMD), is the best performing site for housing (SA Objective 9). In contrast, **Site BG001** is among the worst performers for three SA Objectives, but is not identified as best performing for any objective and as such could be identified as the **overall worst performing site**.

Table D.15.2: *Indicative best and worst performing strategic sites*

SA Objective	Best performing strategic site(s)	Worst performing strategic site(s)
SA Objective 1: Climate change mitigation	Uncertain	Uncertain
SA Objective 2: Climate change adaptation	Sites BUR002, CHAR005, CHIP006, MIN002, SHIL003 and WOOD001	Site BAM002
SA Objective 3: Biodiversity and geodiversity	Sites BAM003, BAM005, BN001a, CUR001, MIN006, SHIL002 and SHIL003	Site BN006
SA Objective 4: Landscape	Sites BAM002, BAM003, BAM005, BG001, and WOOD001	Sites BUR002 and CHAR005
SA Objective 5: Cultural heritage	Sites ALV002, BAM003, BAM005, BN001a, MIN002, SL006, WIT002 and WIT006	Site CHAR005
SA Objective 6: Air quality	Sites ALV002, BAM005, BN001, BN001a, CHAR005, CUR003, MIN006, SHIL002, SHIL003 and WOOD001	Sites BG001, BN003, BN006, BUR002, CUR008, EW1, EW2, MIN002, SL006 and WIT001
SA Objective 7: Water	Uncertain	Sites ALV002, BAM002, BG001, BN006, CHIP006, CN1, EW1, SHIL002, WIT001 and WIT006
SA Objective 8: Natural resources and waste	Site CUR001	Site BN003
SA Objective 9: Housing and equality	Site BN006	Site BN001a
SA Objective 10: Health and wellbeing	Sites ALV002, CHIP006, SL006, WIT006 and WOOD001	Sites BAM005, BG001, CUR008, HAN001, MIN002 and MIN006
SA Objective 11: Transport and accessibility	Sites CHAR005 and HAN001	Site BAM003
SA Objective 12: Education	Sites ALV002, BUR002, CN1, EW1, SL006, WIT002 and WIT2	Site BAM005
SA Objective 13: Economy and employment	Sites CUR003, MIN006 and WIT006	Sites CHAR005, CHIP006 and CN1

Appendix E: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Non-Strategic Sites (Pre-mitigation)

Appendix E Contents

Tables

Figures

E.1 Introduction

E.1.1 Overview

E.1.1.1 A total of 54 reasonable alternative non-strategic sites have been identified by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) during the preparation of the Regulation 18 Preferred Spatial Options version of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

E.1.1.2 Non-strategic sites have been identified by the Council following a filtering process which ruled out any sites deemed to be inappropriate, unsustainable, which had a history of planning refusals, or where permission has been dismissed at appeal. The filtering process is covered in more detail in **Chapter 4** of the Regulation 18 Main Report (see **Volume 1**).

E.1.1.3 Some 29 reasonable alternative strategic sites have also been identified; strategic sites comprise sites promoted for residential-led uses, with an indicative capacity of 300 or more homes and have more capability to deliver supporting infrastructure alongside residential growth (see assessment of strategic sites in **Appendix D**). Non-strategic sites include all other smaller reasonable alternative sites promoted for residential or employment uses.

E.1.1.4 The location of the reasonable alternative non-strategic sites is shown in **Figure E.1.1**, and their details are identified in **Table E.1.1.**

E.1.1.5 Each of the sites appraised within this report have been assessed for likely impacts on each of the 13 SA Objectives, as outlined in the SA Framework (see **Appendix A**). Likely sustainability impacts have been set out in **Tables E.2.1 – E.13.1** within each SA Objective chapter, in accordance with the receptor-led site assessment methodology set out in **Appendix C**, as well as the general methodology information set out in **Chapter 2** of the main SA Report.

E.1.1.6 All assessments remain at a high level and rely on available secondary data provided by the Council.

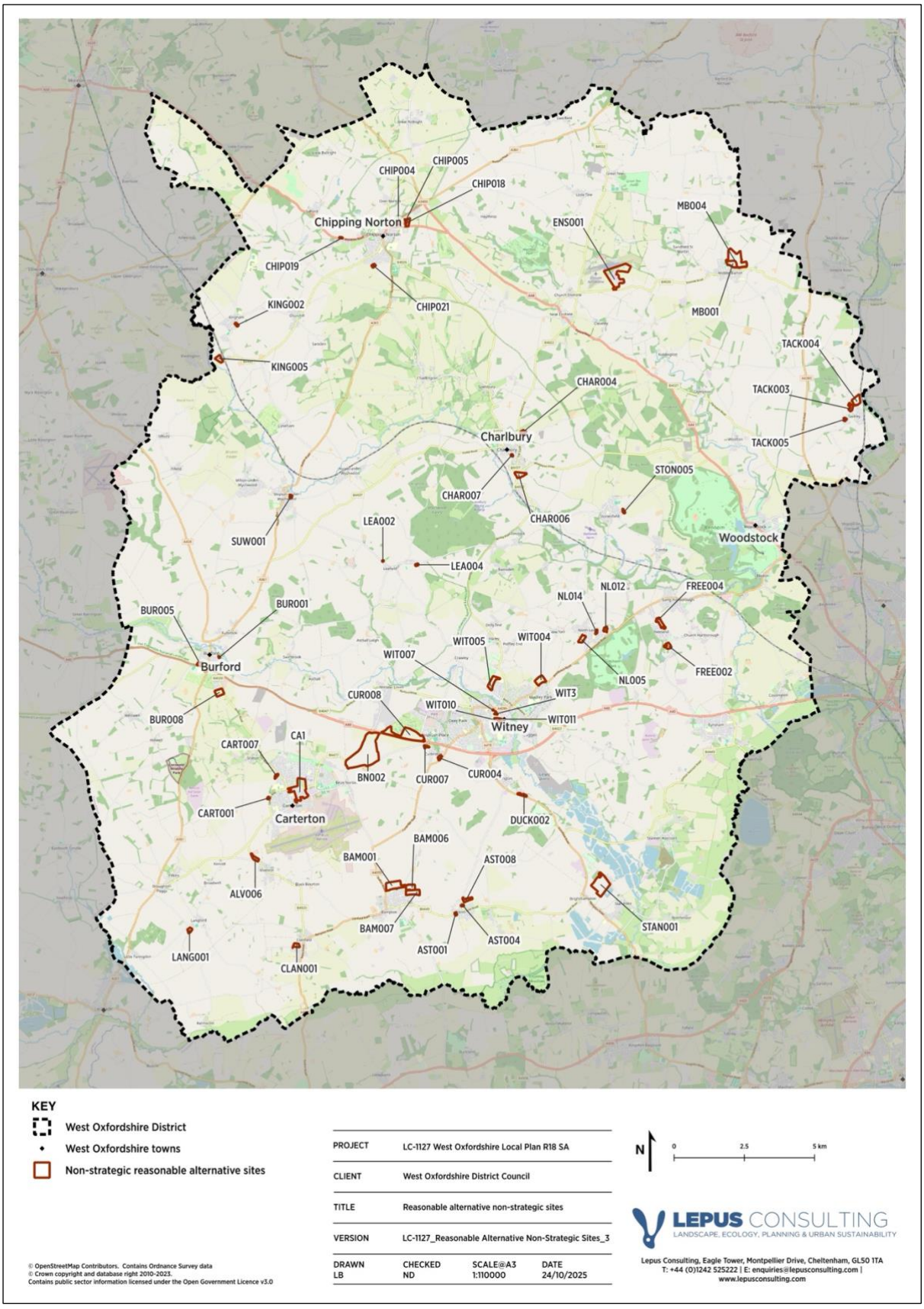

Figure E.1.1: *Location of reasonable alternative non-strategic sites within West Oxfordshire*

Table E.1.1: *Reasonable alternative non-strategic sites within West Oxfordshire*

Site reference	Site name	Proposed use	Gross area (ha)	Net area (ha)	Estimated housing capacity (30dph)	Estimated employment floorspace (sqm)
ALV006	Alvescot Lodge	Residential	3.01	1.81	54	0
AST001	South of Bampton Road	Residential	0.75	0.53	16	0
AST004	Land at North Street (Site C)	Residential	0.60	0.42	13	0
AST008	Land east of North Street	Residential	3.26	1.96	59	0
BAM001	Land west of Mount Owen Road, Bampton	Residential	14.79	8.87	266	0
BAM006	Land east of Mount Owen Road	Residential	5.95	3.57	107	0
BAM007	Land east of Mount Owen Road	Residential	7.99	4.79	144	0
BN002	Land north and east of Carterton	Employment	83.88	33.55	0	335,520
BUR001	Burford Laundry, Tannery Yard	Residential	0.31	0.31	9	0
BUR003	Burford Wysdom Caravan Park	Residential	0.47	0.33	10	0
BUR005	Westfield Recreation Ground	Residential	2.01	1.21	36	0
BUR008	Land west of Shilton Road	Residential	6.13	3.68	110	0
CA1	REEMA North and Central	Residential	28.47	17.08	219	0
CART001	Land at Sunset View, Upavon Way	Residential	0.62	0.43	13	0
CART004	Land at 23 Brize Norton Road	Residential	0.53	0.37	11	0
CART007	Land at Shilton Road	Residential	1.12	0.78	23	0
CHAR004	Land at Jefferson's Piece	Residential	2.05	1.23	37	0
CHAR006	Land east of Fawler Road	Residential	5.41	3.25	98	0
CHAR007	Hixet Wood	Residential	1.12	0.78	23	0
CHIP004	Highways Depot, Banbury Road	Residential	0.42	0.29	9	0
CHIP005	Land at Rockhill Farm	Residential	1.23	0.86	26	0
CHIP018	Rockhill Farm	Residential	2.76	1.66	50	0
CHIP019	Land west of Pine Trees	Residential	0.47	0.33	10	0
CHIP021	Former Chipping Norton FC	Residential	1.23	0.86	26	0
CLAN001	Land north of Mill Lane	Residential	2.51	1.51	45	0
CUR004	Land at Main Road	Residential	1.51	1.06	32	0
CUR007	Land south of Main Road	Residential	1.10	0.77	23	0
CUR008	Land west of Downs Road	Employment	33.20	13.28	0	132,800
DUCK002	Land to the south of Standlake Road	Residential	1.89	1.32	40	0
ENS001	Enstone Business Park	Employment	36.79	15.9	0	159,000
FREE002	Land south of Freeland	Mixed Use (residential and retained employment)	3.47	2.08	62	0
FREE004	Land east of Wroslyn Road	Residential	5.13	3.08	92	0

Site reference	Site name	Proposed use	Gross area (ha)	Net area (ha)	Estimated housing capacity (30dph)	Estimated employment floorspace (sqm)
KING002	Land at Lockwoods Orchard	Residential	1.07	0.75	23	0
KING005	Land adjacent to Kingham Station	Residential	3.97	2.38	71	0
LANG001	Land at the Elms	Residential	2.15	1.29	39	0
LEA002	Land at Fairspear Road	Residential	0.28	0.28	8	0
LEA004	Land at Greenwich Lane	Residential	0.80	0.56	17	0
MB001	Land north of Holliers Crescent	Residential	6.84	4.10	123	0
MB004	Land at Holliers Farm	Residential	29.91	17.95	Uncertain	0
NL005	Land west of Common Road	Residential	3.87	2.32	70	0
NL012	Rear of 75 Park Road	Residential	1.87	1.31	39	0
NL014	Park Road	Residential	0.81	0.57	17	0
STAN001	Land at the Downs	Mixed Use	29.00	17.40	Uncertain	0
STON005	Land east of Charity Farm	Residential	0.97	0.68	20	0
SUW001	Glebe Field, North of Ascott Road	Residential	0.93	0.65	20	0
TACK003	Land west of Rousham Road, Tackley	Residential	2.92	1.75	53	0
TACK004	Land at Rousham Road	Residential	7.40	4.44	133	0
TACK005	Land off Lower Hades Road	Residential	0.90	0.63	19	0
WIT004	Land north of Woodstock Road	Residential	7.49	4.49	135	0
WIT005	Land at Milking Lane	Residential	7.86	4.72	141	0
WIT007	Land at Dark Lane	Residential	0.14	0.14	4	0
WIT010	BT Depot and Clarkes Timber Yard	Mixed Use (Residential and community)	0.76	0.53	16	0
WIT011	Welch Way Civic Buildings	Mixed Use (Residential and community)	0.95	0.67	20	0
WIT3	Woodford Way Car Park	Residential	0.68	0.48	50	0

E.2 SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation

E.2.1 Increase in GHG emissions

E.2.1.1 The estimated carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions for West Oxfordshire in 2023 was 448.1 kilo tonnes, with per capita emissions of 3.8 tonnes, according to UK local authority CO_2 emissions data[1]. It is likely that new development as a result of the Local Plan will increase local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the construction phase, the occupation and operation of homes and businesses, energy and water consumption and increases in local road transport with associated emissions. This impact is considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

E.2.1.2 There are measures which can be incorporated into the non-strategic sites that may present opportunities to mitigate climate change, such as the integration of GI which will be likely to encourage active travel through the provision of more attractive places and consequently reducing air pollution[2]. However, this level of detail is not currently known for the non-strategic sites and as such cannot be taken into consideration in the assessment process.

E.2.1.3 Overall, the appraisal of all reasonable alternatives non-strategic sites is limited in its assessment of carbon emissions, due to an absence of site-specific carbon footprint data. Furthermore, the nature and scale of any on-site non-residential development is unknown at this stage, and the extent of positive effects associated with the provision of renewable or low-carbon energy supply is unknown. Consequently, the carbon emissions likely to be generated as a result of development is currently uncertain. A more detailed carbon footprinting exercise could allow for more meaningful evaluation.

[1] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2023. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023 [Date accessed: 06/08/25]

[2] TCPA (2023) What is Green Infrastructure? Available at: www.tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/ [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

E.3 SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation

E.3.1 Flood Zones

E.3.1.1 The district is affected to varying degrees by fluvial (river) flooding. A small proportion of the district lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3, predominantly along the River Thames that comprises the southern border of the district. Flood risk will be expected to increase as a result of climate change impacts.

E.3.1.2 The majority (47) of the non-strategic sites are located wholly within Flood Zone 1 and will situate development in areas at low risk of fluvial flooding. A minor positive impact on flood risk is identified for these sites.

E.3.1.3 Seven sites are partially located within Flood Zones 2 and/or 3.

E.3.1.4 Five sites are located where 10% or more of their site areas lie within Flood Zones 2 or 3: 8.5% in Flood Zone 2 and 14.5% in Flood Zone 3 at Site CUR004; 3.5% in Flood Zone 2 and 17.4% in Flood Zone 3 at Site KING005; 30.3% in Flood Zone 2 at Site WIT010; 86.1% in Flood Zone 2 at Site WIT011; and 24.4% in Flood Zone 2 at Site WIT3. In absence of detailed information regarding the developable areas within the site boundaries, Sites CUR004, KING005, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3 have been identified as potentially having a major negative impact on flooding, as they may locate some site end users at high risk of fluvial flooding, and exacerbate existing flooding issues.

E.3.1.5 A small proportion of two sites (CART007 and CUR008) lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3: both with approximately 1% of the site area in Flood Zone 2 and 3% in Flood Zone 3. Development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact upon flood risk.

E.3.2 Surface water flood risk

E.3.2.1 Small areas of surface water flood risk (SWFR) can be found within the district, primarily along watercourses in the southeast and north of the district. Flood risk will be expected to increase as a result of climate change impacts.

E.3.2.2 Of the 54 non-strategic sites, 15 are located in areas where 1% or more of the site area coincides with an area of high SWFR. Depending on the specific location of development within the gross site area, development at these sites has potential to have significant adverse effects, exacerbating the SWFR at locations where flood risk is already high and potentially increasing SWFR in surrounding locations.

E.3.2.3 Additionally, a further 14 sites are in locations of low and/or medium SWFR, where more than 1% but less than 50% of the site areas coincide with low SWFR, and/or more than 1% but less than 10% coincides with areas of medium SWFR. Development at these sites is likely to have a minor adverse effect.

E.3.2.4 The remaining 25 sites, where less than 1% of the site coincides with low, medium or high SWFR, are identified to have a negligible impact on surface water flooding.

Table E.3.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation*

Site reference	Flood zones	SWFR
ALV006	+	0
AST001	+	-
AST004	+	-
AST008	+	0
BAM001	+	0
BAM006	+	--
BAM007	+	--
BN002	+	0
BUR001	+	-
BUR003	+	0
BUR005	+	0
BUR008	+	--
CA1	+	--
CART001	+	0
CART004	+	--
CART007	-	--
CHAR004	+	0
CHAR006	+	--
CHAR007	+	0
CHIP004	+	--
CHIP005	+	0
CHIP018	+	0
CHIP019	+	-
CHIP021	+	--
CLAN001	+	-
CUR004	--	--
CUR007	+	0
CUR008	-	-
DUCK002	+	--
ENS001	+	-
FREE002	+	0
FREE004	+	-
KING002	+	--
KING005	--	-
LANG001	+	-
LEA002	+	--
LEA004	+	0
MB001	+	0
MB004	+	0
NL005	+	--
NL012	+	0
NL014	+	0
STAN001	+	-
STON005	+	0
SUW001	+	0
TACK003	+	0
TACK004	+	0

Site reference	Flood zones	SWFR
TACK005	+	0
WIT004	+	0
WIT005	+	0
WIT007	+	-
WIT010	--	-
WIT011	--	--
WIT3	--	-

E.3.3 Ranking

E.3.3.1 There is no single best performing option with regard to climate change adaptation (SA Objective 2), as 25 sites (ALV006, AST008, BAM001, BN002, BUR003, BUR005, CART001, CHAR004, CHAR007, CHIP005, CHIP018, CUR007, FREE002, LEA004, MB001, MB004, NL012, NL014, STON005, SUW001, TACK003, TACK004, TACK005, WIT004 and WIT005) lie wholly within Flood Zone 1 and in areas with insignificant SWFR. As such, these 25 sites could be identified as **the best performing options**. It is worth noting that this ranking is only based on available data relating to flooding. It is likely that some, or all, of the non-strategic sites may have opportunities to integrate GI that could further support adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

E.3.3.2 **The worst performing strategic sites** could be identified as CUR004 and WIT011, where development at these two sites coincide with areas of high SWFR. These non-strategic sites also have the high proportions within Flood Zone 2 and 3; 20.9% of CUR001 sits within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and 86.1% of WIT011 sits within Flood Zone 2.

E.3.3.3 It should be noted that other potential sources of flood risk, such as sewer flood risk, should also be explored and quantified where specific data has not been available to inform the SA assessments. Furthermore, following guidance from the Environment Agency[3], nature-based solutions should be explored through the design and layouts of the sites, which could include planting trees and hedges and improving soil cover to increase water absorption, catch rainfall and slow down surface water run-off.

[3] Environment Agency (2021). Use nature-based solutions to reduce flooding in your area. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-nature-based-solutions-to-reduce-flooding-in-your-area [Date accessed: 23/10/25]

E.4 SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

E.4.1 European sites

E.4.1.1 The only European site within West Oxfordshire is Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is partially located within the east of the district, with the remainder of the designated site falling in the adjacent City of Oxford. Oxford Meadows SAC is designated for its lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis*) and creeping marshwort (*Apium repens*). The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) notes the SAC is vulnerable to hydrological changes and invasive species[4]. While not mentioned explicitly in the SIP, the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (2025)[5] has screened in Oxford Meadows SAC for habitat loss, air pollution and recreational pressure in addition to hydrological changes.

E.4.1.2 The emerging HRA will provide more detailed analysis of likely impacts and identification of impact pathways to this SAC and other European sites outside of the Plan area. The HRA Screening indicated potential for likely significant effects on Oxford Meadows SAC in terms of physical damage and habitat loss, air pollution, water quality/quantity and recreational pressure, as well as Cothill Fen SAC for air pollution, and Little Wittenham SAC for water quality/quantity. These impacts will be explored further in a re-screening of policies and site allocations, followed by an Appropriate Assessment.

E.4.1.3 At this stage of the plan making process, there are no formally identified Zones of Influence (ZOIs) for the European sites in proximity to West Oxfordshire. However, as part of the (now ceased) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 evidence base, an HRA Report was prepared that defined distance-based risk zones for Plan development including an inner 2km zone for recreation, and outer precautionary 10km zone[6].

E.4.1.4 None of the non-strategic reasonable alternative sites lie within the 2km zone, however nine sites lie within 10km of Oxford Meadows SAC and/or Cothill Fen SAC. Based on available evidence at this stage, the proposed development at these nine sites has greater potential to result in a minor negative impact on the integrity of these SACs. For the remaining 45 non-strategic sites, the impact of development upon European sites is currently uncertain.

[4] Natural England (2014). Site Improvement Plan for the Oxford Meadows SAC. Available at:https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4942743310696448 [Date accessed: 03/10/25]

[5] LUC (2025) West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan (Regulation 18) HRA Screening Report. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cu2pcxiq/local-plan-2041-hra-screening-report-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 31/07/25]

[6] Ricardo (2019) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment: Distance-based risk-zones for Plan Development. Report for the Oxfordshire Plan Team. Available at: https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s60849/Appendix%207C%20HRA%20Distance-Based%20Risk%20Zones%20Nov%202019%20FINAL.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

E.4.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

E.4.2.1 A total of 30 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) lie within the Plan area. Natural England have developed Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for each SSSI in the country, in order to allow for a rapid assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals.

E.4.2.2 Two non-strategic sites (MB001 and MB004) lie adjacent to Middle Barton Fen SSSI, as seen in **Figure E.4.2**, which consists of calcareous fen meadow and limestone grassland and hedgerows. Depending on the layout and scale of development within the indicative site boundary, these two sites could potentially have a direct major negative impact on the SSSI through increased habitat fragmentation and disturbance as well as likely resulting in increased recreational disturbance with a greater number of visitors. The sites also lie within IRZs that indicate "*residential development of 10 or more units outside of existing settlements/urban areas"* should be consulted on with Natural England.

E.4.2.3 Sites ALV006, CHAR006, DUCK002 and LEA004 are located within IRZs which state that "*residential development of 50 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas*" should be consulted on with Natural England. Sites CART001, CHIP005, CHIP018 and LEA002 are located within IRZs which state that "*residential development of 100 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas*" should be consulted on with Natural England. Only Sites ALV006 and CHAR006 meet this threshold, with a capacity of approximately 54 dwellings and 98 dwellings respectively. Therefore, a minor negative impact is identified for these two sites, where the proposed development has potential to harm the reasons for designation of the nearby SSSIs (Alvescot Meadows SSSI approximately 370m from Site ALV006; and Wychwood SSSI approximately 630m from Site CHAR006).

E.4.2.4 The remaining 50 reasonable alternative sites do not lie in proximity to any SSSIs or within an IRZ which indicates the proposed use as a threat to any SSSIs. These 50 sites are therefore likely to result in a negligible impact on SSSIs.

E.4.3 National Nature Reserves

E.4.3.1 There are two NNRs within West Oxfordshire: 'Wychwood' NNR located just north of Witney in the centre of the district, and 'Chimney Meadows' NNR located within the south of the district.

E.4.3.2 None of the 54 non-strategic sites coincide with, lie adjacent to, or are situated within close proximity to Chimney Meadows NNR.

E.4.3.3 Wychwood NNR is one of Oxfordshire's largest areas of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland, covering 262ha. The reserve is primarily made up of oak and ash woodland, providing a rich habitat for a variety of plant and animal species[7]. Four sites (CHAR006, CHAR007, LANG001 and LEA002) are located within close proximity to this NNR. The closest of these sites to the NNR is Site LEA002, which is located approximately 700m from the NNR. All four of these proximal sites have been identified as having a potential minor negative impact upon Wychwood NNR, through increased visitor pressures from development.

[7] Natural England (2014). Oxfordshire's National Nature Reserve. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxfordshires-national-nature-reserves/oxfordshires-national-nature-reserves [Date accessed: 23/10/25]

E.4.4 Ancient Woodland

E.4.4.1 Large areas of ancient woodland are located throughout the district, with large proportions located within the Wychwood NNR including 'Churchill Copse', 'Hawknest Copse' and 'Fiveoak Copse'.

E.4.4.2 Of the 54 non-strategic sites, Site FREE002 is situated closest to ancient woodland. It lies approximately 190m northwest of 'The Thrift'. Additionally, Site BN002 is located approximately 300m from 'Rabbits Piece Copse'. Development at these two sites have potential to result in a minor negative impact upon the woodlands, for instance through pollution and recreational pressures. Development at the other 52 sites, which are located further away from areas of ancient woodland, is less likely to significantly affect ancient woodland and negligible impacts are recorded.

E.4.5 Local Nature Reserves

E.4.5.1 There are two LNRs located within the district: 'Saltway' LNR and 'Crecy Hill' LNR. Six of the non-strategic sites are within close proximity to these LNRs. Three sites (CHAR004, CHAR006 and CHAR007) are situated nearby to Saltway LNR and three sites (TACK003, TACK004 and TACK005) are nearby to Crecy Hill LNR, with TACK004 located just 18m west of the designation. Therefore, these six sites have been identified as likely to have a minor negative impact upon these LNRs, as they may bring increased pollution and recreational impacts that have the potential to detrimentally impact the biodiversity supported by the LNR.

E.4.5.2 The other 48 non-strategic sites are located away from the district's two LNRs. Therefore, a negligible impact is anticipated as a result of development at these sites.

E.4.6 Local Wildlife Sites

E.4.6.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) maintains a 'living list' of the Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in each local authority area in Berkshire and Oxfordshire[8]. Some 103 LWS lie wholly or partially within West Oxfordshire District, covering a range of habitat types including grassland, woodland and ponds.

E.4.6.2 Two non-strategic sites (TACK004 and CART001) are located close to one of the district's LWS. CART001 lies approximately 80m southwest of Carterton Grassland LWS and TACK004 is situated approximately 18m west of Crecy Hill LWS. Development at these sites is likely to have a minor negative impact upon these LWS, where there is potential for habitat degradation and associated disruption to wildlife as a result of development.

E.4.6.3 The remaining 52 sites are located further from LWS and are less likely to result in significant impacts on LWS; a negligible impact is recorded for these sites.

[8] TVERC (2024) LWS 'living list' and locations. Available at: https://www.tverc.org/cms/LWSLivingLists [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

E.4.7 Geological Sites

E.4.7.1 There are 16 Local Geological Sites (LGS) which are located wholly or partially in the district designated by the Oxfordshire Geology Trust, which exhibit important geological and geomorphological features[9].

E.4.7.2 None of the 54 non-strategic sites coincide with a geological site. Therefore, development at these sites is anticipated to have a negligible impact.

E.4.8 Priority habitat

E.4.8.1 Priority habitats present in the district include good quality semi-improved grassland (found scattered throughout the north), coastal and floodplain grazing marsh along the River Windrush and the River Thames corridors in the centre and south east, and areas of traditional orchard throughout the district. Smaller proportions of lowland habitats are also present (including calcareous grassland, dry acid grassland, fens, and meadows).

E.4.8.2 Five of the 54 non-strategic sites (ENS001, FREE002, FREE004, KING002 and SUW001) are likely to have a minor negative impact upon priority habitat, as part, or all, of the site coincides with an area of priority habitat. Development at these sites may result in the loss of these priority habitats, which may be detrimental to the species these habitats currently support. Site ENS001 coincides with deciduous woodland and good quality semi-improved grassland (3.7%), Site FREE002 coincides with traditional orchard and deciduous woodland (16%), Site FREE004 coincides with deciduous woodland (13%), Site KING002 coincides with traditional orchard (2.5%) and Site SUW001 coincides with deciduous woodland (5%). Consequently, development at these sites is likely to result in loss of the traditional orchard priority habitat and some loss/disturbance of the deciduous woodland priority habitat.

E.4.8.3 The remaining 49 sites do not coincide with priority habitat and as such development at these sites is expected to result in a negligible impact with regard to priority habitat.

[9] TVERC (2024) Local Geological Sites. Available at: https://www.tverc.org/cms/content/local-geological-sites [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

Table E.4.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity*

Site reference	European sites	SSSI	NNR	Ancient woodland	LNR	LWS	Geological site	Priority habitat
ALV006	+/-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
AST001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AST004	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AST008	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM006	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM007	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BN002	+/-	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
BUR001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BUR003	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BUR005	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BUR008	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA1	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CART001	+/-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
CART004	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CART007	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHAR004	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
CHAR006	+/-	-	-	0	-	0	0	0
CHAR007	+/-	0	-	0	-	0	0	0
CHIP004	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP005	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP018	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP019	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP021	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLAN001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR004	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR007	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR008	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DUCK002	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ENS001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
FREE002	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	-
FREE004	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
KING002	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
KING005	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LANG001	+/-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
LEA002	+/-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
LEA004	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MB001	+/-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0
MB004	+/-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0
NL005	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NL012	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NL014	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STAN001	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STON005	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUW001	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-

Site reference	European sites	SSSI	NNR	Ancient woodland	LNR	LWS	Geological site	Priority habitat
TACK003	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
TACK004	+/-	0	0	0	-	-	0	0
TACK005	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
WIT004	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT005	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT007	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT010	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT011	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT3	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

E.4.9 Ranking

E.4.9.1 Uncertainty remains in the assessment of non-strategic sites in terms of impacts on European sites at this stage of the assessment process, in absence of the HRA conclusions.

E.4.9.2 It is difficult to identify a single best performing option with regard to biodiversity and geodiversity (SA Objective 3), as (aside from uncertainty in terms of European sites) 30 of the reasonable alternative sites are expected to have a negligible impact across all biodiversity receptors (AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM001, BAM006, BAM007, BUR001, BUR003, BUR005, BUR008, CA1, CART004, CART007, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, CHIP019, CHIP021, CLAN001, CUR004, CUR007, CUR008, DUCK002, KING005, LEA004, WIT005, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3). As such, these 30 non-strategic sites could be identified as **the best performing options**. Opportunities for ecological enhancements are not known on a site-by-site basis at this stage, nor are potential adverse impacts on non-designated aspects of the ecological network or protected species.

E.4.9.3 Sites CHAR006, CHAR007, FREE002, MB001 and MB004 could be identified as **the worst performing non-strategic sites**. Sites CHAR006 and CHAR007 are both within close proximity to NNRs and LNRs. Site FREE002 coincides with an area of priority habitat and is closest to an area of ancient woodland (see **Figure E.4.1**). Sites MB001 and MB004 are adjacent to Middle Barton Fen SSSI (see **Figure E.4.2**). As such, there is potential for these sites to result in adverse impacts on these biodiversity features as a result of increased recreational disturbance as well as potential impacts associated with the construction phase of development.

Figure E.4.1: *Biodiversity assets in proximity to non-strategic Site FREE002*

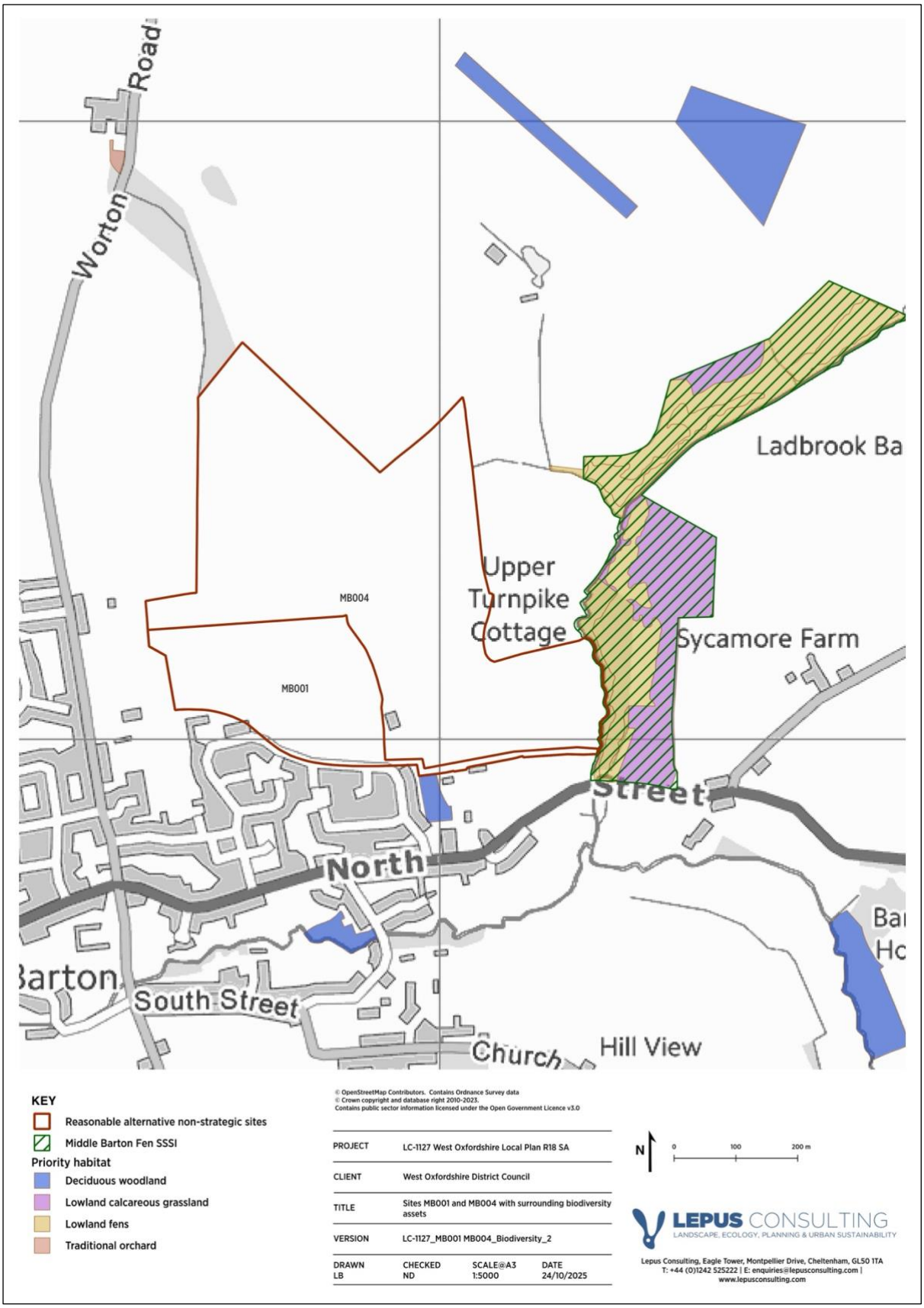

Figure E.4.2: *Biodiversity assets in proximity to non-strategic sites MB001 and MB004*

E.5 SA Objective 4 – Landscape

E.5.1 Cotswold National Landscape

E.5.1.1 The Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), formerly known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), encompasses a large portion of the northwest of the district. The Cotswolds is the largest National Landscape in England and is recognised for its rich, diverse and high-quality landscape, encompassing flower-rich limestone grasslands and ancient broadleaved woodland[10]. The CNL Landscape Character Assessment[11] identified 19 landscape character types across the CNL, within which there are 68 distinct character areas. The CNL Landscape Strategy and Guidelines[12] highlights key characteristics and sensitivities for each area that have been drawn upon in this assessment.

E.5.1.2 Of the 54 non-strategic sites, 13 sites lie within the CNL, where development is likely to have significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the CNL without careful planning (see **Figure E.5.1**). There is potential for a major negative impact as a result of development at 11 of these sites (BUR005, CHAR004, CHAR006, CHIP019, CHIP021, KING002, KING005, LEA002, LEA004, STON005 and SUW001), where new development at the edge of, or outside of, existing settlements has potential to conflict with the guidelines set out in the CNL Landscape Character Assessment without mitigation. Sites BUR001 and CHAR007 also lie wholly within the CNL, however as the sites contain some previous development and are situated within the existing settlements of Burford and Charlbury respectively, impacts on the special qualities of the CNL are likely to be minor.

E.5.1.3 Four further the non-strategic sites (BN002, BUR008, CHIP005, CHIP018) are identified as likely to have a minor negative impact, through alteration of the setting or views of the CNL. This is due to the fact that they are located on previously undeveloped land, within close proximity to the NL (Sites BUR008, CHIP005 and CHIP019 less than 400m away, and Site BN002 comprising a large undeveloped area lying 1.1km from the CNL).

E.5.1.4 The remaining 37 non-strategic sites are expected to have a negligible impact upon the NL, including its views and setting.

E.5.1.5 The CNL Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change Report[13] highlights long distance views as key features across several of the landscape character types. However, given the small scale and lack of site-specific detail of the non-strategic sites it is difficult to determine potential for effects on long distance views. It is recommended that further work is undertaken to determine the impact some non-strategic sites may have with regard to views to and from the CNL.

[10] Cotswolds National Landscape (2024) Special qualities of the Cotswolds – A National Treasure. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-landscape-2/ [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[11] Cotswolds National Landscape (no date) Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[12] Cotswolds National Landscape (2016) Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/about-the-cotswolds-national-landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-strategy-and-guidelines/ [Date accessed: 21/08/25]

[13] Latham Architects (2003). Cotswold's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change. Available at: https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/CCB-Local-Distinctiveness-and-Landscape-Change-report-ldr-09.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

E.5.2 Landscape character

E.5.2.1 Baseline data on Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Types (LT) within the Plan area are derived from the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998)[14].

E.5.2.2 Development at the majority of the non-strategic sites (35 of the 54 sites) has potential to be discordant with the LCA within which they are situated. This includes several sites that coincide with features noted as being of importance for the character such as large-scale open limestone wolds, hedgerow boundaries to fields and semi-enclosed flat vale farmland among others. Therefore, these 35 sites have been deemed likely to have a minor negative impact upon landscape character.

E.5.2.3 The remaining 19 non-strategic sites are likely to have a negligible impact upon landscape character, as development there is expected to be concordant with the LCA.

E.5.3 Landscape sensitivity

E.5.3.1 Baseline data on landscape sensitivity has been drawn on from published landscape assessments around Witney[15], Carterton[16] and Chipping Norton[17], insofar as these relate to land parcels within which the reasonable alternative non-strategic sites lie. This allowed for 18 of the non-strategic sites to be assessed in terms of landscape sensitivity at this stage. The impact of the other 36 non-strategic sites upon landscape sensitivity is currently uncertain.

E.5.3.2 Of the 18 non-strategic sites which were covered by the above landscape sensitivity data, 11 were deemed likely to have a negligible impact upon sensitive landscapes as a result of being located within areas of 'low' sensitivity or at the heart of existing urban settlements and as such not likely to impact the wider landscape setting. One of the sites (WIT004) was anticipated to have a minor negative impact, as it is located in land parcel C4: an area of Witney with 'low-moderate overall sensitivity'. Six of the sites (CART001, CART007, CHIP018, CHIP021, CUR008 and WIT005) were identified as likely to have a major negative impact upon sensitive landscapes, due to their location within land parcels in Carterton, Chipping Norton and Witney wherein development is considered 'inappropriate' due to the 'high landscape/visual sensitivity'.

E.5.3.3 It is strongly recommended that the Council carry out further landscape studies in order to have a full picture on the likely impacts of development sites on West Oxfordshire's landscape. It is likely that some locations outside the scope of currently published evidence studies are likely to be particularly sensitive, such as Charlbury.

[14] Atlantic Consultants (1998) West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/cpqn2fj0/west-oxfordshire-landscape-assessment-1998.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[15] AHLC (2007) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Witney Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2mdjjkg4/witney-landscape-assessment-2007-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[16] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Carterton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/gykqnexu/carterton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[17] AHLC (2009) West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework: Chipping Norton Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qwrkoffm/chipping-norton-landscape-assessment-2009-full-report.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

E.5.4 Public Rights of Way Network

E.5.4.1 There is an extensive Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network within the semi-rural areas of West Oxfordshire, although this is more fragmented within the urban and the most rural areas.

E.5.4.2 Of the 54 non-strategic sites, 24 are likely to have a minor negative impact upon the PRoW network, as development in these locations is likely to alter views for users of this network. For instance, part of the PRoW network runs along the eastern boundary of Site CHAR006. Therefore, development at this site is likely to negatively impact views for users of the PRoW network where pleasant views across an expansive green field will be lost.

E.5.4.3 The remaining 30 non-strategic sites are likely to have a negligible impact, as they are located at a distance from the PRoW network and less likely to be visible or directly detract from recreational experience in the countryside.

E.5.5 Increase risk of coalescence

E.5.5.1 The risks of coalescence and urbanisation of the countryside are key considerations for development proposals within West Oxfordshire. Due to their small scale, only three of the non-strategic sites are identified as having the potential to give rise to adverse effects in regard to coalescence.

E.5.5.2 Sites BN002, CUR008, STAN001 and TACK003 are identified as likely to have a minor negative impact by increasing the risk of coalescence between existing settlements. Site BN002 comprises a large area consisting of arable fields, stretching from the north eastern edge of Carterton/Brize Norton up to the A40 in the north adjacent to Minster Lovell, where development may reduce the separation between these settlements. Development at Site CUR008 is likely to reduce the separation between Minster Lovell and Witney. Site STAN001 consists of a group of fields located in the centre of four rural villages (Brighthampton, Standlake, Hardwick and Stanton Harcourt). Development at this site would increase the risk of merging these villages, with Brighthampton and Standlake already displaying evidence of coalescence. Site TACK003 is situated between Tackley and Nethercott which appear to have already become conjoined, however development at the site is likely to exacerbate this existing risk of coalescence and loss of village identity.

E.5.5.3 The impact of the remaining 50 non-strategic sites is likely to be negligible, as they are located in rural settings or areas in and around existing settlements where development is unlikely to increase the risk of coalescence.

E.5.6 Tree protection orders

E.5.6.1 Tree protection orders (TPOs) are assigned to specific trees or groups of trees of which their retention is expedient in the interests of amenity of the local area. A TPO prohibits the damage or destruction of trees without the written consent of the local planning authority[18].

E.5.6.2 Six non-strategic sites (AST001, BUR003, CA1, CART004, CHIP018 and FREE004) coincide with, or are located adjacent to, a tree protected by a TPO. The proposed development at these six sites could potentially result in adverse impacts in the form of

[18] MHCLG (2014). Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas. Guidance. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

structural damage to the tree, soil disruption which could impact surrounding ecosystems, and further implications to the appearance and character of the local landscape. Therefore, a minor negative impact on TPOs is identified for these sites.

E.5.6.3 The remaining 48 non-strategic sites are anticipated to have a negligible impact upon TPOs, as they do not coincide with, or lie adjacent to, any trees protected by TPOs.

Table E.5.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 4 – Landscape*

Site reference	Cotswold NL	Landscape character	Landscape sensitivity	Views from the PRoW network	Coalescence	TPO
ALV006	0	-	0	0	0	0
AST001	0	-	+/-	-	0	-
AST004	0	0	+/-	0	0	0
AST008	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BAM001	0	-	+/-	0	0	0
BAM006	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BAM007	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
BN002	-	-	+/-	-	-	0
BUR001	-	0	+/-	0	0	0
BUR003	0	0	+/-	0	0	-
BUR005	--	0	+/-	-	0	0
BUR008	-	-	+/-	-	0	0
CA1	0	0	0	0	0	-
CART001	0	0	--	0	0	0
CART004	0	0	0	0	0	-
CART007	0	0	--	0	0	0
CHAR004	--	0	0	-	0	0
CHAR006	--	0	+/-	-	0	0
CHAR007	-	0	+/-	0	0	0
CHIP004	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP005	-	-	0	0	0	0
CHIP018	-	-	--	0	0	-
CHIP019	--	-	0	0	0	0
CHIP021	--	-	--	-	0	0
CLAN001	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
CUR004	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
CUR007	0	-	+/-	0	0	0
CUR008	0	-	--	-	-	0
DUCK002	0	-	+/-	0	0	0
ENS001	0	0	+/-	0	0	0
FREE002	0	-	+/-	0	0	0
FREE004	0	-	+/-	-	0	-
KING002	--	-	+/-	0	0	0
KING005	--	-	+/-	0	0	0
LANG001	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
LEA002	--	-	+/-	0	0	0

Site reference	Cotswold NL	Landscape character	Landscape sensitivity	Views from the PRoW network	Coalescence	TPO
LEA004	--	-	+/-	0	0	0
MB001	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
MB004	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
NL005	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
NL012	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
NL014	0	-	+/-	0	0	0
STAN001	0	-	+/-	-	-	0
STON005	--	0	+/-	0	0	0
SUW001	--	0	+/-	0	0	0
TACK003	0	-	+/-	-	-	0
TACK004	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
TACK005	0	-	+/-	-	0	0
WIT004	0	-	-	0	0	0
WIT005	0	-	--	-	0	0
WIT007	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT010	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT011	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT3	0	0	0	0	0	0

E.5.7 Ranking

E.5.7.1 It is difficult to identify best and worst performing sites against landscape (SA Objective 4), owing to the lack of detailed information available at this stage to inform the assessments; for example, landscape sensitivity/capacity information across the district would enable a more robust evaluation.

E.5.7.2 Sites CHIP004, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3 could be identified as **the best performing non-strategic sites**. These five sites are all deemed likely to have a negligible impact across all six of the landscape receptors, based on available evidence at this stage of the assessment process.

E.5.7.3 Based on the available information, Site CHIP021 emerges as **the worst performing option,** where potential major negative impacts have been identified with regard to the CNL and landscape sensitivity as well as two minor negative impacts with regard to landscape character and the alteration of views from the PRoW network. Although, the lack of landscape sensitivity data covering all settlements could result in the identification of further negative impacts for sites currently scored as uncertain should further studies be carried out. This includes Sites BUR005, CHAR006, KING002, KING005, LEA002 and LEA004 which also lie within the CNL and have similar potential for adverse effects on other receptors as Site CHOP021. Notably, Sites KING005 and CHAR006 are larger-scale than Site CHIP021 and in more prominent locations at the edge of settlements that may be more sensitive and potentially worse-performing overall.

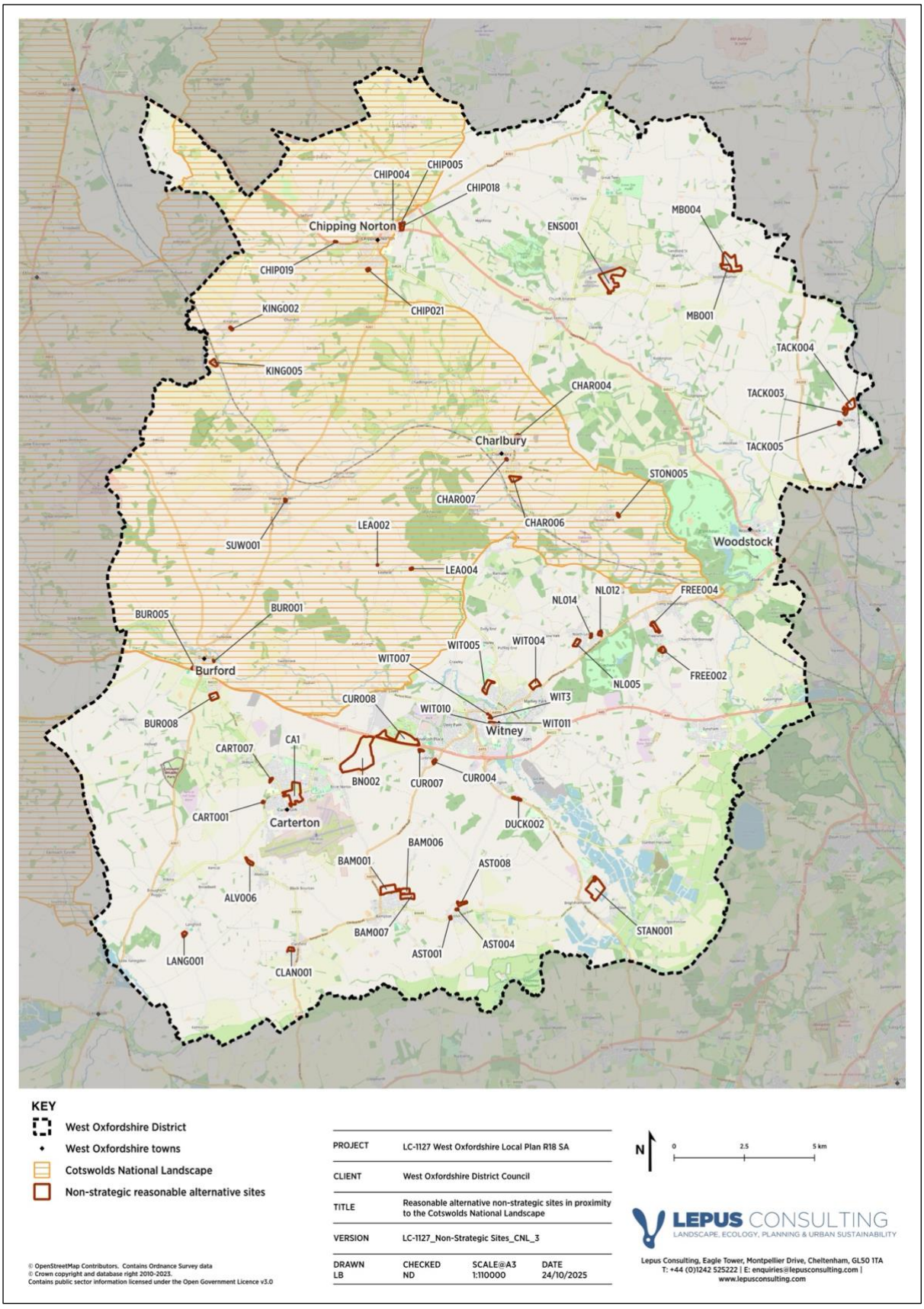

Figure E.5.1: *Non-strategic sites in relation to the Cotswolds National Landscape*

E.6 SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage

E.6.1 Grade I Listed Building

E.6.1.1 Within West Oxfordshire there are 42 Grade I Listed Buildings (LB). None of the 54 non-strategic sites coincide with, lie adjacent to, or are in close proximity to a Grade I LB. Consequently, all of the non-strategic sites are deemed likely to have a negligible impact upon the district's Grade I LBs.

E.6.2 Grade II* Listed Building

E.6.2.1 There are 214 Grade II* LBs within the district. None of the non-strategic sites coincide with, or lie adjacent to, a Grade II* LB.

E.6.2.2 However, three sites are located in close proximity to a Grade II* LB. Site CHAR007 is situated approximately 50m northeast of 'Lee Place', a small country house that includes features from the 17th and 18th century[19]. Site SUW001 lies approximately 75m southwest of 'The New House with surrounding pool and garden wall to the west', a private house with a contemporary Japanese style garden, built in 1964 by nationally renowned architects Stout & Litchfield[20]. Site TACK005 is situated approximately 60m northwest of 'Stables at Manor Farm', thatched-roof stables said to be built in 1616[21], as seen in **Figure E.6.1**. Development at these three sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on the nearby Grade II* LBs, by impacting the setting and views from the LBs.

E.6.2.3 The proposed development at the remaining 51 non-strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any Grade II* LB, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest LBs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features, and negligible impacts are identified.

E.6.3 Grade II Listed Building

E.6.3.1 There are 2,950 Grade II Listed Buildings located throughout West Oxfordshire. None of the 54 non-strategic sites coincide with a Grade II LB.

E.6.3.2 Four sites (BUR001, BUR003, CUR004 and TACK005) are situated adjacent to a Grade II LB. For instance, Site CUR004 lies adjacent to the late 17th-early 18th century Grade II LB 'Thatch Cottage'. A further 12 sites are located in close proximity to a Grade II LB. All 16 of these sites may have a minor negative impact upon the Grade II LBs nearby, particularly through alteration of their setting.

E.6.3.3 The proposed development at the remaining 38 non-strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any Grade II LB, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest LBs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features, and negligible impacts are identified.

[19] Historic England. Official List entry. Lee Place. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1284015?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[20] Historic England. Official List entry. The New House with surrounding pool and garden wall to the west. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1375658?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[21] Historic England. Official List entry. Stables at Manor Farm. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1052894?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

E.6.4 Conservation Areas

E.6.4.1 There are 53 conservation areas (CA) located within West Oxfordshire.

E.6.4.2 Some 11 sites coincide with CAs, designated for their historic and/or architectural interest. This includes Site TACK005 (which wholly coincides with Tackfield CA), Sites AST001 and AST004 (which wholly coincide with Aston CA), and Sites CHAR004, CHAR006 and CHAR007 (which wholly coincide with Charlbury CA). A further seven sites are located adjacent to a CA and 11 sites are located in close proximity to a CA. Development at all 29 of these sites has potential to result in a minor negative impact upon the character and/or setting of these CAs.

E.6.4.3 The remaining 25 non-strategic sites are not located within close proximity to a CA. Consequently, a negligible impact is anticipated from development at these sites.

E.6.5 Scheduled Monument

E.6.5.1 There are 139 Scheduled Monuments (SM) within the district. None of the 54 non-strategic sites coincide with, or lie adjacent to, an SM.

E.6.5.2 However, four sites (CHAR006, LEA002, NL005 and TACK005) are located in close proximity to an SM. Development at these four sites has the potential to result in a minor negative impact upon the SM to which they are proximal, by altering their features and/or setting. Site CHAR006 is located across the road (B4022) from the SM 'Section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch running east from the River Evenlode opposite Cornbury Park'; Site LEA002 across Fairspear Road from the SM 'Site of 19th century pottery factory NW of Leafield'; Site NL005 approximately 320m from the SM 'Section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch west of Common Farm'; and Site TACK005 approximately 85m from the SM 'Water gardens, avenue and an associated earthwork, east of Court Farm'. There is potential for development at these sites to impact both the features and setting of the SMs.

E.6.5.3 The proposed development at the remaining 50 non-strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any SM, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest SMs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features, and negligible impacts are identified.

E.6.6 Registered Parks and Gardens

E.6.6.1 Within the district there are 17 Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs), including Blenheim Palace. Blenheim Palace was also designated as a World Heritage Site (WHS) in 1987, due to its architectural significance and landscape design which marked a turning point in English architecture[22]. None of the non-strategic sites coincide with, lie adjacent to, or are located within close proximity to Blenheim Palace.

E.6.6.2 However, ten sites do lie within close proximity of an RPG. Sites CHAR006 and CHAR007 are proximal to 'Cornbury Park' RPG, Sites FREE002, FREE004, NL005, NL012 and NL014 are proximal to 'Eynsham Hall' RPG, Sites TACK003 and TACK005 are proximal to 'Tackley Water Gardens' RPG and Site SUW001 is proximal to 'The Japanese Garden at the New House' RPG. Development at these ten sites has the potential to have a minor

[22] Historic England. List entry. Blenheim Palace. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000091?section=official-list-entry [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

negative impact upon nearby RPGs, by increasing damaging activities associated with greater recreational pressure (such as deterioration and damage due to increased footfall and visitor traffic), or via disrupting views of/from the RPGs and altering their settings.

E.6.6.3 The proposed development at the remaining 44 non-strategic sites is unlikely to significantly impact any RPG, owing to the distance between the sites and the nearest RPGs and/or separation by existing built form or landscape features, and negligible impacts are identified.

Table E.6.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage*

Site reference	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden
ALV006	0	0	0	-	0	0
AST001	0	0	-	-	0	0
AST004	0	0	-	-	0	0
AST008	0	0	0	-	0	0
BAM001	0	0	0	-	0	0
BAM006	0	0	0	0	0	0
BAM007	0	0	0	0	0	0
BN002	0	0	-	0	0	0
BUR001	0	0	-	-	0	0
BUR003	0	0	-	-	0	0
BUR005	0	0	0	-	0	0
BUR008	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA1	0	0	0	0	0	0
CART001	0	0	0	0	0	0
CART004	0	0	0	0	0	0
CART007	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHAR004	0	0	0	-	0	0
CHAR006	0	0	0	-	-	-
CHAR007	0	-	0	-	0	-
CHIP004	0	0	-	-	0	0
CHIP005	0	0	0	-	0	0
CHIP018	0	0	0	-	0	0
CHIP019	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHIP021	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLAN001	0	0	0	0	0	0
CUR004	0	0	-	0	0	0
CUR007	0	0	-	0	0	0
CUR008	0	0	-	0	0	0
DUCK002	0	0	0	-	0	0
ENS001	0	0	0	0	0	0
FREE002	0	0	-	0	0	-
FREE004	0	0	0	0	0	-
KING002	0	0	-	-	0	0
KING005	0	0	0	0	0	0
LANG001	0	0	0	-	0	0
LEA002	0	0	0	-	-	0
LEA004	0	0	0	-	0	0

Site reference	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden
MB001	0	0	0	-	0	0
MB004	0	0	0	-	0	0
NL005	0	0	0	0	-	-
NL012	0	0	0	0	0	-
NL014	0	0	-	0	0	-
STAN001	0	0	-	0	0	0
STON005	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUW001	0	-	-	-	0	-
TACK003	0	0	-	-	0	-
TACK004	0	0	0	-	0	0
TACK005	0	-	-	-	-	-
WIT004	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT005	0	0	0	0	0	0
WIT007	0	0	0	-	0	0
WIT010	0	0	0	-	0	0
WIT011	0	0	0	-	0	0
WIT3	0	0	0	-	0	0

E.6.7 Ranking

E.6.7.1 It is difficult to identify a single best performing option in regard to cultural heritage (SA Objective 5) where 15 sites (BAM006, BAM007, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART004, CART007, CHIP019, CHIP021, CLAN001, ENS001, KING005, STON005, WIT004 and WIT005) are identified as having a negligible impact upon all of the considered cultural heritage designations (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, and Registered Park and Gardens). As such, these 15 sites could be identified as **the best performing options** with regard to cultural heritage.

E.6.7.2 **The worst performing site** could be identified as TACK005 which is identified to result in minor negative impacts with regard to Grade II* and Grade II Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens.

E.6.7.3 Further site-specific Heritage Impact Assessment information and exploration of potential archaeological significance of the sites would be needed to verify these high-level SA assessments and evaluation of sites with respect to heritage.

Figure E.6.1: *Non-strategic site TACK005 and surrounding heritage assets*

E.7 SA Objective 6 – Air quality

E.7.1 Air Quality Management Area

E.7.1.1 There are two small Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within West Oxfordshire, including the Chipping Norton AQMA and Witney AQMA (see **Figure E.7.1**). These are located along sections of main roads where national air quality objectives are unlikely to be met.

E.7.1.2 Site CHIP004 partially coincides with Chipping Norton AQMA. Development at this site is likely to result in increased volumes of traffic through the AQMA and as such making it more challenging for the national air quality objectives to be met. Additionally, site end users at Site CHIP004 are more likely to be exposed to higher levels of air pollutants arising from the AQMA, with implications for respiratory health. Therefore, a minor negative impact is identified for Site CHIP004.

E.7.1.3 The remaining 53 non-strategic sites do not coincide with AQMAs and as such are not anticipated to significantly worsen their capability to meet the national air quality objectives. Negligible impacts have been identified for these 53 non-strategic sites, although it is acknowledged that cumulative adverse effects associated with traffic increases could arise from all sites.

E.7.2 Main Road

E.7.2.1 Many major roads pass through West Oxfordshire, including the A40, A44, A361, A415, A436, A3400, A4095 and A4260. Some 18 sites are located within 200m of a main road (see **Figure E.7.1**). The proposed development at these sites could potentially expose site end users to higher levels of transport associated air and noise pollution. Traffic using these main roads could potentially have a minor negative impact on air quality and noise at these sites.

E.7.2.2 Seven sites (BAM001, CLAN001, CUR004, NL012, WIT004, WIT007 and WIT3) are located where development is partially or predominantly within 200m of the A4095, four sites (CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018 and CHIP019) are located wholly or partially within 200m of the A44, one site (DUCK002) is located wholly or partially within 200m of the A415, four sites (BN002, BUR005, CUR007 and CUR008) are located within 200m of the A40, one site is located within 200m of the A361 (SUW001) and one site (BUR003) is located within 200m of the A40 and A361.

E.7.2.3 The proposed development at the remaining 36 sites which are over 200m from a main road are expected to have a negligible impact on air and noise pollution from transportation associated with main roads.

Table E.7.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 6 – Air quality*

Site reference	AQMA	Main road
ALV006	0	0
AST001	0	0
AST004	0	0
AST008	0	0
BAM001	0	-
BAM006	0	0
BAM007	0	0
BN002	0	-
BUR001	0	0
BUR003	0	-
BUR005	0	-
BUR008	0	0
CA1	0	0
CART001	0	0
CART004	0	0
CART007	0	0
CHAR004	0	0
CHAR006	0	0
CHAR007	0	0
CHIP004	-	-
CHIP005	0	-
CHIP018	0	-
CHIP019	0	-
CHIP021	0	0
CLAN001	0	-
CUR004	0	-
CUR007	0	-
CUR008	0	-
DUCK002	0	-
ENS001	0	0
FREE002	0	0
FREE004	0	0
KING002	0	0
KING005	0	0
LANG001	0	0
LEA002	0	0
LEA004	0	0
MB001	0	0
MB004	0	0
NL005	0	0
NL012	0	-
NL014	0	0
STAN001	0	0
STON005	0	0
SUW001	0	-
TACK003	0	0
TACK004	0	0
TACK005	0	0
WIT004	0	-
WIT005	0	0

Site reference	AQMA	Main road
WIT007	0	-
WIT010	0	0
WIT011	0	0
WIT3	0	-

E.7.3 Ranking

E.7.3.1 No single best performing option can be identified with regard to air quality where 36 sites (ALV006, AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM006, BAM007, BUR001, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART004, CART007, CHAR004, CHAR006, CHAR007, CHIP021, ENS001, FREE002, FREE004, KING002, KING005, LANG001, LEA002, LEA004, MB001, MB004, NL005, NL014, STAN001, STON005, TACK003, TACK004, TACK005, WIT005, WIT010 and WIT011) are identified as having a negligible impact with regards to AQMAs and air and noise pollution associated with main roads. As such, these 36 sites could be identified as **the best performing options** with regard to air quality (SA Objective 6). No data has been available regarding the potential generation of air pollution from each site.

E.7.3.2 **The worst performing non-strategic site** is CHIP004 where it is located within 200m of an AQMA and a main road and as such has potential to worsen air quality within Chipping Norton and expose residents to noise and air pollution associated with the A44.

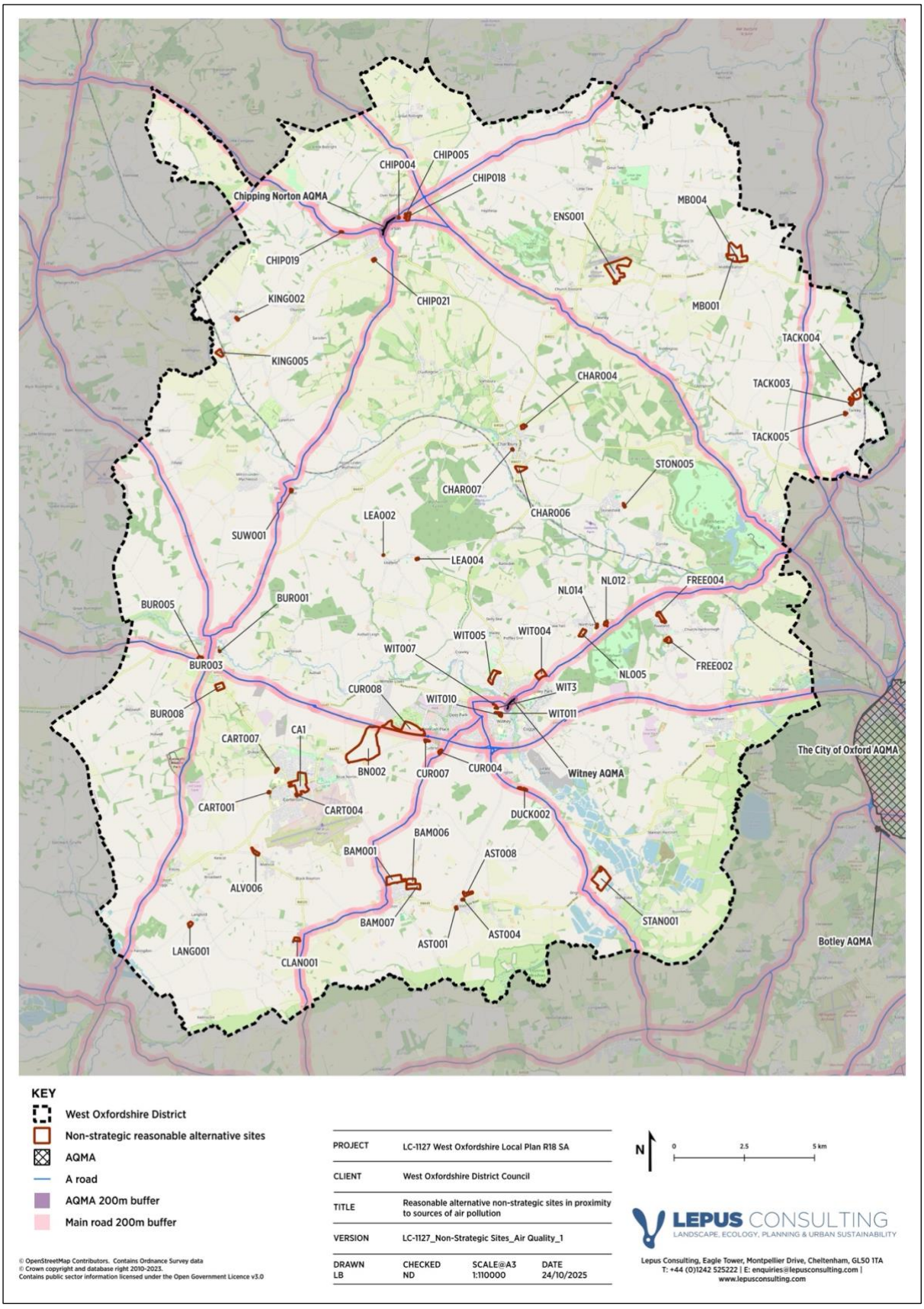

Figure E.7.1: *Main roads and AQMAs in proximity to the non-strategic sites*

E.8 SA Objective 7 – Water

E.8.1 Watercourse

E.8.1.1 West Oxfordshire's watercourse network comprises the River Thames and its tributaries. The River Thames runs through a small section of the southeast of the district and along the southwestern district boundary. The River Windrush, a tributary of the River Thames, runs through Witney town centre. The majority of the small watercourses running through the district run through the peri-urban and rural areas.

E.8.1.2 Three of the non-strategic sites (BN002, BUR001 and CART007) are located within 10m of a watercourse. Site BUR001 is located adjacent to the River Windrush, Site CART007 is located adjacent to Shill Brook, and a section of the Highmoor Brook flows through Site BN002; these watercourses ultimately flow into the River Thames. Consequently, both sites are identified as likely to have a minor negative impact upon the water quality of these watercourses, as they may increase the risk of contamination and pollution.

E.8.1.3 The remaining 51 non-strategic sites which are located over 10m from watercourses are less likely to have a significant impact on the quality of watercourses. However, each site would need to be evaluated according to land use type, size of development and exact location. At this stage, the potential effects of these sites on water quality remain uncertain and would be dependent on implementation.

E.8.2 Groundwater Source Protection Zone

E.8.2.1 There is one Source Protection Zones (SPZs) for groundwater within West Oxfordshire, which is located in the north of the district, to the east of Chipping Norton, as seen in **Figure E.8.1**. SPZs are grouped from 1 to 3 based on the level of protection that the groundwater requires.

E.8.2.2 Sites CHIP005 and CHIP018 are both located wholly within an SPZ 3 and approximately half of Site CHIP021 is also located within an SPZ3. Consequently, development at these sites has the potential to contribute to the pollution of groundwater sources and, therefore, result in a minor negative impact on groundwater quality.

E.8.2.3 The remaining 51 non-strategic sites do not coincide with the catchment of any SPZ. Hence, the proposed development at these sites is likely to have a negligible impact upon groundwater quality.

Table E.8.1: *Non-strategic sites matrix for SA Objective 7 – Water*

Site reference	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ
ALV006	+/-	0
AST001	+/-	0
AST004	+/-	0
AST008	+/-	0
BAM001	+/-	0
BAM006	+/-	0
BAM007	+/-	0
BN002	-	0
BUR001	-	0
BUR003	+/-	0
BUR005	+/-	0
BUR008	+/-	0
CA1	+/-	0
CART001	+/-	0
CART004	+/-	0
CART007	-	0
CHAR004	+/-	0
CHAR006	+/-	0
CHAR007	+/-	0
CHIP004	+/-	0
CHIP005	+/-	-
CHIP018	+/-	-
CHIP019	+/-	0
CHIP021	+/-	-
CLAN001	+/-	0
CUR004	+/-	0
CUR007	+/-	0
CUR008	+/-	0
DUCK002	+/-	0
ENS001	+/-	0
FREE002	+/-	0
FREE004	+/-	0
KING002	+/-	0
KING005	+/-	0
LANG001	+/-	0
LEA002	+/-	0
LEA004	+/-	0
MB001	+/-	0
MB004	+/-	0
NL005	+/-	0
NL012	+/-	0
NL014	+/-	0
STAN001	+/-	0
STON005	+/-	0
SUW001	+/-	0
TACK003	+/-	0

Site reference	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ
TACK004	+/-	0
TACK005	+/-	0
WIT004	+/-	0
WIT005	+/-	0
WIT007	+/-	0
WIT010	+/-	0
WIT011	+/-	0
WIT3	+/-	0

E.8.3 Ranking

E.8.3.1 It is not possible to identify a single best performing non-strategic sites with regard to water (SA Objective 7), as 48 of the sites (ALV006, AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM001, BAM006, BAM007, BUR003, BUR005, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART007, CHAR004, CHAR006, CHAR007, CHIP018, CHIP021, CLAN001, CUR004, CUR007, CUR008, DUCK002, ENS001, FREE002, FREE004, KING002, KING005, LANG001, LEA002, LEA004, MB001, MB004, NL005, NL012, NL014, STAN001, STON005, SUW001, TACK003, TACK004, TACK005, WIT004, WIT005, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3) are identified as having an uncertain impact on water quality of watercourses, as well as a negligible impact upon groundwater quality, as they are not positioned within 10m of a watercourse or within a groundwater SPZ.

E.8.3.2 The cumulative effect of development across the district will also need to be considered, as well as any site-specific details regarding end uses that might influence the extent of diffuse pollution to be generated or exacerbated. Additionally, there is further potential for impacts on water quality, water resources/supply and wastewater infrastructure at any strategic site, especially given West Oxfordshire's location in an area of 'serious water stress'. As recommended in the Water Cycle Study (WCS) Scoping Report (July 2025)[23], liaison with Thames Water will be required to determine whether the location and size of potential allocations can be aligned with infrastructure upgrades to meet demands.

E.8.3.3 **The worst performing non-strategic sites** could be identified as BN002, BUR001, CART004, CHIP004, CHIP005 and CHIP019. Development at these sites has been deemed most likely to result in a minor negative impact upon the quality of nearby watercourses or groundwater, based on available information at this stage.

[23] WHS (2025) West Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study Scoping Report. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxuf3hnd/whs10174-wodc-scoping-water-cycle-study_v2-0.pdf [Date accessed: 16/10/25]

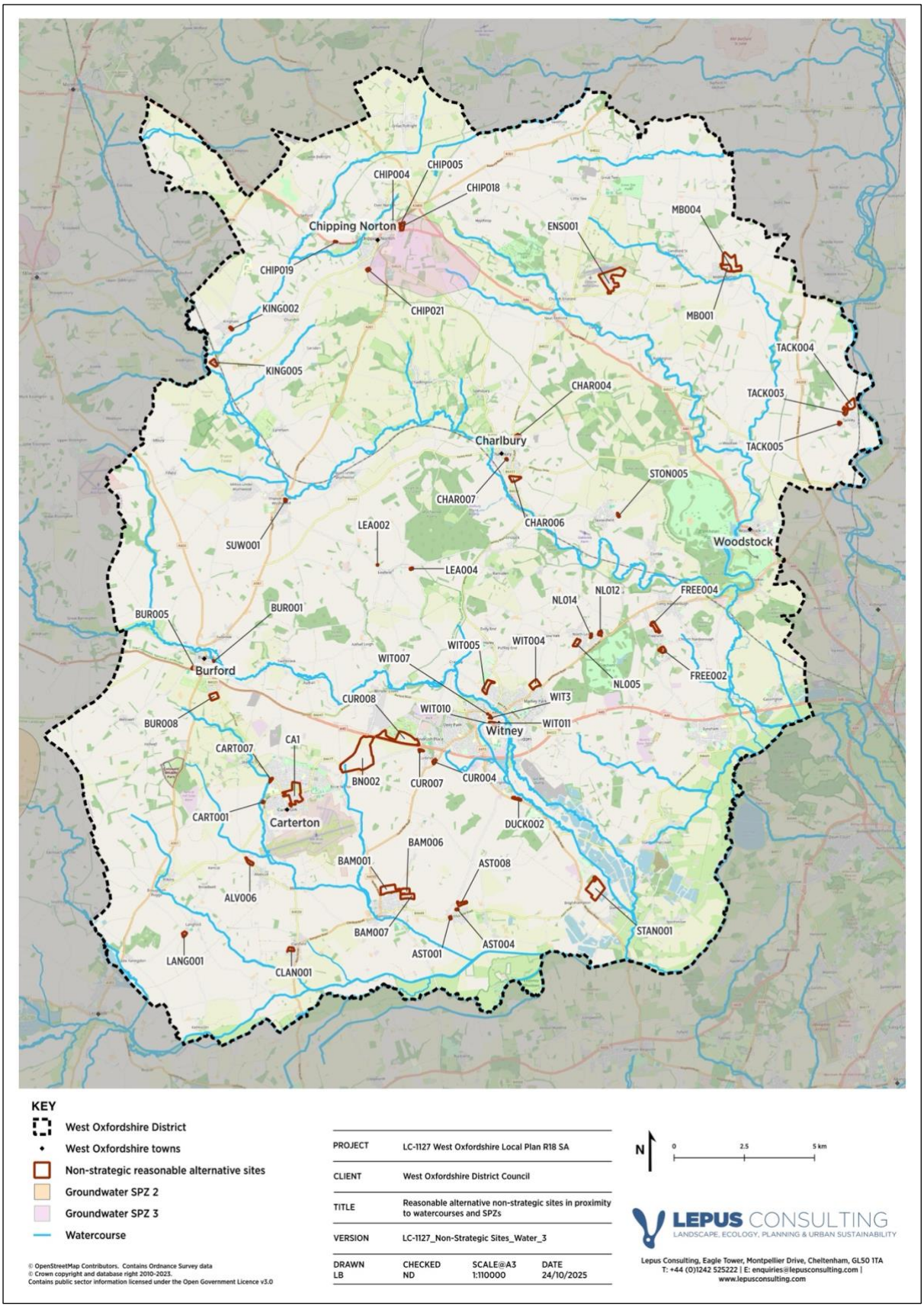

Figure E.8.1: *Watercourses and groundwater source protection zones with regard to the non-strategic sites*

E.9 SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste

E.9.1 Previously undeveloped land / land with environmental value

E.9.1.1 West Oxfordshire is primarily a rural district, with a built-up area to the south of the Plan area, comprising of settlements such as Witney and Carterton. Rural areas span the remainder of the district, with interspersed settlements including Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Long Hanborough and Woodstock.

E.9.1.2 Some 49 non-strategic sites are comprised of (either wholly, or in part) undeveloped land or land with potential environmental value, likely to contain hedgerows, trees and scrub that have potential to be lost to development. Therefore, the proposed development at these 49 sites is expected to have a minor negative impact on natural resources due to the potential loss of ecologically or environmentally valuable soil resources.

E.9.1.3 Five sites (BUR001, CA1, CHIP004, WIT007 and WIT3) wholly comprise previously developed land (PDL) where positive effects are likely in terms of promoting an efficient use of land. Sites BUR001, CHIP004 and WIT3 are also identified to contain contaminated land. As such, major positive impacts have been identified for these three sites where they make the most efficient use of land which could not be feasibly used for other purposes such as agriculture as a result of previous contamination. A minor positive impact is identified for Sites CA1 and WIT007 where development will make efficient use of available land resources.

E.9.2 Agricultural Land Classification

E.9.2.1 The land within West Oxfordshire consists of Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 agricultural land, as well as areas classified as ‘non-agricultural’ and ‘urban’ according to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), as seen in **Figure E.9.1**. The majority of the land in the district is Grade 3, with the south exhibiting greater variation in classification. Grade 1, 2 and 3a represent the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

E.9.2.2 Five sites (BUR001, CA1, CHIP004, WIT007 and WIT3) are located wholly on PDL and as such are identified as having a negligible impact where their development will not result in the loss of agriculturally valuable soil resources.

E.9.2.3 Seven sites are identified as having a minor positive impact on the protection of BMV land. Three of these sites (CART007, WIT010 and WIT011) are wholly located on urban land, and four sites (CUR004, CUR007, NL012 and NL014) are wholly located on ALC Grade 4 land. As such, these sites are anticipated to have a minor positive impact in relation to BMV land where they will avoid the loss of the highest quality agricultural soil resources.

E.9.2.4 Two non-strategic sites contain over 20ha of land which is classed as ALC Grade 3 (Site BN002) or Grade 2 (Site STAN001). As such, the proposed development at these two sites could potentially have a major negative impact owing to the loss of significant areas of agriculturally valuable soil resources. There are 40 sites which contain areas of BMV land under 20ha, where minor negative impacts have been identified.

E.9.3 Waste

E.9.3.1 The estimated total household waste produced in West Oxfordshire in 2023/2024 was 43,160 tonnes, of which some 57% was sent for recycling/composting/re-use, according to the UK local authority household waste data[24]. Residential-led development is likely to result in an increase in household waste generation, to some extent. There is potential for a significant cumulative increase in household waste to be generated through the development of the residential-led non-strategic sites, although this will depend on availability and implementation of sustainable waste measures and the behaviour of site end users.

E.9.3.2 Sites proposed for mixed use which will include employment land, may present further negative effects on waste production; however, this would be dependent on the site-specific proposals and the nature of development, which is unknown at the time of assessment.

E.9.3.3 The waste likely to be generated as a result of each non-strategic development site is currently uncertain.

E.9.4 Mineral Safeguarding Areas

E.9.4.1 Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) are predominantly located to the south of the district and one at the north eastern district boundary. These are predominantly sharp sand and gravel resources situated to the south and south east of the district.

E.9.4.2 There are five non-strategic sites which coincide with MSAs. Sites BAM006 and BAM007 wholly coincide with the Bampton/Clanfield MSA. Site BUR008 wholly coincides with the Burford South of A40 MSA. A small portion of Site MB004 coincides with the Duns Tew Area MSA. Site STAN001 wholly coincides with the Thames, Lower Windrush & Evenlode Valleys MSA. Minor negative impacts have been identified for these sites where they have the potential to result in the sterilisation of important mineral deposits.

E.9.4.3 For the remaining 49 sites negligible impacts have been identified where these sites do not coincide with MSAs.

[24] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025) Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics for 2023/2024. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results [Date accessed: 06/08/25]

Table E.9.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 8 – Natural resources*

Site reference	Land with environmental value	BMV land	Waste	MSA
ALV006	-	-	+/-	0
AST001	-	-	+/-	0
AST004	-	-	+/-	0
AST008	-	-	+/-	0
BAM001	-	-	+/-	0
BAM006	-	-	+/-	-
BAM007	-	-	+/-	-
BN002	-	--	+/-	0
BUR001	++	0	+/-	0
BUR003	-	-	+/-	0
BUR005	-	-	+/-	0
BUR008	-	-	+/-	-
CA1	+	0	+/-	0
CART001	-	-	+/-	0
CART004	-	-	+/-	0
CART007	-	+	+/-	0
CHAR004	-	-	+/-	0
CHAR006	-	-	+/-	0
CHAR007	-	-	+/-	0
CHIP004	++	0	+/-	0
CHIP005	-	-	+/-	0
CHIP018	-	-	+/-	0
CHIP019	-	-	+/-	0
CHIP021	-	-	+/-	0
CLAN001	-	-	+/-	0
CUR004	-	+	+/-	0
CUR007	-	+	+/-	0
CUR008	-	-	+/-	0
DUCK002	-	-	+/-	0
ENS001	-	-	+/-	0
FREE002	-	-	+/-	0
FREE004	-	-	+/-	0
KING002	-	-	+/-	0
KING005	-	-	+/-	0
LANG001	-	-	+/-	0
LEA002	-	-	+/-	0
LEA004	-	-	+/-	0
MB001	-	-	+/-	0
MB004	-	-	+/-	-
NL005	-	-	+/-	0
NL012	-	+	+/-	0
NL014	-	+	+/-	0
STAN001	-	--	+/-	-
STON005	-	-	+/-	0
SUW001	-	-	+/-	0
TACK003	-	-	+/-	0
TACK004	-	-	+/-	0
TACK005	-	-	+/-	0
WIT004	-	-	+/-	0

Site reference	Land with environmental value	BMV land	Waste	MSA
WIT005	-	-	+/-	0
WIT007	+	0	+/-	0
WIT010	-	+	+/-	0
WIT011	-	+	+/-	0
WIT3	++	0	+/-	0

E.9.5 Ranking

E.9.5.1 **The best performing non-strategic sites** with regard to natural resources (SA Objective 8) are Sites BUR001, WIT3 and CHIP004. The sites are located on PDL, will help to remediate contaminated land, and do not coincide with an MSA; although uncertainty remains in terms of the impact on waste generation.

E.9.5.2 **The worst performing non-strategic site** is STAN001 where development at this location is likely to result in the loss of over 20ha of BMV land, and may compromise access to mineral resources owing to the presence of an MSA.

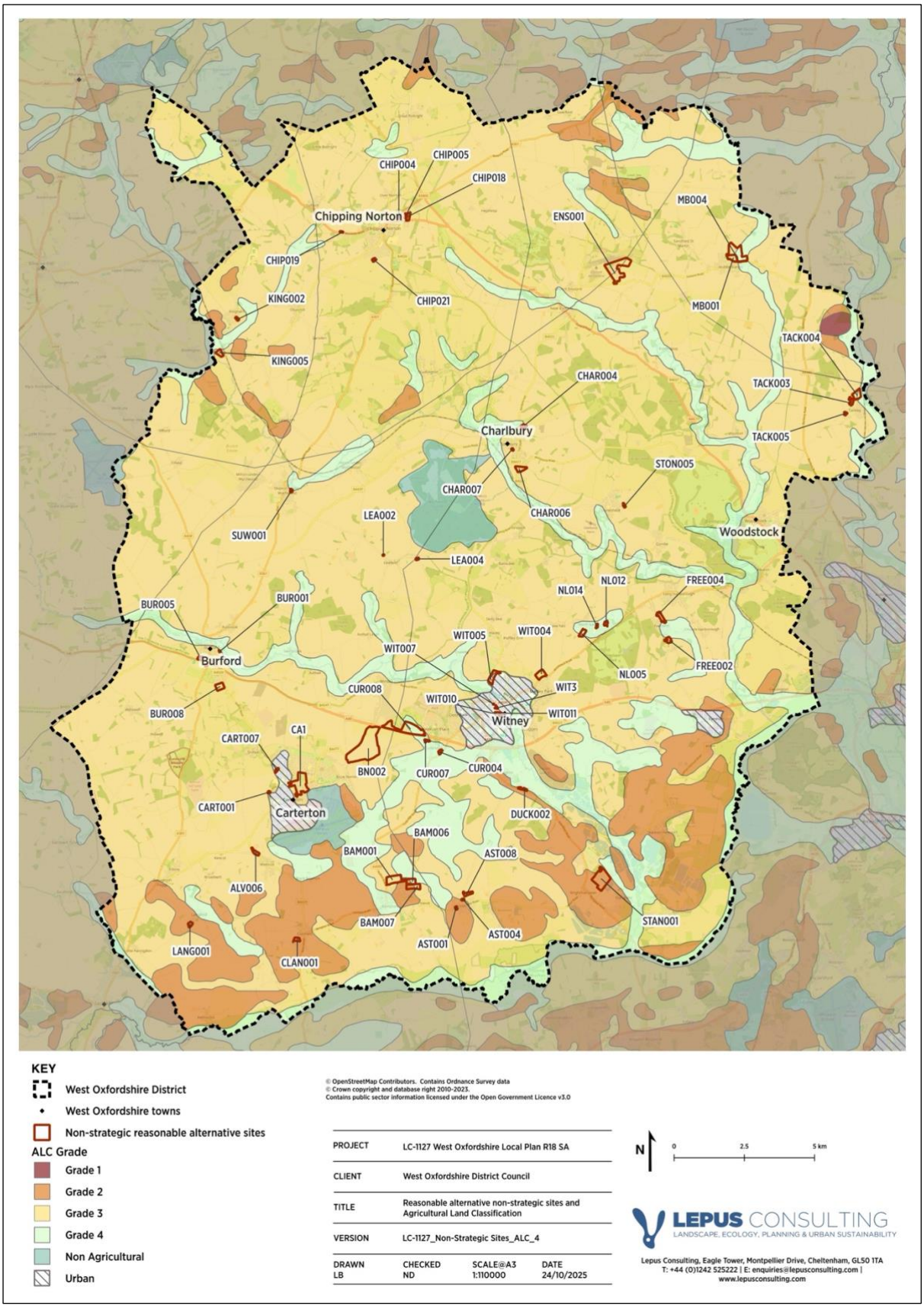

Figure E.9.1: *Agricultural land classification in West Oxfordshire in relation to the non-strategic sites*

E.10 SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality

E.10.1 Housing provision

E.10.1.1 Residential-led development is likely to result in a net gain in housing. The majority (51) of the non-strategic sites are proposed for residential or mixed use. Based on indicative capacity information supplied by WODC, some 40 sites have capability for the development of 99 dwellings or less; development at these sites is identified to result in a minor positive impact on housing provision. Nine sites have capacity for the development of 100 or more dwellings; development at these sites is identified to result in a major positive impact on housing provision.

E.10.1.2 The residential capacity at Sites MB004 and STAN001 is unknown, and therefore at this stage the potential effect on housing provision is uncertain.

E.10.1.3 Sites BN002, CUR008 and ENS001 are proposed for employment use. A negligible impact on housing provision is identified at these sites.

E.10.2 Indices of multiple deprivation

E.10.2.1 One domain of the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) is 'barriers to housing and services', which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services[25]. Within West Oxfordshire, a significant proportion of the district falls within decile one of this domain, which represents the 10% most deprived areas, which are those facing the greatest constraints with regard to access to affordable housing and essential services.

E.10.2.2 There are seven non-strategic sites (ALV006, BN002, KING002, LANG001, STAN001, WIT004 and WIT005) which are located within the top 10% of this domain and as such are in areas which are least accessible to local services and suffer from inaccessibility relating to affordable housing. Development at these locations has potential to result in positive impacts where some developments may provide a level of affordable housing or new services. However, at this stage, the specific proposals at each site are not known and as such an uncertain impact has been identified for these seven sites as well as for the remaining 47 sites located outside of the top 10% domain.

[25] MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Technical report. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8b387740f0b609909b5908/IoD2019_Technical_Report.pdf [Date accessed 24/10/25]

Table E.10.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality*

Site reference	Housing provision	Equality
ALV006	+	+/-
AST001	+	+/-
AST004	+	+/-
AST008	+	+/-
BAM001	++	+/-
BAM006	++	+/-
BAM007	++	+/-
BN002	0	+/-
BUR001	+	+/-
BUR003	+	+/-
BUR005	+	+/-
BUR008	++	+/-
CA1	++	+/-
CART001	+	+/-
CART004	+	+/-
CART007	+	+/-
CHAR004	+	+/-
CHAR006	+	+/-
CHAR007	+	+/-
CHIP004	+	+/-
CHIP005	+	+/-
CHIP018	+	+/-
CHIP019	+	+/-
CHIP021	+	+/-
CLAN001	+	+/-
CUR004	+	+/-
CUR007	+	+/-
CUR008	0	+/-
DUCK002	+	+/-
ENS001	0	+/-
FREE002	+	+/-
FREE004	+	+/-
KING002	+	+/-
KING005	+	+/-
LANG001	+	+/-
LEA002	+	+/-
LEA004	+	+/-
MB001	++	+/-
MB004	+/-	+/-
NL005	+	+/-
NL012	+	+/-
NL014	+	+/-
STAN001	+/-	+/-
STON005	+	+/-
SUW001	+	+/-

Site reference	Housing provision	Equality
TACK003	+	+/-
TACK004	++	+/-
TACK005	+	+/-
WIT004	++	+/-
WIT005	++	+/-
WIT007	+	+/-
WIT010	+	+/-
WIT011	+	+/-
WIT3	+	+/-

E.10.3 Ranking

E.10.3.1 Sites WIT004 and WIT005 could be identified as the **best performing non-strategic sites** with regard to housing (SA Objective 9), potentially providing a significant number of residential dwellings (indicative capacity of 135 and 141 dwellings respectively) in areas that are the most constrained to housing and essential services.

E.10.3.2 Site WIT007 could be identified as the **worst performing non-strategic site**, providing the lowest number of residential dwellings (indicative capacity of four dwellings).

E.10.3.3 It should be noted this ranking does not factor in potential localised benefits that might be achieved in terms of delivery of new homes in areas of highest demand, where such details are not available at this stage of assessment. Uncertainty remains in the assessment where the potential for non-strategic sites to deliver affordable homes is unknown.

E.11 SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing

E.11.1 Access to NHS hospital with A&E department

E.11.1.1 There are no NHS hospitals with an Accident & Emergency department located within West Oxfordshire. The nearest A&E NHS hospitals include John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, Horton General Hospital in Banbury and Great Western Hospital in Swindon. All 54 of the non-strategic sites are located over 8km from an NHS hospital with an A&E department. The proposed development at these sites may have limited sustainable access to emergency healthcare, with a potential minor negative impact on health.

E.11.2 Access to GP Surgery

E.11.2.1 There are 13 GP surgeries in West Oxfordshire serving the existing local communities, located within the settlements of Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Milton-under-Wychwood, Witney and Woodstock. Some 17 non-strategic sites are located where the majority of the site lies within 800m of a GP surgery offering residents excellent access to healthcare facilities; a major positive impact has been identified for these 17 sites. There is also one site (FREE004) which is partially located within 800m of a GP surgery and as such a minor positive impact in relation to access to a GP surgery has been identified.

E.11.2.2 There are two non-strategic sites (BAM006 and BAM007) which are located between 800m to 1km from a GP surgery. Development at these two sites is anticipated to have a negligible impact with regards to access to a GP surgery.

E.11.2.3 The remaining 34 non-strategic sites are all located over 1km from a GP surgery and as a result offer residents more limited access to essential healthcare services. Therefore, for these 34 sites a minor negative impact has been identified for access to a GP surgery.

E.11.3 Access to leisure facilities

E.11.3.1 There are eight leisure centres in West Oxfordshire, six located to the south of the district, one to the north and one at the eastern district boundary. These include Bartholomew Sports Centre, Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch, Carterton Leisure Centre, Carterton Pavillion, Chipping Norton Leisure Centre, Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney Artificial Turf Pitch and Woodstock Open Air Pool.

E.11.3.2 There are 12 non-strategic sites which are located where the majority of the site is within 1.5km of a leisure facility offering residents excellent access to opportunities for recreation and exercise. A major positive impact has been identified for these 12 sites. One site (BN002) lies partially within 1.5km to a leisure facility; a minor positive impact is identified for this site. Four sites (CHIP019, CUR004, WIT004 and WIT005) are located between 1.5km to 2km from a leisure facility; a negligible impact has been identified for these sites.

E.11.3.3 The remaining 37 sites are located over 2km from a leisure facility and as such have been identified to have adverse impacts where they do not offer residents good access to leisure facilities for recreation and exercise-relation opportunities. As such, minor negative impacts have been identified.

E.11.4 Access to public greenspace

E.11.4.1 Greenspaces are distributed throughout West Oxfordshire however are most prevalent within the settlements of Witney and Carterton, including parks, allotments and playing fields. Out of the 54 non-strategic sites, 51 are located where the whole site or majority of the site lies within 600m of a green space. This is expected to offer residents excellent access to outside space for exercise and recreational purposes supporting the mental and physical wellbeing. A major positive impact is identified for these 51 sites.

E.11.4.2 Site ENS001 lies partially within 600m to a green space; a minor positive impact is identified at this site.

E.11.4.3 Site CHIP019 is located between 600m to 800m from a green space and as such a negligible impact has been identified for this site.

E.11.4.4 Site BN002 lies wholly over 800m from an existing green space, where development could potentially restrict access of site end users to green space for recreation and outdoor exercise. A minor negative impact is identified for this site.

E.11.5 Access to Public Rights of Way / National Trails

E.11.5.1 West Oxfordshire is predominantly a rural district with extensive and in-tact PRoW networks offering residents good access to the countryside. Some 52 of the non-strategic sites are located within 600m of PRoW which will support the physical and mental health of residents where they are able to easily access open countryside and outdoor spaces. As such, a minor positive impact has been identified for these sites.

E.11.5.2 The remaining sites (CART004 and ENS001) are located over 600m from the PRoW network meaning site end users may find they are more limited in accessing surrounding countryside and outdoor space for recreation and exercise. A minor negative impact is therefore anticipated for these two sites.

Table E.11.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing*

Site reference	NHS hospital with A&E	GP surgery	Leisure facilities	Access to green space	Access to PRoW
ALV006	-	-	-	++	+
AST001	-	-	-	++	+
AST004	-	-	-	++	+
AST008	-	-	-	++	+
BAM001	-	++	-	++	+
BAM006	-	0	-	++	+
BAM007	-	0	-	++	+
BN002	-	-	+	-	+
BUR001	-	++	-	++	+
BUR003	-	++	-	++	+
BUR005	-	++	-	++	+
BUR008	-	-	-	++	+
CA1	-	++	++	++	+
CART001	-	++	++	++	+
CART004	-	++	++	++	-
CART007	-	-	++	++	+
CHAR004	-	++	-	++	+
CHAR006	-	-	-	++	+
CHAR007	-	++	-	++	+
CHIP004	-	++	++	++	+
CHIP005	-	++	++	++	+
CHIP018	-	++	++	++	+
CHIP019	-	-	0	0	+
CHIP021	-	-	++	++	+
CLAN001	-	-	-	++	+
CUR004	-	-	0	++	+
CUR007	-	-	-	++	+
CUR008	-	-	-	++	+
DUCK002	-	-	-	++	+
ENS001	-	-	-	+	-
FREE002	-	-	-	++	+
FREE004	-	+	-	++	+
KING002	-	-	-	++	+
KING005	-	-	-	++	+
LANG001	-	-	-	++	+
LEA002	-	-	-	++	+
LEA004	-	-	-	++	+
MB001	-	-	-	++	+
MB004	-	-	-	++	+
NL005	-	-	-	++	+
NL012	-	-	-	++	+
NL014	-	-	-	++	+
STAN001	-	-	-	++	+
STON005	-	-	-	++	+
SUW001	-	++	-	++	+
TACK003	-	-	-	++	+
TACK004	-	-	-	++	+
TACK005	-	-	-	++	+
WIT004	-	-	0	++	+

Site reference	NHS hospital with A&E	GP surgery	Leisure facilities	Access to green space	Access to PRoW
WIT005	-	-	0	++	+
WIT007	-	++	++	++	+
WIT010	-	++	++	++	+
WIT011	-	++	++	++	+
WIT3	-	++	++	++	+

E.11.6 Ranking

E.11.6.1 It is difficult to identify a single best performing option with regard to health and wellbeing (SA Objective 10) given that nine of the non-strategic sites (CA1, CART001, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3) are all within recommended distances for sustainable access to a GP surgery, leisure facilities and access to green space as well as access to the PRoW network. As such, these nine sites could be identified as the **best performing options**.

E.11.6.2 Site ENS001 emerges as the overall **worst performing site**, owing to its location beyond the recommended sustainable distances from a GP, leisure facilities and the PRoW network.

E.12 SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility

E.12.1 Proximity to bus stop

E.12.1.1 Many bus stops are distributed throughout West Oxfordshire. These are generally expected to provide regular public transport access, with the exception of some rural areas where bus services are more thinly distributed and less regular. The majority of the non-strategic sites (46 sites) are located where the whole site, or majority of the site, is located within 400m of a bus stop providing a regular service. As such, a major positive impact has been identified for these sites.

E.12.1.2 There are five sites (BAM001, BAM006, BAM007, BN002 and STAN005) where the site is partially located within 400m of a bus stop providing a regular service. As such, a minor positive impact has been identified for these sites.

E.12.1.3 The remaining three sites (ALV006, ENS001 and LANG001) are located where the majority or entirety of the site sits over 400m from a bus stop providing access to a regular service. As such, a minor negative impact is identified for these sites where residents will have limited access to this sustainable mode of transport.

E.12.2 Proximity to railway station

E.12.2.1 There are eight railway stations located within West Oxfordshire, including Kingham Station, Shipton Station, Ascott-under-Wychwood Station, Charlbury Station, Finstock Station, Combe Station, Hanborough Station and Tackley Station.

E.12.2.2 The majority of the non-strategic sites (44 sites) are located where the entirety or majority of the site sits over 2km from a railway station. As such, residents will have more limited access to the railway network offering access to services and amenities as well as education and employment opportunities. Minor negative impacts have been identified for these 44 sites with regard to access to the rail network.

E.12.2.3 One site (FREE004) is partially located within a 2km sustainable distance of Combe railway station. As such a minor positive impact is identified for Site FREE004 where development will support some sustainable access to the rail network.

E.12.2.4 The remaining nine sites (CHAR004, CHAR006, CHAR007, KING002, KING005, SUW001, TACK003, TACK004 and TACK005) are located where the entirety or majority of the site is located within a 2km sustainable distance of a railway station, including Charlbury, Finstock, Kingham, Shipton and Tackley. A major positive impact has been identified for these nine sites where development will support access to services and amenities, as well as access to education and employment opportunities for site end users.

E.12.3 Access to local services

E.12.3.1 There are 17 non-strategic sites which are located where the entirety or majority of the site is within 600m of a local food store, such as supermarkets or convenience stores. These sites will be expected to offer residents sustainable access to essential services and amenities and as such a major positive impact is identified for these sites. There are also two sites (MB004 and TACK004) which are partially located within 600m of a local food

store. As such, development at these sites will be likely to have a minor positive impact on access to local services.

E.12.3.2 There are three non-strategic sites (BUR003, CHAR004 and WIT004) which are located between 600m to 800m from a local food store. A negligible impact is identified for these sites with regard to access to food stores.

E.12.3.3 The remaining 32 non-strategic sites are located where the entirety or majority of the site is over 800m from a local food store, placing residents outside of the sustainable distance to access essential services and amenities. The development at these sites is likely to have a minor negative impact on access to local services for site end users.

E.12.4 Pedestrian or cycle access

E.12.4.1 Sites with good pedestrian and cycle access include those with existing pavements, pathways or cycle lanes which are segregated from traffic use in the area. Pedestrian pathways are well distributed in West Oxfordshire's urban areas but are more limited in rural locations. The national cycle network is well distributed across the district, though primary concentrated in the central and northern areas.

E.12.4.2 The majority of the non-strategic sites (46 sites) are located where they are able to safely access pedestrian routes (such as pavements) or the cycle network. As such are likely to have a minor positive impact with regards to access to pedestrian and cycle routes.

E.12.4.3 Three of the non-strategic sites (BUR001, CHAR007 and KING002) are located where they are within safe and sustainable access to both pedestrian and cycle routes offering residents excellent access to the essential services and amenities beyond. Therefore, development at these sites is anticipated to result in a major positive impact with regard to pedestrian and cycle access.

E.12.4.4 Development at the remaining five sites (AST008, BAM006, BAM007, BN002 and ENS001) is likely to result in a minor negative impact with regard to pedestrian and cycle access where these sites are not within safe and sustainable access to pedestrian routes or the cycle network.

Table E.12.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objectives 11 – Transport and access*

Site reference	Bus stop	Railway station	Local services	Pedestrian/ cycle network
ALV006	-	-	-	+
AST001	++	-	-	+
AST004	++	-	-	+
AST008	++	-	-	-
BAM001	+	-	-	+
BAM006	+	-	-	-
BAM007	+	-	-	-
BN002	+	-	-	-
BUR001	++	-	++	++
BUR003	++	-	0	+
BUR005	++	-	++	+
BUR008	++	-	-	+
CA1	++	-	++	+
CART001	++	-	-	+
CART004	++	-	++	+
CART007	++	-	-	+
CHAR004	++	++	0	+
CHAR006	++	++	-	+
CHAR007	++	++	++	++
CHIP004	++	-	++	+
CHIP005	++	-	++	+
CHIP018	++	-	++	+
CHIP019	++	-	-	+
CHIP021	++	-	-	+
CLAN001	++	-	-	+
CUR004	++	-	-	+
CUR007	++	-	-	+
CUR008	+	-	-	+
DUCK002	++	-	-	+
ENS001	-	-	-	-
FREE002	++	-	-	+
FREE004	++	+	-	+
KING002	++	++	++	++
KING005	++	++	-	+
LANG001	-	-	-	+
LEA002	++	-	-	+
LEA004	++	-	-	+
MB001	++	-	++	+
MB004	++	-	+	+
NL005	++	-	-	+
NL012	++	-	-	+
NL014	++	-	-	+
STAN001	++	-	-	+
STON005	++	-	-	+
SUW001	++	++	-	+
TACK003	++	++	++	+
TACK004	++	++	+	+
TACK005	++	++	++	+
WIT004	++	-	0	+

Site reference	Bus stop	Railway station	Local services	Pedestrian/ cycle network
WIT005	++	-	++	+
WIT007	++	-	++	+
WIT010	++	-	++	+
WIT011	++	-	++	+
WIT3	++	-	++	+

E.12.5 Ranking

E.12.5.1 **The best performing non-strategic sites** with regard to transport and access (SA Objective 11) provides a positive impact on access to sustainable transport options including bus, rail, footpaths and cycleways and pedestrian access to local services. The best performing sites are CHAR007 and KING002.

E.12.5.2 There are several non-strategic sites which perform poorly across three of the SA Objectives. Site ENS001 emerges as the overall **worst performing site**, owing to its location beyond the recommended distance to sustainable transport options including bus, rail and pedestrian access to local services.

E.13 SA Objective 12 – Education

E.13.1 Primary school

E.13.1.1 There are 59 state-funded, non-selective primary schools distributed throughout West Oxfordshire. The majority of the non-strategic sites (40 sites) are located where the entirety or majority of the site is within 800m of a primary school. A major positive impact is identified for these sites with regard to access to primary education.

E.13.1.2 One site (BAM007) is located partially within 800m of a primary school and as such a minor positive impact has been identified.

E.13.1.3 Seven sites are located within 800m to 1km of a primary school. Development at these nine sites is identified to result in a negligible impact on access to primary education.

E.13.1.4 The remaining three residential-led sites (BUR008, CHIP019 and KING005) are located where the entirety of majority of the site is located over 1km from a primary school. Development at these sites will offer more limited sustainable access to primary education facilities and as such a minor negative impact has been identified for these three sites.

E.13.1.5 The proposed employment development at Sites BN002, CUR008 and ENS001 will result in a negligible impact on access to education.

E.13.2 Secondary school

E.13.2.1 There are nine state-funded, non-selective secondary schools distributed throughout West Oxfordshire. Some 17 non-strategic sites are located where the entirety or majority of the site is located within 1.5km of a secondary school. Development at these 17 sites is likely to result in a major positive impact with regard to access to secondary education. One further site (WIT005) is located partially within 1.5km of a secondary school and as such a minor positive impact has been identified for WIT005.

E.13.2.2 One site (CHIP019) is located between 1.5km to 2km from a secondary school. Development at this site is anticipated to have a negligible impact for site end users with regards to access to a secondary school.

E.13.2.3 The majority of the non-strategic sites (32 sites) are located where the entirety or majority of the site is over the 2km sustainable distance from a secondary school. As such, development at these sites is likely to result in a minor negative impact with regards to sustainable access to secondary education facilities.

E.13.2.4 The proposed employment development at Sites BN002, CUR008 and ENS001 will result in a negligible impact on access to education.

E.13.3 Further education

E.13.3.1 There are several further educational facilities in West Oxfordshire. These include the Witney Campus and Common Leys Campus of Abingdon and Witney College, Carterton Community College, Oxford International College of Beauty and several Sixth Forms.

E.13.3.2 The majority of non-strategic sites (25) are located over 3km from a further education facility. As such, development at these sites is anticipated to have a negligible impact for site end users with regards to access to further education facilities.

E.13.3.3 One site (NL012) is located partially within 3km of a further education facility. A minor positive impact has been identified for this site. The remaining 25 residential-led sites are located where the entirety of majority of the site is within 3km of a further education facility. Development at these 25 sites is anticipated to provide site end users with excellent access to opportunities for further education and as such are identified to have major positive impacts on access to further education.

E.13.3.4 The proposed employment development at Sites BN002, CUR008 and ENS001 will result in a negligible impact on access to education.

Table E.13.1: *Strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objectives 12 – Education*

Site reference	Primary school	Secondary school	Further education
ALV006	++	-	++
AST001	++	-	0
AST004	++	-	0
AST008	++	-	0
BAM001	++	-	0
BAM006	++	-	0
BAM007	+	-	0
BN002	0	0	0
BUR001	++	++	++
BUR003	++	++	++
BUR005	++	++	++
BUR008	-	++	++
CA1	++	++	++
CART001	++	++	++
CART004	++	++	++
CART007	0	++	++
CHAR004	++	-	0
CHAR006	0	-	0
CHAR007	++	-	0
CHIP004	++	++	++
CHIP005	++	++	++
CHIP018	++	++	++
CHIP019	-	0	++
CHIP021	++	-	++
CLAN001	++	-	0
CUR004	0	-	++
CUR007	++	-	++
CUR008	0	0	0
DUCK002	++	-	++
ENS001	0	0	0
FREE002	0	-	0
FREE004	++	-	0
KING002	++	-	0
KING005	-	-	0
LANG001	++	-	0
LEA002	++	-	0
LEA004	0	-	0
MB001	++	-	0
MB004	0	-	0

Site reference	Primary school	Secondary school	Further education
NL005	++	-	++
NL012	++	-	+
NL014	++	-	++
STAN001	0	-	0
STON005	++	-	0
SUW001	++	-	0
TACK003	++	-	0
TACK004	++	-	0
TACK005	++	-	0
WIT004	++	++	++
WIT005	++	+	++
WIT007	++	++	++
WIT010	++	++	++
WIT011	++	++	++
WIT3	++	++	++

E.13.4 Ranking

E.13.4.1 The best performing non-strategic sites with regard to education (SA Objective 12) provide a major positive impact on sustainable access to education facilities including primary schools, secondary schools and further education facilities. There are 15 non-strategic sites (BUR001, BUR003, BUR005, CA1, CART001, CART004, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, CHIP021, WIT004, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3) which offer this and as such it is not possible to determine one single best performing option, rather these twelve sites make up **the best performing options**.

E.13.4.2 **The worst performing non-strategic site** is Site KING005 which is located over 1km from a primary school and over 2km from a secondary school resulting in minor negative scores for both access and primary and secondary schools.

E.14 SA Objective 13 – Economy and employment

E.14.1 Employment floorspace

E.14.1.1 Employment floorspace provision has been assessed with consideration of current land use and the proposed development at each site.

E.14.1.2 The majority of non-strategic sites (48 sites) are anticipated to have a negligible impact on employment floorspace where there these sites are not expected to result in the loss or gain of employment floorspace. This includes Site FREE002 that is proposed for mixed uses including retention of the existing employment floorspace within the site.

E.14.1.3 Three sites (BN002, CUR008 and ENS001) are proposed for employment development. A major positive impact on employment floorspace provision is identified at Site BN002, as the site is currently undeveloped and capable of providing approximately 335,520 sqm of new floorspace. Site CUR008 contains some existing development at 'Peashell Farm', and Site ENS001 coincides with the existing 'Enstone Business Park'. It is uncertain whether the proposed development at these two sites will result in an overall net change in employment floorspace or job provision.

E.14.1.4 Sites WIT010 and WIT011 contain existing development within Witney Town Centre. It is uncertain whether the proposed mixed use redevelopment at these sites will result in a net change in employment floorspace or job provision.

E.14.1.5 Site BUR001 is proposed for residential use, however the site currently coincides with a number of businesses including 'The Burford Laundry', 'The Burford Recruitment Company' and 'Tea Gift Company'. Development at Site BUR001 is likely to result in a minor negative impact associated with a loss of local employment floorspace.

E.14.2 Access to existing employment opportunities

E.14.2.1 Major employment areas have been identified using spatial data provided by WODC, in addition to town centres where a range of employment opportunities are likely. Major employment areas identified, to name a few, include Station Lane Industrial Area, Long Hanborough Business Park, Lakeside Industrial Estate, Windrush Industrial Estate and Brize Norton Royal Air Force (RAF) Base.

E.14.2.2 The majority of non-strategic sites (29 sites) are located within 5km of two major employment locations or town centres. Development at these locations will be expected to provide excellent employment opportunities to site end users ensuring access to a range of jobs. A major positive impact has been identified for these 29 sites. A further 16 sites are located within 5km of one major employment location or town centre and as such are identified to have a minor positive impact on access to existing employment opportunities.

E.14.2.3 One site (LEA002) is located between 5km and 8km of one major employment location or town centre and as such is likely to have a negligible impact on access to existing employment opportunities.

E.14.2.4 The remaining five residential-led sites (KING002, KING005, MB001, MB004 and SUW001) are located over 8km from a major employment location or town centre and as

such may limit the sustainable access of new residents to opportunities for employment. As such, a minor negative impact is identified for these sites.

E.14.2.5 Sites BN002, CUR008 and ENS001 are proposed for employment uses, and have not been assessed in terms of access to employment opportunities. A negligible impact is recorded.

Table E.14.1: *Non-strategic sites impact matrix for SA Objective 13 – Economy*

Site reference	Employment floorspace	Access to existing employment opportunities
ALV006	0	++
AST001	0	++
AST004	0	++
AST008	0	++
BAM001	0	++
BAM006	0	++
BAM007	0	++
BN002	++	0
BUR001	-	+
BUR003	0	+
BUR005	0	+
BUR008	0	++
CA1	0	++
CART001	0	++
CART004	0	++
CART007	0	++
CHAR004	0	+
CHAR006	0	+
CHAR007	0	+
CHIP004	0	+
CHIP005	0	+
CHIP018	0	+
CHIP019	0	+
CHIP021	0	+
CLAN001	0	++
CUR004	0	++
CUR007	0	++
CUR008	+/-	0
DUCK002	0	++
ENS001	+/-	0
FREE002	0	++
FREE004	0	++
KING002	0	-
KING005	0	-
LANG001	0	+
LEA002	0	0
LEA004	0	+
MB001	0	-
MB004	0	-
NL005	0	+
NL012	0	++
NL014	0	++

Site reference	Employment floorspace	Access to existing employment opportunities
STAN001	0	+
STON005	0	++
SUW001	0	-
TACK003	0	++
TACK004	0	+
TACK005	0	++
WIT004	0	++
WIT005	0	++
WIT007	0	++
WIT010	+/-	++
WIT011	+/-	++
WIT3	0	++

E.14.3 Ranking

E.14.3.1 The ranking for economy and employment (SA Objective 13) focuses on access to employment opportunities. The ranking does not consider potential employment provision, given that the majority of non-strategic sites are residential-led, nor does it include the potential for residents at all sites to work remotely from home.

E.14.3.2 In terms of access to employment opportunities, it is difficult to identify a single best performing option where 27 sites (ALV006, AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM001, BAM006, BAM007, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART004, CART007, CLAN001, CUR004, CUR007, DUCK002, FREE002, FREE004, NL012, NL014, STON005, TACK003, TACK005, WIT004, WIT005, WIT007 and WIT3) will not result in any loss of employment floorspace and are within the recommended target distance of 5km to two or more major employment locations or town centres. The best performing options are likely to be those located within the main towns (Witney and Carterton) as they are likely to provide the greatest range of employment opportunities within walking distance or a short public transport journey. As such the **best performing non-strategic sites** could be identified as Sites CA1, CART001, CART004, WIT004, WIT005, WIT007 and WIT3.

E.14.3.3 Similarly, it is also difficult to identify a single worst performing option where five sites (KING002, KING005, MB001, MB004 and SUW001) are located over 8km from a major employment location or town centre. One site (BUR001) has potential to result in the loss of existing employment floorspace, and a further two residential-led sites (WIT010 and WIT011) are uncertain as to their outcome regarding any loss of employment floorspace. As such, **the worst performing non-strategic sites** with regard to economy (SA Objective 13) could be identified as these eight sites.

E.15 Conclusions

E.15.1 Overview

E.15.1.1 **Table E.15.1** presents a summary of the assessment findings for the reasonable alternative sites against each SA Objective, indicating the 'worst-case' score of the receptor assessments as presented within **Tables E.2.1 – E.14.1**. The ranking of the strategic sites against each individual SA Objective is explained within **sections E.2 – E.14** above and summarised within **Table E.15.2** below.

Table E.15.1: *Impact matrix table of the reasonable alternative non-strategic sites, pre-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
ALV006	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST004	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST008	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM001	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM006	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM007	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BN002	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	+/-	-	-	0	++
BUR001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	-
BUR003	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
BUR005	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
BUR008	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CA1	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART001	+/-	+	-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART004	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART007	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CHAR004	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
CHAR006	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
CHAR007	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
CHIP004	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP005	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP018	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP019	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
CHIP021	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CLAN001	+/-	-	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CUR004	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CUR007	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-
DUCK002	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
ENS001	+/-	-	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-
FREE002	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
FREE004	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
KING002	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	-

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
KING005	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
LANG001	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
LEA002	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	0
LEA004	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
MB001	+/-	+	--	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
MB004	+/-	+	--	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
NL005	+/-	--	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
NL012	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
NL014	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
STAN001	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+
STON005	+/-	+	-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
SUW001	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
TACK003	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	++
TACK004	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
TACK005	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	++
WIT004	+/-	+	-	-	0	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT005	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT007	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	-	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT010	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+/-
WIT011	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+/-
WIT3	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	++

E.15.1.2 Any attempt to accurately predict a best performing non-strategic site is limited because of the high-level assessment carried out based on the information available at the time of assessment and without incorporation of detailed mitigation. The ranking reflects performance levels across the SA Objectives, which can only be interpreted loosely, as individual sustainability topics are not necessarily interchangeable.

E.15.1.3 Given the lack of currently available information and the uncertainty with regard to the impacts of all 54 sites on GHG emissions, the overall ranking does not factor climate change mitigation (SA Objective 1).

E.15.1.4 It is difficult to identify a single best performing site. **Sites CA1, CART001, WIT005 and WIT3 emerge as the most frequently best performing sites**, each identified as among the best for six SA Objectives, and do not feature among the worst performing sites for any SA Objectives.

- Site CA1 performs well for: biodiversity, cultural heritage, air quality, health and wellbeing, education and employment (SA Objectives 3, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 13).
- Site CART001 performs well for: climate change adaptation, cultural heritage, air quality, health and wellbeing, education and employment (SA Objectives 2, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 13).

- Site WIT005 performs well for: climate change adaptation, biodiversity, cultural heritage, air quality, housing and equality, and employment (SA Objectives 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 13).
- Site WIT3 performs well for: biodiversity, landscape, natural resources and waste, health and wellbeing, education and economy (SA Objectives 3, 4, 8, 10, 12 and 13).

E.15.1.5 On the other hand, based on the relative performance of each non-strategic site with regard to the available evidence, **Sites ENS001, MB001 and MB004 emerge as potentially worst performing overall**. These three sites have each been found to be amongst the worst performing for two SA Objectives:

- Site ENS001 is the worst performing site for health and wellbeing, and transport and accessibility (SA Objectives 10 and 11).
- Sites MB001 and MB004 are among the worst performing sites for biodiversity and employment (SA Objectives 3 and 13).

E.15.1.6 However, Sites ENS001, MB001 and MB004 also perform well in some areas, with Site ENS001 among the best performing sites for cultural heritage and air quality (SA Objectives 5 and 6) and Sites MB001 and MB004 among the best performing sites for climate change adaptation and air quality (SA Objectives 2 and 6).

Table E.15.2: *Indicative best and worst performing non-strategic sites*

SA Objective	Best performing non-strategic site(s)	Worst performing non-strategic site(s)
SA Objective 1: Climate change mitigation	Uncertain	Uncertain
SA Objective 2: Climate change adaptation	Sites ALV006, AST008, BAM001, BN002, BUR003, BUR005, CART001, CHAR004, CHAR007, CHIP005, CHIP018, CUR007, FREE002, LEA004, MB001, MB004, NL012, NL014, STON005, SUW001, TACK003, TACK004, TACK005, WIT004 and WIT005	Sites CUR004 and WIT011
SA Objective 3: Biodiversity and geodiversity	Sites AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM001, BAM006, BAM007, BUR001, BUR003, BUR005, BUR008, CA1, CART004, CART007, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, CHIP019, CHIP021, CLAN001, CUR004, CUR007, CUR008, DUCK002, KING005, LEA004, WIT005, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3	Sites CHAR006, CHAR007, FREE002, MB001 and MB004
SA Objective 4: Landscape	Sites CHIP004, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3	Site CHIP021
SA Objective 5: Cultural heritage	Sites BAM006, BAM007, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART004, CART007, CHIP019, CHIP021, CLAN001, ENS001, KING005, STON005, WIT004 and WIT005	Site TACK005
SA Objective 6: Air quality	Sites ALV006, AST001, AST004, AST008, BAM006, BAM007, BUR001, BUR008, CA1, CART001, CART004, CART007, CHAR004, CHAR006, CHAR007, CHIP021, ENS001, FREE002, FREE004, KING002, KING005, LANG001, LEA002, LEA004, MB001, MB004, NL005,	Site CHIP004

SA Objective	Best performing non-strategic site(s)	Worst performing non-strategic site(s)
	NL014, STAN001, STON005, TACK003, TACK004, TACK005, WIT005, WIT010 and WIT011	
SA Objective 7: Water	Uncertain	Sites BN002, BUR001, CART004, CHIP004, CHIP005 and CHIP019
SA Objective 8: Natural resources and waste	Sites BUR001, WIT3 and CHIP004	Site STAN001
SA Objective 9: Housing and equality	Sites WIT004 and WIT005	Site WIT007
SA Objective 10: Health and wellbeing	Sites CA1, CART001, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3	Site ENS001
SA Objective 11: Transport and accessibility	Sites CHAR007 and KING002	Site ENS001
SA Objective 12: Education	Sites BUR001, BUR003, BUR005, CA1, CART001, CART004, CHIP004, CHIP005, CHIP018, CHIP021, WIT004, WIT007, WIT010, WIT011 and WIT3	Site KING005
SA Objective 13: Economy and employment	Sites CA1, CART001, CART004, WIT004, WIT005, WIT007 and WIT3	Sites BUR001, KING002, KING005, MB001, MB004 and SUW001, WIT010 and WIT011

Appendix F: Assessment of Policies

Appendix F Contents

Tables

F.1 Overview

F.1.1 Introduction

F.1.1.1 At the previous stage of plan making, known as the 'Preferred Policy Options' consultation, WODC presented a draft vision, objectives and set of draft policies for the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan. This comprised a total of 71 policies, including:

- 12 core (strategic) policies;
- Six place-based policies;
- 15 settlement strategy policies; and
- 38 development management (DM) policies.

F.1.1.2 The Local Plan vision, objectives, and each of the 71 draft policies was assessed in the Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options SA (June 2025)[1].

F.1.1.3 At the current Regulation 18 'Preferred Spatial Options' consultation stage, WODC has proposed updates to two of the core policies:

- **Core Policy 2 (Settlement Hierarchy)** – This introduces an additional tier to the hierarchy, separating the previously defined villages into Tier 3 Larger Villages and Tier 4 Medium Villages; and
- **Core Policy 3 (Spatial Strategy)** – To provide clearer definitions of different scales of residential development and what is considered appropriate for each tier of settlement.

F.1.1.4 The purpose of this appendix is therefore to assess the updated version of these two policies and provide any further recommendations for the plan making process going forward.

F.1.1.5 The SA Framework (see **Appendix A**) has been used to evaluate the sustainability performance of each policy, in accordance with the methodology as set out in **Chapter 2** of the main Regulation 18 Report (**Volume 1**). For ease of reference the scoring system is summarised in **Table F.1.1**.

[1] Lepus Consulting (2025) Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041: Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qi1puvnm/sustainability-appriasal-of-the-west-oxfordshire-local-plan-preferred-options-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 14/10/25]

Table F.1.1: *Presenting likely impacts*

Likely impact	Description	Impact symbol
Major Positive Impact	The proposed policy contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	++
Minor Positive Impact	The proposed policy contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	+
Negligible/ Neutral Impact	The proposed policy has no effect or an insignificant effect on the achievement of the SA Objective.	0
Uncertain Impact	The proposed policy has an uncertain relationship with the SA Objective or insufficient information is available for an appraisal to be made.	+/-
Minor Negative Impact	The proposed policy prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	-
Major Negative Impact	The proposed policy prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	--

F.1.1.6 Each appraisal in the following sections of this report includes an SA impact matrix that provides an indication of the nature and magnitude of effects. All impact matrices are accompanied by an assessment narrative which describes the findings of the appraisal and provides a rationale for the recorded impact values.

F.2 Updated Core Policies

F.2.1 Core Policy 2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Core Policy 2 – Settlement Hierarchy

The proposed settlement hierarchy for West Oxfordshire is as follows:

Tier 1 – Principal Towns

Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton

Tier 2 – Service Centres

Bampton, Burford, Charlbury Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Woodstock, Salt Cross Garden Village (new)

Tier 3 – Large Villages

Aston, Brize Norton, Ducklington, Enstone, Freeland, Middle Barton, Milton under Wychwood, Minster Lovell (South of Burford Road), North Leigh, Shipton under Wychwood, Standlake, Stonesfield, Tackley

Tier 4 – Medium Villages

Alvescot, Ascott-under-Wychwood, Bladon, Cassington, Chadlington, Churchill, Clanfield, Combe, Curbridge, Filkins and Broughton Piggs, Finstock, Fulbrook, Great Rollright, Kingham, Langford, Leafield, Over Norton, Stanton Harcourt and Sutton, Wootton

Tier 5 – Small Villages, Hamlets and Open Countryside

All other villages and settlements not listed above plus open countryside.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Policy Ref	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Air Quality	Water	Natural Resources	Housing	Health	Transport	Education	Economy
CP2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

F.2.1.1 Core Policy 2 defines the Settlement Hierarchy in West Oxfordshire based on the size and nature of the different settlements in the district, ranging from the three principal towns through to smaller villages and hamlets.

F.2.1.2 In its current form, the draft policy will not directly affect any of the SA Objectives. Defining a hierarchy of settlements can help to ensure that appropriate types and scales of new development is directed to each type of settlement, as set out in Core Policy 3. This approach will help to manage the scale of growth so that development does not overwhelm existing infrastructure or significantly alter the rural character of rural settlements, which is likely to help reduce the potential for adverse effects against environmental and social receptors. A negligible impact is identified for all SA Objectives.

F.2.1.3 **Recommendation:** Policy CP2 could be merged with CP3 to ensure clarity on the purpose and intention of defining a settlement hierarchy.

F.2.2 Core Policy 3 – Spatial Strategy

Core Policy 3 – Spatial Strategy

The spatial strategy for West Oxfordshire to 2043 is underpinned by a commitment to delivering a sustainable pattern of development that:

- Meets identified housing, economic and community needs;
- Aligns growth with existing and planned infrastructure;
- Supports climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Enhances the environment and recovers nature;
- Sustains the vitality of local communities;
- Protects the unique identity and character of West Oxfordshire's towns, villages and countryside.

To achieve this, the strategy will:

1. **Adopt a hierarchical approach to growth aligned with the settlement hierarchy:**

a) Principal Towns (Tier 1) – Witney, Carterton and, to a lesser extent, Chipping Norton will be the primary focus for growth, reflecting their existing roles, services and infrastructure. In relation to future residential development, this is anticipated to include a combination of small, medium and strategic-scale sites.

Growth in these locations will support regeneration, make best use of previously developed land and under-used sites, and deliver transformational opportunities, particularly in Carterton, where scalable new communities within the rural fringe will complement investment in the town and unlock its economic and social potential including its relationship with RAF Brize Norton.

b) Service Centres (Tier 2) – Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, and Woodstock will accommodate a proportionate level of growth appropriate to the size of each settlement and to support their local service function. A particular focus will be placed on ensuring good public transport accessibility and active travel opportunities (both existing and proposed).

In relation to future residential development, this is anticipated to include a combination of small and medium-scale sites, with additional large and strategic-scale development only taking place through existing permissions and allocated sites.

Due to their location within the Cotswolds National Landscape, the scale and extent of development at Burford and Charlbury will be limited in accordance with national policy.

Development at Salt Cross Garden Village will be guided by the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP) and other relevant Local Plan policies.

c) Large Villages (Tier 3) – Small and medium scale growth will be supported in villages that have a reasonable level of services and facilities, helping to sustain local communities and support local needs and where proportionate to the size of the settlement, taking account of recent development and existing planned growth.

In relation to future residential development, this is anticipated to include a combination of small and medium-scale sites only (except where allocated in the Local Plan) and will be more limited in scale than at Tier 2 – Service Centres, guided by the existing size and relative sustainability of each settlement in terms of their available service and facilities.

This will include the identification of specific allocations where existing infrastructure capacity can support the delivery of new development or where new development can facilitate the delivery of new infrastructure to improve the sustainability of the settlement.

As with Tier 2 – Service Centres, there will be a particular focus on locations which benefit from existing or proposed public transport and active travel opportunities and the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape will be limited in accordance with national policy.

d) Medium Villages (Tier 4) – A more restrictive policy will be applied to villages recognising the relative sustainability of these communities.

Core Policy 3 – Spatial Strategy

Allocations for new development will be made where infrastructure capacity exists and to address identified local circumstances and needs.

Otherwise, new residential development at Teir 4 Medium Villages will typically be expected to be small-scale only.

d) Small Villages, Hamlets and Open Countryside (Tier 5) – A more restrictive approach will apply, with development limited to that which requires a rural location.

Any residential proposals will be expected to be small-scale (minor) development and will only be permitted in limited circumstances as set out in Policy DM26.

2. Focus growth along key strategic corridors, notably:

a) The A40 Corridor – A central growth area, particularly around Eynsham, Witney and Carterton, facilitating existing commitments and enabling new sustainable communities through strategic-scale growth. This includes supporting the aspiration for a rail connection from Carterton to Oxford via Witney and Eynsham, helping reduce car dependency and improve regional connectivity.

b) A44 Corridor – Strategic-scale growth at Chipping Norton and medium-scale growth at Woodstock, enabling the delivery of committed development and supporting local infrastructure and services.

3. Prioritise sustainable travel and infrastructure alignment:

a) Reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, by focusing growth in accessible locations;

b) Encourage a modal shift toward walking, cycling, and public transport;

c) Maximise use of existing public transport infrastructure, including but not limited to, Hanborough and Tackley rail stations;

d) Align growth with existing and planned infrastructure, including transport, schools and utilities.

e) Make effective use of land and address climate change:

f) Prioritise the re-use of brownfield and under-utilised land;

g) Promote compact, walkable communities;

h) Avoid areas of flood risk, taking full account of climate change projections.

4. Protect environmental and landscape assets:

a) Conserve and enhance the Cotswolds National Landscape, with great weight given to landscape and scenic beauty, and a limit on the scale and extent of development;

b) Protect the Oxford Green Belt in accordance with national policy;

c) Support the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Strategy, embedding opportunities to protect, restore, create and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks as part of development proposals.

d) Support the integrated management of the natural and historic environment where practicable, and recognise the positive contribution heritage can make in effective place-shaping.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Policy Ref	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Air Quality	Water	Natural Resources	Housing	Health	Transport	Education	Economy
CP3	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	++	+	+	+	++

F.2.2.1 Core Policy 3 sets out the proposed distribution of housing and employment development across the district. A settlement hierarchy has been identified and is set out within the

policy, and Core Policy CP2. Development will be primarily focused within and around the 'Principal towns' (tier 1) of Carterton, Witney and Chipping Norton to a lesser extent. Policy CP3 aims to meet the identified housing need of approximately 16,000 dwellings over the Plan period to 2043. As such, Policy CP3 is likely to result in a major positive impact on housing (SA Objective 9).

F.2.2.2 The policy sets out measures that will help increase the adoption of sustainable modes of transport. The policy encourages a shift away from private car use by focusing new development in locations that are already well served by public transport networks. In addition, the policy supports the enhancement of public transport infrastructure, including improvements to rail services. These enhancements aim to reduce journey times and make public transport a more attractive and viable choice. The policy promotes the creation of compact communities where essential services, amenities, and employment opportunities are located within walking distance. These measures not only support public health and wellbeing through encouraging active lifestyles but also contribute to reduced congestion and lower GHG emissions. Policy CP3 aims to ensure development supports climate change mitigation and adaptation. Overall, a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and adaptation, health and wellbeing and transport and accessibility (SA Objective 1, 2, 10 and 11) have been identified. Population growth projected over the Plan period is likely to increase congestion, with the latest Air Quality ASR (2025)[2] identifying road traffic as the primary source of pollution in the district. However, the policy incorporates measures to encourage a shift away from private car use and reduce associated emissions. Therefore, on balance a negligible impact has been identified for air quality (SA Objective 6).

F.2.2.3 Policy CP3 requires that new development protects and enhances the district's landscape and biodiversity. The policy ensures that development proposals are appropriately designed to respect the surrounding landscape, with particular attention given to the Cotswolds National Landscape and requires the scale of development to be in keeping with the character of the area. Additionally, the policy prioritises the use of brownfield and under-utilised land, thereby helping to preserve the district's rural character. This approach helps protect and enhance the district's green infrastructure (GI) network, which is essential for maintaining habitat connectivity and supporting biodiversity. By preserving and improving these natural corridors, the policy ensures that wildlife can move freely between habitats, supporting healthier ecosystems and contributing to the overall resilience of local flora and fauna. The policy also acknowledges the importance of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), requiring development to identify and pursue opportunities to protect, restore, create and enhance ecological networks as part of planning proposals. Overall, minor positive impacts are identified for biodiversity, landscape and natural resources (SA Objectives 3, 4 and 8).

F.2.2.4 The spatial strategy promotes enhanced public transport infrastructure and co-location of residents with essential services, such as schools, ensuring that communities are situated in highly accessible locations. This strategic approach will enable access to both educational and employment opportunities. In particular, focusing development along key strategic transport corridors and within principal towns such as Witney, Carterton, and Chipping Norton, supports local economies by encouraging residents to live, work, and spend locally. Furthermore, revitalising brownfield land in these areas may help to unlock

[2] West Oxfordshire District Council (2025) Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR), June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/d1nbwdqn/air-quality-annual-report-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

investment potential and enhance the visual and functional appeal of town centres. The creation of walkable, mixed-use communities and the strategic location of housing near employment hubs will also help retain a younger, skilled workforce, contributing to a more dynamic and resilient local labour market. While the policy prioritises development in principal towns, proportionate growth in Tier 2, 3 and 4 settlements will continue to support rural economies, sustaining smaller businesses and improving access for rural populations. Overall, a major positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13) is identified, as well as a minor positive impact on education (SA Objective 12).

F.2.2.5 The policy emphasises the importance of directing development towards areas with a low risk of flooding and includes provisions to retain GI, which plays a key role in natural flood management by helping to reduce surface water runoff and mitigate flood risks at development sites. On balance, the policy is considered to have a negligible impact on climate change adaptation (SA Objective 2).

F.2.2.6 New development has the potential to increase surface water runoff during both the construction phase and subsequent occupation, which has potential to negatively affect the quality of both surface and groundwater bodies. Policy CP3 seeks to "*Align growth with existing infrastructure, including transport, schools and utilities*" and in doing so should refer to the most recent Water Cycle Study, along with relevant Water Resource Management Plans to identify where there may be capacity constraints and infrastructure upgrades may be required. As such, Policy CP3 will be expected to support development in West Oxfordshire whilst minimising potential risks to water quality. An overall negligible impact has been identified with regard to water quality (SA Objective 7).

F.2.2.7 The policy ensures the protection and, where possible, enhancement of the landscape, with potential benefits to the settings of historic assets, and supports the integrated management of the natural and historic environment where practicable. On balance, considering the large-scale development anticipated through the Local Plan and spatial strategy, a negligible impact on cultural heritage is identified (SA Objective 5).

Appendix G: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites (Post-mitigation)

Appendix G Contents

Tables

G.1 Introduction

G.1.1 Overview

G.1.1.1 The process which has been used to appraise reasonable alternative sites is sequenced through two stages. Firstly, sites are assessed in terms of impacts on the baseline without consideration of mitigation. Secondly, the appraisal findings are further assessed in light of any relevant mitigation that is available through emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan policies.

G.1.1.2 The pre-mitigation assessment provides a baseline assessment of each site and identifies any local constraints. The pre-mitigation assessment does not consider mitigating factors such as Local Plan policy. The purpose of this stage is to identify the impacts that will need to be overcome for development to optimise sustainability performance.

G.1.1.3 The post-mitigation assessment considers how mitigating factors, including Local Plan policy and other guidance, will help to avoid or reduce the impacts that were identified at the pre-mitigation stage.

G.1.1.4 It is important to demonstrate the amount of mitigation that may be required to ensure a site can optimise sustainability performance. The level of intervention that may be required to facilitate effective mitigation varies and can help determine the eventual choice of preferred option in the plan. Sites which require low levels of intervention are likely to be preferable to sites that require complex and potentially unviable strategies.

G.1.1.5 **Chapter G.2** sets out the pre-mitigation impacts of all reasonable alternative sites considered throughout the SA process alongside the Local Plan preparation (see **Appendix D** and **E** for the full pre-mitigation strategic and non-strategic site assessments set out per receptor within each SA Objective).

G.1.1.6 **Chapter G.3** provides detail on the mitigation within the Local Plan and discusses the post-mitigation impacts for the reasonable alternative sites against each SA Objective where potential adverse effects were identified.

G.1.1.7 **Chapter G.4** summarises the overall post-mitigation assessment for the reasonable alternative sites, with scoring set out per SA Objective.

G.2 Pre-mitigation assessment

G.2.1 Introduction

G.2.1.1 A total of 83 reasonable alternative sites have been identified and described by WODC and evaluated in the SA process.

G.2.1.2 This includes 29 reasonable alternative strategic sites, considered by WODC to comprise sites promoted for residential-led uses, with an indicative capacity of 300 or more homes and have more capability to deliver supporting infrastructure alongside residential growth. The pre-mitigation assessment of the 29 strategic sites can be found in **Appendix D**, which also took into account accompanying infrastructure and proposals from masterplans and other information supplied by the Council, recognising that this will be necessary for the delivery of such large-scale growth.

G.2.1.3 Additionally, 54 non-strategic reasonable alternative sites have been identified, which include all other smaller reasonable alternative sites promoted for residential or employment uses. The full pre-mitigation assessment of non-strategic sites is set out in **Appendix E**.

G.2.1.4 **Tables G.2.1** and G**.2.2** present the summary pre-mitigation impact matrices for strategic and non-strategic sites respectively, summarising the assessment that is set out per receptor within each SA Objective in **Appendices D** and **E**.

Table G.2.1: *Impact matrix table of the reasonable alternative strategic sites, pre-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy
ALV002	+/-	--	-	--	0	0	-	--	++	-	-	++	++
BAM002	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	-	--	++	-	-	-	++
BAM003	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	-	++
BAM005	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	+
BG001	+/-	--	-	-	--	-	-	--	++	-	-	-	++
BN001	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	++
BN001a	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	++	++
BN003	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	+/-
BN006	+/-	--	--	-	--	-	-	--	++	-	-	-	+/-
BUR002	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	+/-	-	++	-	-	++	+
CHAR005	+/-	+	-	--	--	0	+/-	-	++	-	++	-	+
CHIP006	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	-	-	++	-	-	++	+
CN1	+/-	+	-	--	--	-	-	--	++	-	-	++	+/-
CUR001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	-	++
CUR003	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	-	--	-	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	-	+/-
EW1	+/-	--	-	--	--	-	-	--	++	-	-	++	+/-
EW2	+/-	--	-	-	--	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	+/-
HAN001	+/-	--	-	-	-	-	+/-	--	++	-	++	-	++

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy
MIN002	+/-	+	--	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	-	++
MIN006	+/-	--	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	--	++	-	-	-	++
SHIL002	+/-	--	+/-	--	-	0	-	-	++	-	-	-	++
SHIL003	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	++
SL006	+/-	-	-	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	++
WIT001	+/-	--	-	--	-	-	-	--	++	-	-	++	++
WIT002	+/-	--	-	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	++
WIT006	+/-	--	-	--	0	-	-	--	++	-	-	++	++
WIT2	+/-	--	-	--	-	-	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	++
WOOD001	+/-	+	-	-	--	0	+/-	--	++	-	-	++	++

Table G.2.2: *Impact matrix table of the reasonable alternative non-strategic sites, pre-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
ALV006	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST004	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
AST008	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM001	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM006	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BAM007	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
BN002	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	+/-	-	-	0	++
BUR001	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	-
BUR003	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
BUR005	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
BUR008	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CA1	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART001	+/-	+	-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART004	+/-	--	+/-	-	0	0	-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CART007	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
CHAR004	+/-	+	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
CHAR006	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
CHAR007	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
CHIP004	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP005	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP018	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CHIP019	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
CHIP021	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+
CLAN001	+/-	-	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
CUR004	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CUR007	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-
DUCK002	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
ENS001	+/-	-	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	0	+/-
FREE002	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
FREE004	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
KING002	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	-
KING005	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
LANG001	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
LEA002	+/-	--	-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	0
LEA004	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
MB001	+/-	+	--	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
MB004	+/-	+	--	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
NL005	+/-	--	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+
NL012	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
NL014	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
STAN001	+/-	-	-	-	-	0	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+
STON005	+/-	+	-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	++
SUW001	+/-	+	-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-
TACK003	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	++
TACK004	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	+
TACK005	+/-	+	-	-	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	++
WIT004	+/-	+	-	-	0	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT005	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT007	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	-	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	++	++
WIT010	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+/-
WIT011	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	++	+/-
WIT3	+/-	--	+/-	0	-	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	++	++

G.3 Mitigating effects of the Local Plan policies

G.3.1 Introduction

G.3.1.1 A total of 71 draft policies were included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options version of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan[1]. The policies have been evaluated in the Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options SA (June 2025)[2]. Two policies have been revised by WODC at the current Preferred Spatial Options consultation stage: Core Policy 2 (Settlement Hierarchy) and Core Policy 3 (Spatial Strategy). The two updated policies have been reviewed against the SA Framework, with updated assessments of these two policies presented in **Appendix F**.

G.3.1.2 Many of the draft policies are anticipated to improve the sustainability performance of the reasonable alternative site assessments through the reduction or elimination of adverse effects and optimising positive effects.

G.3.1.3 **Tables G.3.1** to **G.3.13** below set out the potential adverse impacts that have been identified through the assessment of sites pre-mitigation for each SA Objective, as presented in **Tables G.2.1** and **G.2.2**, and indicate which, if any, of the emerging Local Plan policies will be likely to mitigate these effects.

G.3.1.4 The assessment of the sustainability performance of sites post-mitigation, taking into account the mitigating effects of the draft Local Plan policies, is summarised in the matrix in **Table G.4.1**.

G.3.2 SA Objective 1 – Climate change mitigation

G.3.2.1 **Table G.3.1** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 1 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.1: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA1 – Climate change mitigation*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for climate change mitigation	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Increase in greenhouse gas emissions – new development as a result of the Local Plan has potential to increase local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the construction phase, the occupation and operation of homes and businesses,	• **CP1 (Climate Change)** requires new developments to support the UK's net zero target by minimising carbon emissions, maximising energy efficiency and renewable energy use, reusing resources, incorporating climate-resilient design, and major developments demonstrating through a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) how	The Local Plan includes a comprehensive policy framework to address climate change and GHG emissions, collectively setting out integrated requirements to minimise carbon emissions, maximise energy efficiency, promote renewable and low-carbon

[1] WODC (2025) West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041. Draft Preferred Policy Options Paper. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qf3bnn0n/wodc-local-plan-preferred-policy-options-consultation-paper-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 24/10/25]

[2] Lepus Consulting (2025) Sustainability Appraisal of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041: Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options. June 2025. Available at: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/qi1puvnm/sustainability-appriasal-of-the-west-oxfordshire-local-plan-preferred-options-june-2025.pdf [Date accessed: 29/09/25]

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for climate change mitigation	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
energy and water consumption and increases in local road transport with associated emissions.	they will mitigate and adapt to climate change. • **CP8 (High Quality and Sustainable Design)** requires all development to deliver high-quality, sustainable design including energy efficient and low carbon building methods and make provision for sustainable transport and renewable energy technologies. • **CP8 (Sustainable Transport)** requires development to be designed to support active and low-carbon travel modes. • **DM5 (Achieving Net-Zero Carbon Development)** requires all new development to achieve net-zero operational carbon, reduce embodied carbon, and to be designed for climate resilience. • **DM7 (Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience)** encourages developments to incorporate energy-saving measures, renewable energy technologies, and strategies for adapting to climate challenges. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites include the provision of low carbon technologies to reduce emissions related to the proposed development, such as solar farms, heat pumps and provision of electric vehicle infrastructure.	energy, and support climate resilience. However, the policies may not fully mitigate effects, where residual emissions may still arise from embodied carbon, construction activities, and indirect transport effects.

G.3.3 SA Objective 2 – Climate change adaptation

G.3.3.1 **Table G.3.2** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 2 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.2: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA2 – Climate change adaptation*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for climate change adaptation	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Fluvial flood risk – a small number of sites have more than 10% or more of their site areas located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Development at these sites may have a potentially major negative impact on flooding, as they may locate some site users at high risk of fluvial flooding, and exacerbate flooding issues.	• **CP7 (Water Environment)** will ensure proposals must address flood risk from all potential sources, including surface water, groundwater, fluvial and sewer flooding. Major developments must be accompanied by a site-specific water management strategy that outlines integrated measures including for flood risk. • **CP1 (Climate Change)** requires major developments to be accompanied by a CIA that includes adaptation strategies for extreme weather events, including flooding and storms.	It is likely that the Local Plan policies, alongside national policy, will ensure that potential adverse impacts associated with development in areas of fluvial flood risk will be mitigated. However, at this stage of the Plan process, uncertainty remains in absence of the final Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Sequential Test details.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for climate change adaptation	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	• **PL3 (Conservation and Management of the Windrush Valley)** supports incorporation of natural flood management techniques including restoration of floodplain meadows along the River Windrush and its tributaries.	
Surface water flood risk – some sites are partially located in areas at low, medium or high surface water flood risk (SWFR), where there is potential for development to exacerbate SWFR and potentially increasing flood risk in surrounding locations.	• **CP7 (Water Environment)** states that development must address flood risk from all potential sources, including surface water, groundwater, fluvial and sewer flooding. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be incorporated into all developments to manage surface water runoff. • **PL3 (Conservation and Management of the Windrush Valley)** supports incorporation of natural flood management techniques to reduce surface water runoff along the River Windrush and its tributaries. • **DM2 (Green Infrastructure)** sets out the need to include protect and enhance well-managed green and blue infrastructure that will provide multi-functional benefits including for absorbing, storing and slowing the flow of surface water.	It is likely that potential impacts associated with development in areas of SWFR will be mitigated through Local Plan policies that require site-specific flood risk assessment, incorporation of SuDS, and measures to manage runoff.

G.3.4 SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

G.3.4.1 **Table G.3.3** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 3 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.3: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA3 – Biodiversity and geodiversity*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for biodiversity and geodiversity	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Threats and pressures to European Sites – A proportion of reasonable alternative sites lie within the 10km risk zone around Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) where there is greater potential for adverse effects on its integrity. In absence of the HRA conclusions, the potential for adverse effects on other European sites is uncertain.	• **CP12 (Natural Environment)** will ensure that all development contributes to the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment, including designated biodiversity sites. • **DM13 (Air Quality and Pollution)** – will ensure that developments demonstrate compliance with the Habitat Regulations and ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of Oxford Meadows SAC from air pollution, given its sensitivity to nitrogen deposition.	It is uncertain at this stage whether the potential for adverse effects associated with the development sites will be mitigated, in absence of the HRA conclusions. At the Regulation 19 stage, the HRA Screening will be revisited, and a full Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken, which will enable a conclusion to be drawn.
Threats and pressures to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – Two strategic sites (MB001 and MB004) and one non-strategic site (MIN002) lie adjacent to SSSIs, where	• **CP12 (Natural Environment)** will ensure that all development contributes to the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment, including designated biodiversity sites.	The Local Plan policies are likely to mitigate adverse effects on SSSIs for the majority of sites through requirements for biodiversity protection, enhancement, and BNG. However, for

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for biodiversity and geodiversity	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
there is potential for direct adverse effects. A number of further sites lie within Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) that indicate consultation with Natural England will be required.	• **DM8 (Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG))** requires development to follow the mitigation hierarchy and deliver BNG, using on-site enhancements, off-site contributions, and long-term management to protect and restore habitats. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites (including MIN002) indicate that extensive GI will be incorporated into the site layout to protect nearby SSSIs from significant adverse effects associated with new development.	sites that are directly adjacent to SSSIs, potential impacts may require site-specific assessment and close liaison with Natural England to ensure that harm is avoided or appropriately managed.
Threats and pressures to National and Local Nature Reserves (NNRs and LNRs) – A small number of sites are located within close proximity to Wychwood NNR, where there is increased potential for adverse effects such as those associated with increased visitor pressures from development. A small number of non-strategic sites lie in proximity to LNRs where development has potential to lead to habitat degradation and disruption to wildlife.	• **CP12 (Natural Environment)** will ensure that all development contributes to the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment, including designated biodiversity sites. • **PL4 (Wychwood Forest)** ensures that development within or adjacent to the Wychwood Forest area must prioritise the protection, restoration, and enhancement of key habitats. • **DM8 (BNG)** requires development to follow the mitigation hierarchy and deliver BNG, using on-site enhancements, off-site contributions, and long-term management to protect and restore habitats.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on NNRs and LNRs and deliver a net gain in biodiversity for all development sites.
Loss or fragmentation of ancient woodland – Two strategic sites (BN006 and MIN002) coincide with ancient woodlands, and a small number of further sites lie in proximity to ancient woodland, where there is potential for degradation of these habitats including through pollution and recreational pressures.	• **PL4 (Wychwood Forest)** ensures that development within or adjacent to the Wychwood Forest area must prioritise the protection, restoration, and enhancement of key habitats, including ancient woodlands. • **DM8 (BNG)** requires development to follow the mitigation hierarchy and deliver BNG, using on-site enhancements, off-site contributions, and long-term management to protect and restore habitats. • **DM11 (Trees and Hedgerows)** supports the provision of new trees and hedgerows that will increase connectivity between habitats and enhance biodiversity. • **DM12 (Light Pollution and Dark Skies)** ensures that developments in proximity to sensitive habitats including woodlands provide a buffer zone to avoid intrusive lighting. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites (including MIN002) indicate that buffer zones would be provided around areas of ancient woodland to protect them from significant adverse effects associated with new development.	The policies will be likely to reduce or mitigate potential adverse effects in most locations. However, some uncertainty remains, particularly for strategic sites that coincide with or lie adjacent to areas of ancient woodland, where detailed, site-specific assessment and design measures will be needed to ensure impacts are fully avoided or appropriately mitigated.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for biodiversity and geodiversity	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Threats and pressures to Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) – One strategic site (BN006) coincides with an LWS, and a small number of further sites lie adjacent to LWSs, where development has potential to lead to habitat degradation and disruption to wildlife.	• **CP12 (Natural Environment)** will ensure that all development contributes to the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment, including locally important wildlife and geological sites. • **DM8 (BNG)** will ensure that all qualifying developments contribute towards high quality, locally relevant nature-recovery projects, including, but not limited to, the restoration of degraded Local Wildlife Sites and the creation of high or very high distinctiveness habitats.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on locally designated biodiversity sites and deliver a net gain in biodiversity for all development sites.
Threats and pressures to priority habitats – A number of reasonable alternative sites coincide with an area of priority habitat, including deciduous woodland and traditional orchard, where there is potential for loss or degradation of these habitats and the species they support.	• **CP12 (Natural Environment)** will ensure that all development contributes to the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment. Major developments will need to demonstrate that they prevent harm to important habitats and species. • **DM8 (BNG)** will ensure that all qualifying developments contribute towards high quality, locally relevant nature-recovery projects, including, but not limited to, the restoration of degraded priority habitats and the creation of high or very high distinctiveness habitats. • **DM11 (Trees and Hedgerows)** supports the provision of new trees and hedgerows that will increase connectivity between habitats and enhance biodiversity. • **PL4 (Wychwood Forest)** ensures that measures are implemented to prevent pollution or disturbance to sensitive habitats, particularly ancient woodlands and ecologically valuable areas. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that on-site priority habitats would be excluded from the developable areas.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on priority habitats and deliver a net gain in biodiversity for all development sites.

G.3.5 SA Objective 4 – Landscape

G.3.5.1 **Table G.3.4** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 4 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.4: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA4 – Landscape*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for landscape	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Impacts on the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) – Of the reasonable alternative sites, two strategic and 13	• **CP3 (Spatial Strategy)** highlights that great weight is given to landscape and scenic beauty, and a limit on the scale and extent of development considered within the CNL.	The policies provide a strong framework to protect and enhance the CNL, guiding development through limits on scale,

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for landscape	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
non-strategic sites lie within the CNL, and a number of further sites lie in proximity to the CNL, where there is potential for development to have adverse effects on the special qualities and character of the CNL and its setting.	• **CP8 (High Quality and Sustainable Design)** will ensure that development protects and enhances natural beauty, integrating landscaping that preserves important views, particularly in the CNL. • **PL1 (Cotswolds National Landscape)** will ensure development within the CNL protects its beauty, heritage and tranquillity and aligns with policies in the CNL Management Plan. Major development will be resisted in the CNL unless exceptional circumstances are evidenced. • **DM10 (Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape Character through New Development)** requires development proposals to assess the sensitivity of the landscape in which they are located. This includes evaluating the impact of the proposed development on the local landscape character, scenic views, and any valued landscapes in the CNL. • **DM37 (Sustainable Tourism)** – Requires all tourism development proposals to conserve, and where possible, enhance the natural environment, historic assets and landscape character, particularly the CNL. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites (including CHAR005) indicate that high quality landscaped open spaces and corridors will be incorporated into the site layout to maintain views and minimise harm to the CNL.	context-sensitive design, and landscape assessments. However, some uncertainty remains as to whether potential effects will be fully mitigated at all locations without site-specific assessment.
Threaten or result in the loss of rural and locally distinctive landscape character – Many reasonable alternative sites are located in areas where there is potential for new development to discord with the key characteristics identified in the published Landscape Character Assessment. Based on published landscape assessments at the time of writing, seven non-strategic and 17 strategic sites are located in areas of moderate to high sensitivity to development, and many sites are located in areas beyond the coverage of this data where sensitivity / capacity of the landscape is uncertain.	• **CP8 (High Quality and Sustainable Design)** requires all development proposals to deliver high-quality, sustainable design that enhances the district's character, in line with national and local design guidance. • **PL3 (Conservation and Management of the Windrush Valley)** will ensure that development in this area conserves and enhances the unique landscape character including heritage features and GI. • **DM1 (Key Principles for New Development)** requires development proposals to be accompanied by appropriate assessments and plans including landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIA). • **DM10 (Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape Character through New Development)** requires development proposals to be informed by an understanding of the surrounding landscape, including its character, key features, and sensitivity. Major developments will need to prepare detailed	The policies provide a strong framework to conserve and enhance landscape character, requiring development to respect local context and assess impacts on views and valued landscapes. However, without site-specific landscape assessments, some uncertainty remains as to whether effects will be fully mitigated at all locations.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for landscape	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	landscape assessments, including Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), to evaluate potential effects on local landscape character, scenic views, and valued landscapes. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** will ensure small-scale development is supported within or adjacent to the built area of Tier 1-3 settlements where it does not detract from residential amenity or landscape character.	
Change in views from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) – A number of reasonable alternative sites are in areas where development is likely to alter the current undeveloped countryside views experienced by users of the PRoW network.	• **PL1 (Cotswolds National Landscape) –** requires development within the CNL to avoid impacts on the natural beauty of the landscape and minimise and mitigate any impacts including views. • Various settlement strategy policies including **WIT1, CN1, CHA1, WD1** and **RA1** highlight the need for development to conserve key views and the landscape setting of the towns and settlements. • **DM10 (Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape Character through New Development)** requires that development proposals assess and respect key views and skylines, ensuring that new buildings and landscape changes do not dominate or disrupt important local or long-range views. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** will ensure existing PRoW, footpaths and bridleways will be protected and safeguarded from development that would cause harm to their connectivity, accessibility or character. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** will ensure development has no significant adverse impacts on local amenity or PRoW.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to mitigate significant adverse effects on views.
Increased risk of coalescence – A small proportion of sites have potential to reduce separation between existing settlements, risking loss of local identity.	• **WIT1 (A Strategy for Witney)** seeks to preserve the town's distinctiveness and avoid coalescence with neighbouring communities. • **DM1 (Key Principles for New Development)** requires development proposals to demonstrate how they will protect the separate identity of settlements by maintaining appropriate physical and visual gaps between them. • **DM10 (Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape Character through New Development)** seeks to ensure that development celebrates and reflects local identity and distinctiveness. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that high quality landscaped open spaces and corridors will be	The policies seek to avoid coalescence by protecting the separate identity of settlements, maintaining appropriate physical and visual gaps, and ensuring that development reflects local character and distinctiveness. However, for some larger sites located between existing settlements, careful site-specific design and management of gaps will be required to ensure these objectives are fully achieved.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for landscape	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	incorporated into the site layout to maintain views and openness.	
Impacts on protected trees – A proportion of reasonable alternative sites coincide, or are adjacent to, a tree protected by a Tree Protection Order (TPO), where development could result in adverse impacts in the form of structural damage, soil disruption, and implications to the appearance and character of the local landscape.	• **DM11 (Trees and Hedgerows)** requires development proposed in close proximity of an existing tree or hedgerow to submit a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and/or a Hedgerow Protection Plan (HPP) as part of the planning application, demonstrating how trees and hedgerows will be safeguarded during the construction phase. • **DM15 (Conservation Areas)** will ensure that features of special interest within Conservation Areas will be preserved, including trees and hedgerows.	The Local Plan policies, together with national policy, will be expected to ensure that potential impacts on TPOs are avoided or mitigated as necessary.

G.3.6 SA Objective 5 – Cultural heritage

G.3.6.1 **Table G.3.5** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 5 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.5: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA5 – Cultural heritage*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for cultural heritage	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Impacts on Listed Buildings (LBs) – A proportion of sites of sites are located in areas where there is potential to alter the setting of Grade I, II* or II LBs, including several strategic sites that coincide with or are directly adjacent to LBs.	• **CP11 (Historic Environment)** ensures that planning application will conserve/enhance the architectural and historic interest of LBs, particularly their character, fabric and setting. • **DM14 (Listed Buildings)** ensures that development proposals involving alterations, additional to, or change of use of an LB, or for development within its curtilage or affecting its setting, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the key views, vistas and the wider setting of the LB will not be harmed. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that sensitive design and layout would be pursued, informed by heritage assessments, to avoid or minimise harm to nearby LBs.	The policies are expected to ensure that designated heritage assets including LBs and their settings are conserved and enhanced in line with their significance. Potential adverse effects are likely to be mitigated at the majority of sites; however, uncertainty remains for strategic sites that coincide with, or lie adjacent to, LBs where further site-specific assessment such as a Heritage Impact Assessment would be required to demonstrate that harm to significance can be avoided or appropriately mitigated through sensitive design and layout.
Impacts on conservation areas (CAs) – A proportion of the sites are located within a CA, or in close proximity to a CA, where development has the potential to result in an adverse effect on the historic character or setting of the area.	• **CP11 (Historic Environment)** will ensure the character and/or appearance of the district's CAs and their settings, considering the contribution of their surroundings to their historical and visual significance, are conserved and/or enhanced. WODC will prepare update and adapt CA appraisals and management plans, prioritising those areas at greatest risk from development pressures or where the CA is most sensitive to change.	The policies collectively provide a strong framework that is likely to mitigate potential adverse effects of development within or near CAs by requiring that proposals conserve or enhance their character, appearance, and historic significance, ensure sensitive and context-responsive design, and be

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for cultural heritage	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	• **DM1 (Key Principles for New Development)** highlights that design should respond innovatively and sensitively to historic distinctiveness including CAs. • **DM15 (Conservation Areas)** requires development to conserve or enhance the character, appearance and historic significance of CAs, and will only permit development within or affecting the setting of a CA if it can be demonstrated that they respect and contribute positively to the setting.	guided by up-to-date appraisals and management plans.
Impacts on registered parks and gardens (RPG) and Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (WHS) – A small number of reasonable alternative sites are located in close proximity to an RPG, including two strategic sites in proximity to Blenheim Palace RPG/WHS, where development has the potential increase damaging activities associated with greater recreational pressure or disrupting views from the heritage assets and/or altering their setting.	• **CP11 (Historic Environment)** requires development to protect, conserve and enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of the district's historic environment including RPGs and the Outstanding Universal Value of Blenheim Palace WHS in accordance with the WHS Management Plan. • **PL6 (Blenheim Palace WHS)** sets out the requirements to protect, conserve and enhance the cultural significance of the WHS and its setting, and support the WHS Management Plan including consideration to long-distance views. • **DM14 (Listed Buildings)** highlights that loss of significance of RPGs will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Any harm to RPGs must be demonstrated to be outweighed by public benefits or securing the optimum viable use of the building. • **DM17 (Registered Parks and Gardens)** aims to conserve and enhance the historic, aesthetic and environmental significance of RPGs, and requires proposals to enable to restoration of the original landscape designs and features to enhance public appreciation and enjoyment of the RPG.	While these policies are likely to mitigate potential impacts on RPGs and the Blenheim Palace WHS for the majority of sites, strategic-scale development near the WHS would need to be supported by site-specific Heritage Impact Assessments to ensure potential effects on its Outstanding Universal Value and setting are fully understood and appropriately mitigated. As such, some uncertainty remains at this stage.
Impacts on scheduled monuments (SM) – Four reasonable alternative strategic sites coincide with an SM, and a small number of further sites are located in close proximity to an SM, where there is potential for development to alter their features and setting.	• **CP11 (Historic Environment)** requires development to protect, conserve and enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of the district's historic environment including nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not). • **DM16 (Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments)** aims to protect the significance of archaeological remains, including SMs, by preserving them in their original state whenever possible.	The policies are expected to ensure that SMs and their settings are protected and conserved in accordance with their significance, and are likely to mitigate effects at most sites. However, some uncertainty remains where strategic sites overlap with or are adjacent to SMs. For these locations, detailed site-specific assessment and mitigation (e.g. archaeological evaluation or Heritage Impact Assessment) will be needed to ensure potential impacts are fully understood and addressed.

G.3.7 SA Objective 6 – Air quality

G.3.7.1 **Table G.3.6** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 6 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.6: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA6 – Air quality*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for air quality	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Exposure to air pollution associated with main roads and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) – One site (CHIP004) lies partially within 200m of Chipping Norton AQMA, and a proportion of further sites are located within 200m of a main road, where residents are more likely to be exposed to higher levels of air pollution associated with road transport.	• **CP8 (High Quality and Sustainable Design)** requires development to make provisions for sustainable transport, active travel and electric vehicle infrastructure. • **CP10 (Sustainable Transport)** ensures that new developments are designed to facilitate high-quality public transport access and integration of multi-modes of travel, thereby contributing to lower transport-associated emissions. The policy will ensure that transport infrastructure is designed to minimise environmental impacts, including noise and air pollution. • **DM2 (Green Infrastructure)** promotes the protection, enhancement, and expansion of West Oxfordshire's GI network, with likely multi-functional benefits including for filtration of pollutants and improving air quality. • **DM13 (Air Quality and Pollution)** sets out measures to protect air quality and public health, and ensures that development proposals leading to a deterioration in air quality, particularly near sensitive areas like AQMAs and the Oxford Meadows SAC, will be subject to scrutiny and mitigation requirements.	The Local Plan policies are likely to reduce adverse impacts associated with the exposure of site end users to poor air quality within AQMAs and along main roads, but will not be expected to fully mitigate these effects where baseline air pollution levels may be high.

G.3.8 SA Objective 7 – Water

G.3.8.1 **Table G.3.7** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 7 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.7: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA7 – Water*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for water	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Risk of contamination of watercourses – New development has potential to result in downstream impacts on water quality owing to increased runoff, especially for the proportion of reasonable alternative sites in close proximity to watercourses.	• **CP6 (Delivering Infrastructure In-Step with New Development)** requires developers to demonstrate that there is acceptable wastewater capacity and surface drainage to serve the new development. • **CP7 (Water Environment)** promotes water quality by requiring new developments to manage wastewater effectively, incorporate SuDS and blue infrastructure, and implement water-sensitive design measures that prevent pollution and protect aquatic	While the policies are designed to safeguard and enhance water quality, there remains some uncertainty regarding the adequacy of mitigation measures for new development until the findings and requirements of the final Water Cycle Study (WCS) are confirmed.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for water	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	ecosystems including rivers and streams, both during and after construction. • **PL3 (Conservation and Management of the Windrush Valley)** sets out the requirements of development to respect and enhance the natural, cultural and social value of the Windrush Valley including securing benefits for water quality. • **DM2 (Green Infrastructure)** promotes the protection, enhancement, and expansion of West Oxfordshire's GI network, with likely multi-functional benefits including for filtration of pollutants and improving water quality.	
Risk of contamination of groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZ) – A small number of reasonable alternative sites are located partially or wholly within an SPZ, where development has greater potential to contribute to the pollution of groundwater.	• **CP7 (Water Environment)** requires development proposals to demonstrate full consideration of wastewater management and water quality, ensuring that development does not adversely impact water bodies or aquatic ecosystems, outlining strategies to prevent water pollution during and after construction, including safeguarding of groundwater quality. • **PL3 (Conservation and Management of the Windrush Valley)** requires development to maintain and restore natural hydrological processes, helping to improve water retention and groundwater recharge, reducing surface water runoff and also providing benefits to water quality.	These policies will be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on the quality of groundwater SPZs as result of the proposed development.

G.3.9 SA Objective 8 – Natural resources and waste

G.3.9.1 **Table G.3.8** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 8 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.8: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA8 – Natural resources and waste*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for natural resources and waste	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Loss of previously undeveloped land including best and most versatile (BMV) land – a large proportion of reasonable alternative sites are located on previously undeveloped land or contain land with potential environmental value, where valuable soil resources are likely to be lost. The majority of these sites comprise land of Grade 2 or 3 according to the Agricultural Land	• **CP3 (Spatial Strategy)** takes a hierarchal approach to growth, with growth in Tier 1 (principal towns) making best use of previously developed land (PDL) and under-used sites. • **PL2 (Oxford Green Belt)** ensures that proposals for development must prioritise the redevelopment of previously developed land. • **DM2 (Green Infrastructure)** will ensure that new development protects and enhances the GI network, including underlying soil resources.	The majority of the reasonable alternative sites are located on Grades 2 or 3 ALC land, which is likely to comprise some of the district's BMV land. Despite the positive provisions of the policies, they would not be expected to fully mitigate adverse impacts on soil resources.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for natural resources and waste	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Classification (ALC), which could potentially represent BMV land.	• **DM4 (A Healthy Food Environment)** requires all residential developments of 50 homes or more to provide space for community gardens or allotments, which may help to conserve high quality soil resources. • **DM21 (Previously Developed Land and Development Densities)** ensures that the re-use of PDL will be strongly encouraged as a priority for new development. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** ensures that development is physically well-related to existing settlements where possible and uses PDL in preference to greenfield sites.	
Increase in waste production – There is potential for a significant cumulative increase in household waste to be generated through the development of the residential-led non-strategic sites, as well as commercial/industrial waste associated with non-residential sites, although this will depend on site-specific proposals and nature of the development.	• **DM9 (Waste and the Circular Economy)** ensures that developers must design buildings and infrastructure with waste minimisation in mind, in accordance with the waste hierarchy. A Construction Waste Management Plan (CWMP) and Operational Waste Management Plan (OWMP) must be submitted with all planning applications for major development.	While the policy will help to promote recycling and appropriate waste disposal within new developments, it is unlikely to fully mitigate the likely increase in waste associated with the proposed growth through the emerging Local Plan.
Loss of mineral recourses – A small number of reasonable alternative sites coincide with Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs), where there is potential for sterilisation of mineral recourses via the introduction of non-minerals development.	• Whilst WODC's draft policies are silent on minerals, the **adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy for Oxfordshire**[3] including Policy M8 (Safeguarding Mineral Resources) will control non-minerals development within MSAs. WODC will need to consult the County Council for any development proposed within Mineral Consultation Areas (covering MSAs and their surroundings).	It is recommended that a policy is set out in the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan ensuring that development within MSAs is carefully considered to avoid sterilising mineral resources, in accordance with the adopted Minerals Local Plan or its successor. In the absence of a specific policy on MSAs, it is uncertain whether the Plan will adequately mitigate potential impacts on mineral resources.

G.3.10 SA Objective 9 – Housing and equality

G.3.10.1 **Table G.3.9** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 9 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

[3] Oxfordshire County Council (2017) Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Part 1 – Core Strategy. Adopted Plan. September 2017. Available at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/minerals-and-waste-policy/core-strategy [Date accessed: 27/10/25]

Table G.3.9: Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA9 – Housing and equality

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for housing and equality	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Barriers to housing and services – In absence of detailed site proposal information, it is uncertain whether non-strategic development sites will contribute towards provision of affordable homes or service provision.	• **DM23 (Protection and Provision of Community Facilities and Services)** supports the delivery of new or enhanced facilities where they address identified gaps in provision. • **DM27 (Creating Mixed and Balanced Communities)** sets out indicative dwelling size requirements for market and affordable homes that will be expected on each development site. • **DM28 (Affordable Housing)** supports the provision of affordable housing to buy or rent in order to meet West Oxfordshire's needs.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to ensure mixed and balanced communities are supported, through meeting West Oxfordshire's identified needs including provision of affordable homes and addressing accessibility gaps.

G.3.11 SA Objective 10 – Health and wellbeing

G.3.11.1 **Table G.3.10** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 10 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.10: Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA10 – Health and wellbeing

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for health and wellbeing	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Access to healthcare – All sites are located over 8km from an NHS hospital with an A&E department, and the majority of sites are located over 1km from a GP surgery. Development at these locations may offer site end users more limited access to essential healthcare services, potentially exacerbating health inequalities.	• **CP6 (Delivering Infrastructure In-Step with New Development)** ensures that all new development proposals must be supported by effective investment in new or enhanced infrastructure to meet the needs arising from development, including healthcare. • **CP9 (Healthy Place Shaping)** ensures that all development proposals adhere to the agreed Oxfordshire-wide principles of healthy place shaping, including access to new and enhanced healthcare and essential services. • **LH1 (A Strategy for Long Hanborough)** seeks to maintain and enhance community services including GP surgeries. **WD1 (A Strategy for Woodstock)** sets out the delivery of a new GP facility. • **DM23 (Protection and Provision of Community Facilities and Services)** will ensure that existing services, including healthcare facilities, are safeguarded and improved in accessible locations. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** will ensure that new development prioritises creating safe and sustainable access to services including healthcare facilities.	The policies could potentially help to prevent the loss of existing healthcare facilities and improve sustainable access to facilities for some residents, however, the policies would not be expected to fully mitigate the restricted access to healthcare services, in relation to access to NHS hospitals and GP services, for many of the reasonable alternative sites.
Access to leisure facilities – The majority of	• **DM3 (Sport, Recreation and Play) –** ensures that existing open spaces, playing	The policies will be expected to ensure that

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for health and wellbeing	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
reasonable alternative sites are located over 2km from a leisure facility where there is potential for adverse impacts for social exclusion and limited recreational activities.	pitches, sports, recreation, and play facilities will be safeguarded and that new/expanded facilities are provided in accordance with national and local standards to address identified needs. • **DM20 (Town Centres)** supports new leisure and community uses in town centres, reinforced by other town centre policies (**WIT2, CA2, CN2, WD2**). • Various transport-focused policies including **CP10 (Sustainable Transport)** and **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** will improve sustainable access to services.	reasonable access to some form of recreation facility is provided, even if many sites remain beyond the recommended distance to larger, Council-owned leisure centres, by safeguarding existing provision, supporting new or expanded facilities in accessible locations, and improving sustainable travel connections.
Access to PRoW and green space – Two sites (CART004 and ENS001) are located over 600m from the PRoW network and one site (BN002) lies beyond the recommended distance to a green space, meaning site end users may be more limited in accessing outdoor space for recreation and exercise.	• **CP9 (Healthy Place Shaping)** encourages the incorporation of natural green spaces and biophilic design to enhance wellbeing. • **DM2 (Green Infrastructure)** sets out requirements for strategic sites to provide communal open spaces, parks, green corridors and other multi-functional GI. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** will ensure existing active travel routes, including PRoW, footpaths, bridleways, and cycle paths will be protected and safeguarded from development that would cause harm to their connectivity, accessibility or character. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** will ensure development has no significant adverse impacts on PRoW, and that opportunities are sought to enhance footpaths. • **CA1 (A Strategy for Carterton)** (and other settlement strategy policies) supports provision of high-quality public open space and accessible natural green space in conjunction with new development. • **EYN1 (A Strategy for Eynsham)** seeks to protect and enhance Eynsham's footpaths and access to the countryside. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that a variety of new accessible green spaces and footpaths would be provided alongside new development.	The policies will be expected to mitigate adverse impacts associated with restricted access to the pedestrian network and green spaces, and help to encourage local journeys on foot, through the protection and enhancement of PRoW and active travel routes, and the provision of new and improved GI and accessible open spaces.

G.3.12 SA Objective 11 – Transport and accessibility

G.3.12.1 **Table G.3.11** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 11 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.11: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA11 – Transport and accessibility*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for transport and accessibility	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Access to public transport – A small number of reasonable alternative sites are located over 400m from a bus stop providing frequent services. Additionally, many sites are located where the entirety or majority of the site is over 2km from a railway station. As such, residents will have limited access to the railway network offering access to services and amenities, as well as education and employment opportunities.	• **CP10 (Sustainable Transport)** ensures that new developments are designed to facilitate high-quality public transport access and integration of multi-modes of travel. • **PL5 (Carterton-Witney-Oxford Rail Corridor (CWORC))** safeguards a corridor of land between Carterton and Yarnton to enable the future delivery of a long-term rail solution for West Oxfordshire, requiring development within the corridor to avoid prejudicing this infrastructure and to contribute proportionately towards its delivery. • **DM21 (Previously Developed Land and Development Densities)** ensures that higher-density development will be supported in urban areas and locations with good access to public transport. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** ensures that new developments prioritise the creation of safe, direct, and attractive active travel routes that connect with existing networks and key local destinations, including schools, shops, healthcare facilities, and public transport hubs. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** requires development to recognise the dispersed nature of rural communities. Proposals may be supported in locations not well served by public transport. • **WIT2 (Witney Town Centre), BUR1 (A Strategy for Burford)** and **LH1 (A Strategy for Long Hanborough)** will support improved public transport connections including bus services and access to nearby stations. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that public transport improvements would be provided alongside new development.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to improve the coverage of and access to sustainable transport options, however, the nature and locations of these improvements is uncertain at this stage of the planning process. It is considered unlikely that the policies will fully mitigate the restricted access to public transport infrastructure (particularly railway stations) in all locations, with reliance on private cars likely to remain in more rural areas.
Access to local services – the majority of reasonable alternative sites are located over 800m from a local food store, locating residents beyond the recommended sustainable distance to access essential services and amenities.	• **RA1 (Rural Area Strategy) –** provides support to rural communities by maintaining and enhancing local services. • **CP9 (Healthy Place Shaping) –** ensures that development supports health and well-being by providing new and enhanced healthcare and essential services. • **DM21 (Previously Developed Land and Development Densities) –** Ensures that higher-density development will be supported in urban areas and locations with good access to public transport. Key services and employment opportunities.	The policies will be expected to maintain existing local services and facilities as far as possible within the Local Plan process and improve sustainable transport options to access them; however, these polices will not be expected to fully mitigate the restricted access to local facilities in all locations.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for transport and accessibility	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	• **DM23 (Protection and Provision of Community Facilities and Services)** will protect existing shops and community facilities and encourage delivery of new and enhanced facilities to address accessibility gaps. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that public transport and active travel improvements would be provided alongside new development, to improve access to services and facilities.	
Access to pedestrian/cycle routes – A small number of reasonable alternative sites are not within safe and sustainable access to pedestrian routes or the cycle network.	• **CP10 (Sustainable Transport)** ensures that new developments are designed to give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and in connecting to neighbouring areas. • **DM1 (Key Principles for New Development)** ensures that development must ensure the provision of safe, convenient, and inclusive access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** safeguards existing active travel routes including PRoW, footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths, and ensures that new and enhanced active travel networks are integrated within new developments, promoting journeys via foot or bicycle. • Supporting information and masterplans for several reasonable alternative strategic sites indicate that active travel improvements would be provided alongside new development.	The Local Plan policies will be expected to mitigate adverse impacts associated with restricted access to the pedestrian and cycle networks and help to encourage the uptake of these sustainable transport options in order to access community facilities.

G.3.13 SA Objective 12 – Education

G.3.13.1 **Table G.3.12** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 12 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.12: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA12 – Education*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for education	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Access to primary and secondary schools – A proportion of reasonable alternative sites are located over 1km from a primary school and/or over 2km from a secondary school. Development at these sites will offer more limited sustainable access to education facilities, leading to longer travel	• **CP6 (Delivering Infrastructure In-Step with New Development)** requires new development to be supported by timely and effective investment in new or enhanced infrastructure to meet the needs arising from development, including education. • **DM24 (Active and Healthy Travel)** will prioritise new active travel routes to connect key local destinations including schools.	The policies are likely to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet needs, and sustainable access to education is improved. However, it is uncertain whether the policies would provide sustainable access, particularly to secondary schools, for all of West Oxfordshire's settlements

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for education	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
times and reliance on less sustainable modes of transport.	• Settlement strategy policies including **BAM1 (Bampton), CHA1 (Charlbury), EYN1 (Eynsham)** and **LH1 (Long Hanborough)** will enhance cycling and walking provision, including safe routes to schools in these settlements. **WD1 (A Strategy for Woodstock)** sets out the delivery of expanded school capacity. • **RA1 (Rural Area Strategy)** seeks to support the vitality of rural communities by maintaining and enhancing valued services including schools, as well as enhancing access to public and community transport. • It is expected that new strategic development sites over 700 homes will provide new on-site schools, and other strategic sites will make proportionate contributions towards off-site school provision/expansion.	given the rural location of some reasonable alternative sites.

G.3.14 SA Objective 13 – Economy and employment

G.3.14.1 **Table G.3.13** summarises the adverse effects identified in the pre-mitigation assessments for SA Objective 13 and outlines the potential policy mitigation.

Table G.3.13: *Identified adverse effects and policy mitigation for SA13 – Economy and employment*

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for economy and employment	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Loss of employment floorspace – Site BUR001 is proposed for residential use where its development will potentially result in the loss of existing businesses on site. A small number of further sites have uncertain effects, where it is unknown whether the proposed development will result in a net loss or gain of floorspace and job provision.	• **DM34 (Provision and Protection of Land for Employment) –** ensures that proposals involving the partial or complete loss of employment land or premises to non-employment uses will only be permitted where the proposal would provide significant wider public benefits which outweigh the loss of employment space.	The policy will be expected to mitigate the potential adverse impacts associated with the loss of existing employment land across the Plan area, ensuring that current employment land is only lost where it is demonstrated to be surplus to requirements.
Access to existing employment opportunities – A small proportion of reasonable alternative sites are located over 8km from a major employment location or town centre and as such may limit the sustainable access of site end users to opportunities for employment.	• **CP5 (Supporting Economic Growth and Local Prosperity)** ensures provision for the necessary employment land and floorspace to support economic growth, ensuring a diverse range of job opportunities. • **RA1 (Rural Area Strategy)** supports small scale employment development to support rural vitality, encourages small-scale rural enterprise, homeworking, and flexible business space, in addition to improved access to public and community transport, particularly to larger service centres. • **DM21 (Previously Developed Land and Development Densities)** ensures that	These policies offer strong potential to mitigate the lack of sustainable access to employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas, by promoting small-scale local developments, improving transport and digital infrastructure, and supporting flexible work practices.

Identified adverse effect	Policy mitigation for economy and employment	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	higher density development will be supported in urban areas and locations with good access to public transport, key services and employment opportunities, particularly around transport hubs. • **DM34 (Provision and Protection of Land for Employment)** supports proposals for employment development where they align with the Council's economic vision and support other local, regional and national economic priorities. • **DM35 (Supporting the Rural Economy)** ensures that small-scale employment development, including new businesses, will be supported within or adjacent to the built area of settlements. • **DM38 (Supporting Digital Infrastructure for Home and Co-Working)** aims to ensure the provision of new and upgraded digital infrastructure to ensure fast connectivity to full-fibre broadband and 5G networks throughout the district, flexible and sustainable working practices, and greater district-wide economic resilience and competitiveness.	

G.4 Post-mitigation assessment

G.4.1 Overview

G.4.1.1 The impact matrix for all reasonable alternative strategic sites post-mitigation is presented in **Table G.4.1**, and non-strategic sites in **Table G.4.2**. These impacts have been identified following consideration of the likely mitigation effects of the emerging Local Plan policies as discussed in **Tables G.3.1** to **G.3.13**.

G.4.1.2 In some cases, adverse or uncertain effects remain where there are evidence gaps at this stage of the assessment process. The post-mitigation assessments will be revisited at the Regulation 19 stage.

Table G.4.1: *Impact matrix of all reasonable alternative strategic sites, post-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
ALV002	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	0	-	--	++	++	++	++	++
BAM002	+/-	--	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	++	++	+	-	++
BAM003	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	++	+	0	-	++
BAM005	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	+
BG001	+/-	-	-	+/-	--	-	-	--	++	-	++	-	++
BN001	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	--	++	-	++	++	++
BN001a	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	++	-	+	++	++
BN003	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	++	++	++
BN006	+/-	-	--	-	--	-	-	--	++	-	++	-	++
BUR002	+/-	+	-	--	0	-	+/-	-	++	++	++	++	+
CHAR005	+/-	+	+/-	--	--	0	+/-	-	++	++	++	-	+
CHIP006	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	++	++	+	++	+
CN1	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	--	++	++	++	++	+
CUR001	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	++
CUR003	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	++	++	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	++	-	-	-	++
EW1	+/-	-	-	--	--	-	+/-	--	++	++	++	++	++
EW2	+/-	--	-	-	--	-	+/-	--	++	++	++	++	++
HAN001	+/-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	++	-	++	-	++
MIN002	+/-	+	--	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	++	-	++
MIN006	+/-	+	+/-	--	-	0	+/-	--	++	-	++	-	++
SHIL002	+/-	--	+/-	--	-	0	-	-	++	-	-	++	++
SHIL003	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	++	-	-	++	++
SL006	+/-	+	-	--	0	-	-	--	++	++	++	++	++
WIT001	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	++	++	++
WIT002	+/-	-	-	--	0	-	-	--	++	++	++	++	++
WIT006	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	++	++	++	++
WIT2	+/-	-	-	--	0	-	+/-	--	++	-	++	++	++
WOOD001	+/-	+	-	+/-	-	0	+/-	--	++	++	++	++	++

Table G.4.2: *Impact matrix of all reasonable alternative non-strategic sites, post-mitigation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
ALV006	+/-	+	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
AST001	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
AST004	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
AST008	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
BAM001	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	0	++	-	-	++
BAM006	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	0	++	-	-	++
BAM007	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	0	++	-	-	++
BN002	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	-	-	--	0	-	-	0	++
BUR001	+/-	+	+/-	-	-	0	-	0	+	++	++	++	+
BUR003	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	-	-	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	+
BUR005	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	+
BUR008	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	++
CA1	+/-	+	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	+	0	++	++	++	++
CART001	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	-	++	++
CART004	+/-	+	+/-	0	0	0	-	-	+	++	++	++	++
CART007	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	++	++
CHAR004	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	++	-	+
CHAR006	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	+
CHAR007	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	++	-	+
CHIP004	+/-	+	+/-	0	0	-	+/-	0	+	++	++	++	+
CHIP005	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	-	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	+
CHIP018	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	+
CHIP019	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	+
CHIP021	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	++	+
CLAN001	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
CUR004	+/-	--	+/-	+/-	-	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
CUR007	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
CUR008	+/-	-	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	0	-	-	0	0
DUCK002	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
ENS001	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	0	0
FREE002	+/-	+	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
FREE004	+/-	+	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	-	-	++
KING002	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	++	-	0
KING005	+/-	--	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	0
LANG001	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	+
LEA002	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	0
LEA004	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	+
MB001	+/-	+	--	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	++	-	0
MB004	+/-	+	--	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	-	0
NL005	+/-	+	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	+
NL012	+/-	+	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Site reference	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Biodiversity and geodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Air quality	Water	Natural resources and waste	Housing and equality	Health and wellbeing	Transport and accessibility	Education	Economy and employment
NL014	+/-	+	-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
STAN001	+/-	+	-	-	0	0	+/-	--	+/-	-	-	-	+
STON005	+/-	+	-	--	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	-	-	++
SUW001	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	-	+/-	-	+	++	-	-	0
TACK003	+/-	+	+/-	-	0	0	+/-	-	+	-	++	-	++
TACK004	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	++	-	+
TACK005	+/-	+	-	+/-	-	0	+/-	-	+	-	++	-	++
WIT004	+/-	+	-	-	0	-	+/-	-	0	-	++	++	++
WIT005	+/-	+	+/-	--	0	0	+/-	-	0	-	++	++	++
WIT007	+/-	+	+/-	0	0	-	+/-	+	+	++	++	++	++
WIT010	+/-	--	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	++
WIT011	+/-	--	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	-	+	++	++	++	++
WIT3	+/-	--	+/-	0	0	-	+/-	0	+	++	++	++	++

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