Sustainability Appraisal of the Princes Risborough Town Plan

SA of reasonable alternatives and preferred options

March 2016
Sustainability Appraisal of the Princes Risborough Town Plan: Reasonable Alternatives Report

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Cover Photo: Princes Risborough viewed from the Chilterns AONB near Whiteleaf Cross
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Area Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANA</td>
<td>Archaeological Notification Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>Archaeological Notification Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONB</td>
<td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNS</td>
<td>Biological Notification Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>A private healthcare provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMRB</td>
<td>Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Highways Agency, 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCN</td>
<td>Great Crested Newts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI</td>
<td>Green Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMA</td>
<td>Housing Market Area</td>
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<td>LNR</td>
<td>Local Nature Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWS</td>
<td>Local Wildlife Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>MWCS</td>
<td>Minerals &amp; Waste Core Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NERC</td>
<td>Natural Environment and Rural Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDL</td>
<td>Previously Developed Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG</td>
<td>Planning Practice Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>Scheduled Ancient Monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDC</td>
<td>Wycombe District Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFD</td>
<td>Water Framework Directive</td>
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Non-technical summary

What is SA?

N1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is being carried out alongside the preparation of the Area Action Plan for Princes Risborough, which is called the Princes Risborough Town Plan (the Plan). This will set out a development plan for the town of Princes Risborough for the period 2013 – 2033. This Plan will help to shape the area’s growth strategy for the coming years. The Plan will set out where houses and places of work will be located and set standards for new development. SA is a statutory process incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (see European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive). This report does not constitute an Environmental Report under the SEA Directive; this will be produced later in the plan-making process.

N2 SA is used to assess local plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with stakeholders. This assessment helps Local Planning Authorities identify the relative environmental, social and economic performance of possible Strategic Growth Options, Policy Options and Individual Site Options, and to evaluate which of these may be most sustainable.

N3 This document has been prepared to appraise reasonable alternatives identified by Wycombe District Council (WDC) that are relevant to the preparation of the Plan. This report also assesses the preferred policies included in the Draft Princes Risborough Town Plan. It constitutes one type of SA report that will be prepared during the preparation of the Plan. Other SA report types include the Scoping Report and SA Reports to accompany later versions of the Plan.

Purpose and content of this Sustainability Appraisal Report

N4 The purpose of this SA Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Draft Princes Risborough Town Plan and its reasonable alternatives; and
- Provide an early and effective opportunity for statutory consultees, interested parties and the public to offer views on any aspect of the SA process, which has been carried out to date.
This Reasonable Alternatives SA Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan;
- Details of the methodology used to assess the Plan;
- The SA Framework of objectives and indicators against which the Plan has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative Strategic Growth Options for the Plan;
- The appraisal of alternative Individual Site Options for the Plan;
- The appraisal of alternative Road Options for the Plan;
- The appraisal of Preferred Options included in the Draft Princes Risborough Town Plan;
- The likely significant effects of the Plan in sustainability terms; and
- The next steps for the SA.

The scoping stage for the SA

A Scoping Report was prepared by Lepus Consulting in December 2015. This set out the intended scope and level of detail to be included in the SA Report and included a plan, programme and policy review, an evidence base for the assessment, key issues and environmental challenges to address, and an SA Framework of objectives and indicators against which the Plan could be assessed. The Scoping Report was subject to a five-week consultation period, in which Historic England, Environment Agency, Natural England and other stakeholders had the opportunity to comment on the report. This concluded the first stage of the SA process.

Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

The plan making process involves the consideration of options, in terms of quantum of development and strategic locations, individual sites for development and Road Options. Such options can be thought of as “reasonable alternatives”. These options were assessed from January to March 2016. The purpose of assessing the different options, or reasonable alternatives, is to evaluate a number of different approaches to delivering new development in Princes Risborough. A summary of these reasonable alternatives assessments is presented below. Table N1 gives a visual summary of assessment results for reasonable alternatives. Details of the options included in Table N1 are explained in Table N2. These tables should be considered alongside the expanded narrative assessments included in this report.
Assessment of Strategic Growth Options

N8 SA assessments for Strategic Growth Options demonstrated that all sites would have mixed effects with regards to sustainability. Option 1 has the highest number of positive performing sustainability objectives. This suggests that it is the best performing option; and in this sense, it is. This is due to the fact that Option 1 would provide a limited amount of growth and this would be delivered on previously developed land. This option alone is likely to be insufficient to meet local housing demand. It should be noted that performance is not simply the sum of the assessed sustainability objectives, and the nature of the plan must be born in mind, especially it’s objectives.

N9 In general, options performed negatively with regards to biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, water, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and land resources. All options were assessed as having uncertain impacts with regards to health, economy and education as accessibility to these varies greatly within sites. Access to health, employment and education may be further limited as the Aylesbury railway line presents a barrier between potential development to the west of Princes Risborough town, and services and facilities in the existing urban area, which lie to the east of the railway line. All options performed positively with regards to housing. All options performed neutrally when considering impacts on waste in the area.

N10 The larger scale of development for higher growth options may be more likely to lead to negative environmental effects, in particular on the setting of the nationally important Chilterns AONB.

Assessment of Individual Site Options

N11 It is not possible to identify a best performing option with regards to Individual Site Options.

N12 Options 6 and 7 arguably perform better that Options 1 to 5. This is largely due to the fact that these options involve development of previously developed land.

N13 In general, options perform positively with regards to housing and economy. Only the Old Hypnos Site (Option 7) is further than 1km from a primary school (as the crow flies). Most options were assessed as having uncertain impacts with regards to climate change mitigation. Options that include an element of employment have been assessed as uncertain with regards to waste, as some businesses produce hazardous waste or increase per capita waste emissions. The majority of options perform negatively with regards to water and climate change adaptation. Options are assessed as having mixed sustainability performance against other SA Objectives.
Those options to the west of the Aylesbury railway line may have limited accessibility to services and facilities in Princes Risborough town centre.

Assessment of Road Options

All options are assessed as delivering negative environmental effects, Option 12 in the open countryside is likely to be the worst performing option in this respect.

At this high level of assessment, all Road Options perform with similar sustainability effects, with the exception of the ‘no new road infrastructure’ option. The ‘no new road infrastructure’ option will be consistent with baseline conditions, with the exception of exacerbation of existing congestion and safety issues. This is due to the trend of population growth, which is expected to result in a greater overall number of cars on the road.

Provision of a new road to bypass Princes Risborough town centre is expected to reduce congestion, thus reducing carbon emissions associated with cars waiting in traffic queues.

All options (except the ‘no new road infrastructure’ scenario) are expected to have negative effects with regards to biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, water, climate change adaptation and land resources. None of the options are expected to affect waste, housing or education. All options are assessed as having uncertain effects with regards to economy, as the road may make work journeys more efficient, but it would divert traffic that may otherwise stop and spend money in Princes Risborough town. A mix of negative and uncertain effects was identified with regards to transport and health, depending on whether sufficient bicycle and pedestrian access is provided. Option 15b performed positively against health as it includes safety considerations for pedestrian crossings.

Table N1: Summary of assessment results for reasonable alternatives to the Princes Risborough Town Plan (See Table N2 for details of options)

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<th>Option</th>
<th>1 Biodiv.</th>
<th>2 Landscp.</th>
<th>3 Cultural Heritage</th>
<th>4 Water</th>
<th>5 CC Mitigate</th>
<th>6 CC Adapt.</th>
<th>7 Waste</th>
<th>8 Land Resourc.</th>
<th>9 Transp.</th>
<th>10 Housing</th>
<th>11 Health</th>
<th>12 Econm.</th>
<th>13 Educat.</th>
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Strategic Growth Options

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### Individual Site Options

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| 2 | -- | -- | - | O | - | - | O | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | + | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | -- | -- | - | - | - | - | O | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | + | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | 0 | - | 0 | - | +/ | - | 0 | O | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5 | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 6 (H) | - | - | + | O | - | +/- | - | O | +/ | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | + | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 6 (E) | - | - | + | O | + | +/- | - | 0 | +/ | - | +/ | - | - | +/ | - | - | +/ | - | - | +/ | - | - | +/ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 (E) | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | +/ | - | 0 | +/ | - | - | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 (H) | 0 | + | 0 | - | +/- | - | 0 | +/ | - | - | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 (H&R) | 0 | + | 0 | - | +/- | - | 0 | +/ | - | - | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

### Road Options

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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### Table N2: Guide to options in Table N1

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Development of sites within the town’s built-up area only with no greenfield expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low Growth Scenario: 500 homes (Park Mill Farm site only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1500 homes: Between the main railway line, Crowbrook stream and Mill Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2500 homes: Between the main railway line, the B4009 and Mill Lane</td>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the south in the Summerleys Rd/Horsenden area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the north in the parcel of land to the west of Monks Risborough station)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>High Growth Option: 4000 homes (based on all the above Options together)</td>
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<td><strong>Individual Site Options</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Park Mill Farm</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Park Mill Farm and Oak Tree Farm</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>North of Longwick Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mill Lane Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Employment site in triangular area adjacent to the Princes estate (Employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (H)</td>
<td>Longwick Road Industrial Area (Housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (E)</td>
<td>Longwick Road Industrial Area (Employment - no change)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 (E)</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (H)</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Housing)</td>
</tr>
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<td>7 (H&amp;R)</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Mix of housing and retail)</td>
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<td><strong>Road Options</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11b</td>
<td>Through development area with 40mph max speed</td>
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<tr>
<td>15b</td>
<td>Through development area with 30mph max speed</td>
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<td>Wider by-pass around town</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Hybrid of the above</td>
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<td>Min. 11b</td>
<td>Minimum new road infrastructure, based on 11b</td>
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</table>
Assessment of Preferred Policy Options

N19 The Draft Princes Risborough Town Plan includes a number of policies that set a framework for development in Princes Risborough, including an identified expansion area for the town and policies to guide the nature of development. These policies represent the preferred choice of options (as assessed in Chapters 3-5 of this SA Report). A summary of the likely positive and adverse effects of the Preferred Policy Options is presented in Table N3 and Table N4 respectively.

Table N5 gives a visual summary of assessment results for reasonable alternatives. Details of the options included in Table N5 are explained in Table N6. These tables should be considered alongside the full narrative assessment included in this report.

Table N3: Potential positive sustainability effects of the Princes Risborough Town Plan

| Potential positive sustainability effects of the Plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biodiversity and geodiversity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan incorporates elements of green infrastructure into the development and may help to restrict the physical impact of development on greenfield land. The Plan requires development to include ecological enhancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and townscape</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development is required to deliver strong landscape character, including landscaping features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural heritage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan requires that development protects, manages and enhances heritage assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water and flooding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan requires development to integrate flood risk and surface water management. Provision of green infrastructure may contribute to managing flood risk in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan requires incorporation of green infrastructure features, which may help Princes Risborough to adapt to climate change. The Plan requires installation of renewable energy technologies, which may help reduce reliance on fossil fuels in the area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Material assets (waste and land resources)

Some policies include development on previously developed land, which may reduce the area of greenfield land required for development.

## Accessibility and transportation

The Plan requires provision of sustainable transport.
In providing a range of new services and facilities, the Plan may reduce the need to travel.
The Plan includes measures to reduce congestion, such as providing appropriate access onto the highway network.

## Housing

The Plan will contribute to local housing provision, including affordable housing.

## Health and wellbeing

The Plan requires health and recreational facilities to be accessible from development proposed in the plan area.
The Plan requires provision of community facilities, including sports and leisure facilities and open space.

## Economy and employment

The Plan encourages business expansion and start-ups.
The Plan designates land for employment.
The Plan is expected to ensure that sufficient new primary and secondary school places are available or will be provided to meet the needs of the development.
Provision of good transport links is likely to enhance access to education, employment and the town centre.
Table N4: Potential negative sustainability effects of the Princes Risborough Town Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential negative sustainability effects of the Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biodiversity and geodiversity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan may lead to loss of biodiversity and the ecological integrity of the countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and townscape</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plan may lead to development that would affect views from public rights of way and from the Chilterns AONB. The plan may adversely affect the setting of the Chilterns AONB. The plan may lead to loss of features characteristic of the local landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural heritage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plan may alter the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water and flooding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development may be in areas of high flood risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development may be in areas of high flood risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development may lead to loss of some green infrastructure features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material assets (waste and land resources)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment uses may increase waste generation per capita, depending on the nature of the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility and transportation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to existing transport links and existing services and amenities may be limited by the barrier of the Aylesbury railway line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No negative effects were identified against this objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development is likely to be further than 8km from an NHS hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy and employment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No negative effects were identified against this objective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table N5: Summary of assessment results for Preferred Options for the Princes Risborough Town Plan (See Table N6 for details of options)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 2</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>PRTP 3</td>
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<td>PRTP 4</td>
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<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 5</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 6</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 7</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>++</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRTP 10</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 11</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>PRTP 12</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 13</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 14</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table N6: Guide to options in Table N6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option code in Table N1</th>
<th>Option details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 1</td>
<td>Princes Risborough expansion area and associated new employment space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 2</td>
<td>Comprehensive approach to the expansion area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 3</td>
<td>Settlement boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 4</td>
<td>Expansion area development principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 5</td>
<td>Development requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 6</td>
<td>Provision and Safeguarding of transport infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 7</td>
<td>Princes Estate and expansion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Limitations and Assumptions**

N21 This is a high level assessment of a Plan, which means that the assessment processes of SEA and EIA will at times become close to each other. Readers are reminded that the purpose of SEA is to provide a high level of environmental protection, and that the detail of assessment associated with EIA (of schemes like roads in particular) would naturally yield a finer grain of assessment detail.

**Conclusions**

N22 Having appraised all reasonable alternatives and Preferred Options for the Princes Risborough Town Plan, the process has identified a number of positive and negative sustainability effects. It may be possible that the negative effects identified can be addressed via mitigation measures and positive effects could be enhanced through additional design requirements (see Chapter 7). In considering ways to resolve negative sustainability effects, the mitigation hierarchy should be referred to. This states that negative effects should be avoided if possible, in the first instance. If effects cannot be avoided, they should be reduced as far as possible and any residual effects should be compensated for.

**Next Steps**

N23 This SA Report will be subject to a period of consultation, in order to allow stakeholders an opportunity to comment on it. Any responses to this consultation will be considered in the following stages of the SA.
1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting has been instructed by Wycombe District Council (WDC), to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Area Action Plan (AAP) for Princes Risborough, which is called the Princes Risborough Town Plan (the Plan). This document presents the results of the reasonable alternatives and Preferred Options assessments for the Princes Risborough Town Plan.

1.1.2 Please note that this document does not constitute an Environmental Report in line with the SEA Directive. It is a record of assessments of reasonable alternatives: Strategic Growth Options, Individual Site Options and Road Options, and Preferred Options for the Princes Risborough Town Plan.

1.2 Purpose of this report

1.2.1 This report has been prepared to help inform the Council's preparation of their Plan. It specifically concentrates on the high level assessment of reasonable alternatives as well as the Council's Preferred Options for the delivery of the Plan. The Council has provided Lepus with a suite of spatial options, which are assessed in Chapters 3 to 4, as well as some Road Options, which are assessed in Chapter 5.

1.2.2 The Council has also supplied us with their draft copy of the Plan. This document includes the selection of Strategic Growth Option 7 as a preferred policy option.

1.2.3 The planned consultation of the AAP and this supporting SA Report, will help inform the Council's objective decision-making about the content of the AAP.

---

1 European Directive 2001/24/EC
1.2.4 Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive states that ‘Where an environmental assessment is required under Article 3(1), an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated. The information to be given for this purpose is referred to in Annex I.’

1.2.5 PPG Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 11-018-20140306 states that ‘Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable.’

1.3 Previous Stages of the SA

1.3.1 The first stage of the SA was the preparation of the Scoping Report in November 2015. This identified relevant plans, policies and programmes, baseline information, and key issues in the area. This was subject to a five-week consultation with statutory consultees, responses of which have been taken into account during the preparation of this report.

1.4 About the Princes Risborough Town Plan

1.4.1 Princes Risborough is a market town with a population of around 8,000 people at the heart of a network of smaller communities. It is located in the north of Wycombe District at the foot of the Chiltern Hills.

1.4.2 The Princes Risborough Town Plan will seek to deliver sustainable, high quality, well-designed development that respects valued and quality environments, not just the countryside but equally the character and setting for towns and villages and the wealth of natural and heritage assets.
Table 1.1: Strategic Growth Options assessed as part of the sustainability appraisal (see maps in Chapter 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Growth Options</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1</td>
<td>Development of sites within the town’s built-up area only with no greenfield expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2</td>
<td>Low Growth Scenario: 500 homes (Park Mill Farm site only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 3</td>
<td>1500 homes: Between the main railway line, Crowbrook stream and Mill Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 4</td>
<td>2500 homes: Between the main railway line, the B4009 and Mill Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 5</td>
<td>3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the south in the Summerleys Rd/Horsenden area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 6</td>
<td>3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the north in the parcel of land to the west of Monks Risborough station)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 7</td>
<td>High Growth Option: 4000 homes (based on all the above Options together)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2: Individual Site Options assessed as part of the sustainability appraisal (see map in Chapter 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Site Options</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 1</td>
<td>Park Mill Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 2</td>
<td>Park Mill Farm and Oak Tree Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 3</td>
<td>North of Longwick Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 4</td>
<td>Mill Lane Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 5</td>
<td>Employment site in triangular area adjacent to the Princes estate (Employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 6</td>
<td>Longwick Road Industrial Area (Housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 6</td>
<td>Longwick Road Industrial Area (Employment - no change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 7</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 7</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 7</td>
<td>Old Hypnos Site (Mix of housing and retail)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3: Road Options assessed as part of the sustainability appraisal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Options</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 11b</td>
<td>Through development area with 40mph max speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 12</td>
<td>Wider by-pass around town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 15b</td>
<td>Through development area with 30mph max speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 17</td>
<td>Hybrid of the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimized 11b</td>
<td>Minimum new road infrastructure, based on 11b and 15b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimized 15b</td>
<td>Minimum new road infrastructure, based on 15b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No New Infrastructure</td>
<td>Junction improvements only (no new road infrastructure)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.4: Preferred Options assessed as part of the sustainability appraisal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 1</td>
<td>Princes Risborough expansion area and associated new employment space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 2</td>
<td>Comprehensive approach to the expansion area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 3</td>
<td>Settlement Boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 4</td>
<td>Expansion area development principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 5</td>
<td>Development requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 6</td>
<td>Provision and Safeguarding of transport infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 7</td>
<td>Princes Estate and expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 8</td>
<td>Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 9</td>
<td>Town centre traffic and public realm enhancements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 10</td>
<td>Town centre site: Land fronting New Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 11</td>
<td>Town centre site: Land south of Horns Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 12</td>
<td>Molins Sports Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 13</td>
<td>Railway station site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTP 14</td>
<td>Delivery of infrastructure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Using this document:

- Chapter 2 presents the methodology used to undertake the SA of the different housing and employment sites.
- Chapter 3 presents the assessment results for each Strategic Growth Option.
- Chapter 4 presents the assessment results for each Individual Site.
- Chapter 5 presents the assessment for each Road Option.
- Chapter 6 presents the assessment for each Preferred Option.
- Chapter 7 presents suggestions for mitigation of negative and uncertain effects.
- Chapter 8 presents information about the best performing options and next steps in the SA process.
2 Methodology

2.1 Approach to assessment

2.1.1 The approach to assessment uses geographic information, the SA Framework and established standards (where available) to help make the assessment decisions transparent and robust.

2.1.2 All options (see Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4) have been assessed against the SA Framework (see Appendix A). The SA Framework is composed of objectives and decision-making criteria. Acting as yardsticks of sustainability performance, the SA Objectives are designed to represent the topics identified in Annex 1(f) of the Directive. Including the SEA topics in the SA objectives helps ensure that all of the environmental criteria of the SEA Directive are included. Consequently, the 13 SA Objectives seek to reflect all subject areas to ensure the assessment process is transparent, robust and thorough.

2.1.3 To expand on the central focus of each SA objective (as they are high-level and potentially open-ended) the SA Framework includes a series of questions or ‘decision making criteria’ for use when applying the SA Framework to the assessment of the options.

2.1.4 The purpose of the SA objectives is to provide a way of ensuring that the proposed plan considers each site on a fair and consistent basis.

2.1.5 It should be noted that the ordering of the SA objectives does not infer any prioritization.

2.2 Appraisal process

2.2.1 The appraisal process has used the SA Framework, the review of plans, programmes and policies and the baseline (including various mapped data sources), as presented in the SA Scoping Report, to assess each site. Assessments have been undertaken using this empirical evidence and, to a lesser extent, expert judgement.

Annex 1(f) identifies: ‘the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors’.
2.2.2 The first stage of assessment involves answering each of the questions in the SA Framework in turn with a yes (+), no (-), uncertain (+/-) or negligible / no effect / not applicable (0). The results of this indicate whether the scenario is likely to bring positive, negative or uncertain effects in relation to the SA Objectives. This information is then used to inform the overall effect of the site on the SA objective.

2.2.3 The second stage of assessment, considers the level of significance of the effects identified in the first stage (described above). Leading from the likelihood of positive or negative effects, the assessment draws on criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of the SEA Directive and presented in Annex II of the Directive (see Box 2.1). The majority of identified positive or negative effects can be considered to be significant. Any assessment rated as negligible (0) is not considered to represent a significant effect. The extent of significance is perhaps most helpfully expressed by orders of magnitude.

2.2.4 At a strategic level it can be difficult to assess significant effects in the absence of widespread data. Instead, orders of magnitude are used, based on geographic significance and impact magnitude. Table 2.1 illustrates such orders of magnitude for positive and negative effects.

2.2.5 Each of the effects identified in the first stage of assessment are assigned a colour and corresponding symbol to reflect the level of significance of the effect and whether it is positive or negative. Orders of magnitude are not assigned to uncertain effects. Non-significant impacts would be given a ‘negligible’ (0) effect. A single value from Table 2.1 is allocated to each SA Objective and presented in the text of the report (see Chapter 3).

2.2.6 When selecting a single value to best represent the sustainability performance of the relevant SA Objective, the Precautionary Principle is used. This is a worst-case scenario approach. Values presented at the first stage of assessment (see the questions in the SA Framework) are used to determine whether the single value for the SA Objective is positive, negative, uncertain or neutral.

2.2.7 If a likely positive effect is identified in relation to one question and a likely negative effect is identified in relation to another question within the same SA Objective, that objective will be given an overall negative value.
2.2.8 Assessment results within the report do not consider mitigation, which may come through development design.

2.2.9 Assessment results are presented in a single matrix format with accompanying narrative text to interpret the sustainability performance of each site.

**Table 2.1**: Guide to impact significance matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic scale (Sensitivity)</th>
<th>Impact magnitude</th>
<th>Adverse</th>
<th>Neutral or negligible</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International / National (High)</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional (Medium)</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local (Low)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.10 Whilst the orders of magnitude are determined by impact magnitude and geographic significance or sensitivity, the determination of impact also takes into consideration the characteristics of the resultant effect as presented in both Table 2.1 and Box 2.1.

2.2.11 As demonstrated in Table 2.1, significance is determined by the sensitivity or geographic scale of the receptor and the impact magnitude. The coloured boxes represent the level of significance of the predicted effect. The text in each of these boxes describes the level of significance, whilst the plus (+) and minus (-) symbols, along with the colours, give a visual representation of this.
2.2.12 Geographic scale relates primarily to the level of importance of the receptor, or the level at which it is designated, if applicable. Geographic scale may also refer to the physical area of the receptor, or the part of the receptor likely to be affected.

2.2.13 Impact magnitude relates to the degree of change the receptor will experience, including the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects (see Box 2.1). The terms used in Table 2.1 are explained in more detail below.

**Box 2.1** Annex II of the SEA Directive

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of the SEA Directive

The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;

- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;

- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;

- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;

- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;

- the cumulative nature of the effects;

- the transboundary nature of the effects;

- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);

- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
- exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
- intensive land-use;
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

2.2.14 Limitations in terms of the level of detail and confidence of assessment are cited in the explanatory text; the worse case scenario has been assumed in accordance with the precautionary principle.

2.3 Geographic scale

2.3.1 Impact assessment in the sustainability appraisal considers a range of geographic scales and sensitivities at which the impact and subsequent effects might be experienced. A guide to the range of scales used in the impact significance matrix is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Geographic scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>Typical criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International / national</td>
<td>The international level is aimed at designations that have an international aspect or consideration of transboundary effects beyond national boundaries. This also applies to predicted effects at the national level or designations/receptors that have a national dimension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>This includes the regional and sub-regional scale, including county-wide level, the HMA and regional areas such as the South East.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>This is the district and neighbourhood scale.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 Impact magnitude

2.4.1 Impacts are assessed by combining judgements about susceptibility to the type of change arising from the specific proposal with judgements about the value attached to the receptor. A guide to impact magnitude is presented in Table 2.3.
2.4.2 On a strategic basis, the appraisal considers the degree to which a location can accommodate change without detrimental effects on known receptors (identified in the baseline) and the degree to which individual receptors will be affected by the change. This is determined by considering factors included in Annex II of the SEA Directive:

- Probability
- Duration;
- Frequency; and
- Reversibility.

2.4.3 SA and SEA are concerned with *likely* significant effects. As such, if an effect is considered improbable, it will not be considered in assessment. It is considered that most effects cannot be predicted with absolute certainty, as many impacts depend on design of development and may be subject to mitigation.

**Table 2.3: Impact magnitude**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magnitude of Effect</th>
<th>Typical criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Likely total loss of or major alteration to the receptor in question OR Provision of a new receptor / feature OR The impact is permanent and frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>Partial loss of / alteration / improvement to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the receptor in question. OR The impact is one of the following: • Frequent and short-term • Frequent and reversible • Long-term (and frequent) and reversible • Long-term and occasional • Permanent and occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
<td>Minor loss / alteration / improvement to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the receptor in question. OR The impact is one of the following: • Reversible and short-term • Reversible and occasional • Short-term and occasional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5 **Significance**

2.5.1 By combining the assessment of geographic scale and magnitude of impact it is possible to predict the significance of a proposal. Significance can be categorised as minor, moderate or major. The nature of the effect can be either beneficial or adverse depending on the type of development and the design and mitigation measures proposed. **Table 2.1** is a matrix for identifying significant environmental effects; it combines the criteria used to define impact magnitude with receptor sensitivity and geographic scale, in order to arrive at a judgement of the likely level of significance. Terms used in the table are explained in **Table 2.4**.
Table 2.4: Guide to terms used in the significance matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Major adverse      | The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of the receptor;  
• cause a very high quality receptor to be permanently changed and its quality diminished;  
• be at a considerable variance to the location, degrading the integrity of the receptor;  
• be substantially damaging to a high quality receptor such as a specific regional or national designation. |
| Moderate adverse   | The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• be out of scale with the location;  
• not be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a major adverse effect;  
• leave an adverse impact on a receptor of recognised quality such as a specific district or county designation. |
| Minor adverse      | The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• not quite fit into the existing location or with existing receptor qualities;  
• affect undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the neighbourhood scale. |
| Minor beneficial   | The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• improve undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the neighbourhood scale;  
• fit into or with the existing location and existing receptor qualities;  
• enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses. |
| Moderate beneficial| The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• fit very well with the location;  
• improve one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific district or county designation. |
| Major beneficial   | The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:  
• enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale;  
• enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner;  
• repair or restore receptors badly damaged or degraded through previous uses;  
• improve one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific regional or national designation. |

2.6 Assumptions and limitations to assessment

2.6.1 There are a number of limitations that should be borne in mind when considering the results and conclusions of this assessment.
2.6.2 Sustainability appraisal is a tool for predicting potential significant effects. Prediction of effects is made using an evidence based approach and incorporates a judgement.

2.6.3 The assessments are based on the best available information, including that provided to us by the client team and information that is publicly available. Every attempt has been made to predict effects as accurately as possible using the available information.

2.6.4 Previously developed land growth options will be smaller sites delivering housing only, not ancillary uses.

2.6.5 Distances have been measured from the centre of the site to the centre of the receptor. This has been measured as the crow flies, as it is not possible to know the routes of roads and footpaths through the development sites at this stage. Distances to facilities and amenities have been considered sustainable if they are within the maximum recommended distances stated in Barton, Grant and Guise (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods for local health and global sustainability.

2.6.6 Cumulative effects are not assessed in this document, as the Preferred Options are subject to change. Cumulative and/or in-combination effects will be assessed in the next stage of SA.

SA Objective 1: Biodiversity

2.6.7 No site visits have been undertaken to survey and record habitat or species information at each site.

2.6.8 Loss of ancient semi-natural woodland and ancient replanted woodland represents a permanent loss and cannot be mitigated or re-created.

2.6.9 Without species-specific data for each site, assessment of impacts has concentrated on habitat presence and diversity. The following assumptions apply:

- Great Crested Newts (GCN) are associated with ponds, lakes and other suitable water features.
- Bats are associated with mature woodland, certain buildings, quarries and caves.
- Reptiles are associated with railway embankments, allotments, quarries and rough grassland.
• Dormice are associated with coppiced woodland and mature hedgerows, especially ancient semi-natural woodland, in the vicinity of suitable woodland locations.
• White-Clawed Crayfish are associated with freshwater streams, rivers, canals and lakes.
• Badgers are associated with banks, arable and pasture farmland and grassland.
• Breeding and wintering Birds are associated with woodland, trees, hedgerows, and other shrubby structures.
• Otters are associated with freshwater habitats, particularly rivers.
• Water Voles are associated with vegetated river, stream, canal, ponds and ditch banks.
• For the purpose of this document, habitats of principal importance are those listed under s.41 of the NERC Act.
• For the purpose of this document, species of principal importance are those listed under s.41 of the NERC Act.
• Brownfield land has the potential for biodiversity and supporting protected species. As such, areas of brownfield sites have been assessed as habitats with the potential to support protected species of principle importance, as listed under s.41 of the NERC Act.

**SA Objective 2: Landscape and townscape**

2.6.10 It is assumed that development in the Chilterns AONB will result in a change of character.

2.6.11 Where the landscape character is listed in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) as moderate or weak, effects are assumed to have a low magnitude impact. Where the landscape character is listed as strong in the LCA, effects are assumed to have a medium magnitude impact. Assessments also take into account option-specific impacts.

**SA Objective 3: Cultural Heritage**

2.6.12 It is assumed that all historic statutory designations, including listed buildings, will not be lost to development.
SA Objective 4: Water and flooding

2.6.13 There is no water available for licensing in the Thames catchment area. Flows of the rivers in this catchment are likely to be below the requirement to meet Good Ecological Status. The Thames catchment has low resource reliability, with consumptive resource available less than 30% of the time. It is assumed that all housing proposals in the local plan will be subject to appropriate approvals and licencing for sustainable water supply from the Environment Agency.

SA Objective 5: Climate change mitigation

2.6.14 It is not known whether renewable energy generation will be encouraged as a result of development. Assessments have therefore remained uncertain for sustainable building practices and design.

SA Objective 7: Waste


2.6.16 The MWCS identifies the following challenge for Buckinghamshire: Move away from over-reliance on landfill for disposal of waste. It is assumed that all sites will contribute towards this.

2.6.17 The implications of these development scenarios on the amount of waste disposed through landfill remains uncertain as this largely depends on whether recycling facilities are easily accessible to residents (i.e. incorporated into development). Waste generation per capita is not generally expected to increase, as any new residents are expected to live similar lifestyles to existing residents.

2.6.18 Employment sites have been assessed as uncertain for SA Objective 7. The amount of waste generated depends on the type of business operating at this site.

SA Objective 8: Land Resources

2.6.19 It is assumed that development within the Buckinghamshire Mineral Safeguarding Area will sterilize important mineral resources.
SA Objective 9: Transport

2.6.20 For the purpose of this assessment 400m is considered a sustainable distance for travelling to a bus stop, in line with Barton (Barton et al, 2010). Distances for train stations are not referenced within Barton et al (2010). Barton et al (2010) recommend 800m as a sustainable distance to a tram stop. It is assumed that people would be prepared to travel further for a train station and thus 1km has been used as a sustainable distance to a train station.

2.6.21 There is an assumption that Phase 2 of the East West Rail project (planned to be delivered in 2019) will enhance the connectivity of the town, supporting the town’s sustainable transport network. Upgrades will be provided to the Princes Risborough to Aylesbury line, creating through services to Milton Keynes.

2.6.22 It is assumed that the presence or absence of a bus stop corresponds with a low magnitude impact (see Table 2.1), as the impact is likely to be short term, and at a local scale. Train stations, including Princes Risborough station, are generally related to medium magnitude impacts, as any impact is likely to be long term, and at a regional scale. Impacts associated with Monks Risborough train station are assessed as being of low magnitude, as this is a branch line that only operates at a local scale.

2.6.23 There is an assumption that the majority of residents moving into new residential developments will own a motorised vehicle. There is an assumption that car use is likely to be lower if local services and amenities are close enough to be accessible by foot or if there are good links to sustainable modes of transport, particularly buses and cycleways.

SA Objective 10: Housing

2.6.24 It has been assumed that, on sites considered for housing allocations, existing residential estates will be retained. This assumption has not been extended to individual properties if only one or two houses currently exist on the site, as this is considered negligible given the large amount of housing to be allocated on such sites. This assumption has not been applied to sites being considered for employment use.

SA Objective 11: Health and wellbeing

2.6.25 Employment sites have been assessed as neutral for SA Objective 11. Access to healthcare and recreation are expected to be primarily from the home, rather than the workplace.
2.6.26 There are no NHS hospitals within 8km (see Table 2.5). The same level of accessibility applies to all spatial options.

2.6.27 It has been assumed that all public rights of way will be retained or re-routed around the option area.

2.6.28 It has been assumed that all green spaces, as defined in the Council’s Delivery and Allocations Plan, will be retained.

2.6.29 Barton et al (2010) gives target distances and maximum distances to certain facilities and amenities as show in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Sustainable distances to facilities and amenities (Barton et al, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Target distance</th>
<th>Maximum distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>800m</td>
<td>1km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>1.5km</td>
<td>2km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local park/greenspace</td>
<td>400m</td>
<td>600m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure centre</td>
<td>1.5km</td>
<td>2km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor’s surgery</td>
<td>800m</td>
<td>1km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>5km</td>
<td>8km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA Objective 12: Economy and Employment

2.6.30 It has been assumed that all current employment sites will be retained or relocated close by. It is assumed that the growth in population will benefit local economic multipliers. The local economic multiplier effect is assumed on the basis of anticipated greater local economic return generated by money spent at local businesses.

SA Objective 13: Education, skills and training

2.6.31 It is assumed that employment sites perform neutrally for education.
3 Assessment Results: Strategic Growth Options

3.1 Assessment uniformity

3.1.1 In some circumstances, due to geographic proximity of spatial options and limitations of baseline data, assessment results tend to repeat themselves. To avoid lengthy repetition of text, the following assessment findings presented in Table 3.1 apply to all Strategic Growth Options.

Table 3.1: Strategic Growth Options: Assessment uniformity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective 4: Water and Flooding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thames Water has stated that there are constraints to the wastewater network within the vicinity of the AAP area. There have been incidents of sewer flooding in the area, including an incident at the Princes Risborough Water Treatment Plant. In the absence of upgrades to wastewater infrastructure, any development in the area poses a risk of water pollution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Flooding was recorded in the following areas in the winter of 2013 – 14:

- Junction of Mill Lane and Crowbrook Road;
- Junction of Mill Lane and Kingsmead;
- Junction of Mill Lane and Lower Icknield Way;
- Longwick Road, where it is crossed by the stream near Alscot; and
- Junction of Lower Icknield Way and Chestnut Way.

This was associated with surcharging of the sewerage network. Development in or near these areas may be at risk of flooding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective 5: Climate Change Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>According to the Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study (2013), the A4129 and A4010, which pass through the area, suffer from significant congestion at certain periods. Even in the absence of significant new development in Princes Risborough, the junctions of New Road / Longwick Road / Aylesbury Road and A4010 / Grove Lane are likely to exceed capacity in the AM and PM peaks by 2031. The</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) demonstrates that this is likely to be exacerbated by development in the plan area. The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) uses a model of 2000 – 2500 dwellings. Whilst any additional development is likely to contribute to congestion in Princes Risborough, it is not known whether this would be significant for smaller sites that are in proximity to good transport links.

**SA Objective 6: Climate Change Adaptation**

Development at these Strategic Growth Options may lead to a loss of green infrastructure (GI). It is difficult to tell whether the whole of Princes Risborough is within the recognised Buckinghamshire GI network. All Strategic Growth Options include elements of GI, such as hedgerows and footpaths. Development could lead to loss or reduction in quality of GI. Alternatively, larger developments (particularly Strategic Growth Options 4, 5, 6 and 7) may lead to creation of public green space, which may make GI more accessible to people. This is also applicable to SA Objective 11.

**SA Objective 9: Transportation**

According to the Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study (2013), the A4129 and A4010, which pass through the area, suffer from significant congestion at certain periods. Even in the absence of significant new development in Princes Risborough, the junctions of New Road / Longwick Road /Aylesbury Road and A4010 / Grove Lane are likely to exceed capacity in the AM and PM peaks by 2031. The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) demonstrates that this is likely to be exacerbated by development in the plan area. The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) uses a model of 2000 – 2500 dwellings. Whilst any additional development is likely to contribute to congestion in Princes Risborough, it is not known whether this would be significant for smaller sites that are in proximity to good transport links.

With regard to sustainable transport networks, Princes Risborough and/or Monks Risborough train stations are located within 1km of all sites. Princes Risborough station offers frequent transport links to Banbury, London and other intervening destinations. The Monks Risborough station is on a branch line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury and offers more limited services.

There are a number of bus stops within approximately 400m of all Strategic Growth Options, in addition to public footpaths. Bus stops furthest west in the town (i.e. those nearest to Strategic Growth Options 2 to 7) are only served by the Risborough Circular bus service. The Risborough Circular bus service is a community service, which is infrequent and does not provide a peak time service. This may be useful for accessing some local amenities but would be unsuitable for residents wishing to travel to and from work by bus. Commercial services also run in the town, offering access to surrounding towns. These primarily run along the A4010 and generally offer more extensive services than the Risborough Circular bus. The most frequent bus service is the 300 from High Wycombe to Aylesbury via Princes Risborough.

In using distance thresholds (see Section 2.6), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to

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7 Jacobs (2016) Princes Risborough Transport Study, Buckinghamshire County Council/ Wycombe District Council, Stage 1 Option Assessment Report
8 Buckinghamshire County Council (2014) Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire. Available at: http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/media/2294011/bucks_bioandplanning_lo_wres.pdf Accessed: 21/09/15
9 Jacobs (2014) Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study
10 Jacobs (2016) Princes Risborough Transport Study, Buckinghamshire County Council/ Wycombe District Council, Stage 1 Option Assessment Report
public transport (i.e. a train station or bus stop), there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely variance of accessibility to sustainable transport links.

Accessibility to a range of facilities is limited from Strategic Growth Options located to the west of Princes Risborough Town (all Strategic Growth Options except for Strategic Growth Option 1) as the Aylesbury railway line acts as a barrier to the town. Whilst pedestrian routes across the line do exist, these are arguably not sufficient for potential residents considering the large scale of development. Where public footpaths cross the rail line, these tend to be informal, open crossings.

**SA Objective 11: Health**

The size and scale of larger options may favour certain socio-economic SA objectives since the critical mass of the scheme would possibly favour larger scale ancillary dimensions to development, such as health services.

In using distance thresholds (see Table 2.5), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to health and recreation facilities, there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these facilities is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely variance of accessibility to health and recreation facilities.

The majority of sites are further than 8km from an NHS hospital.

With regards to potential development sites to the west of the Aylesbury railway line (i.e. all Strategic Growth Options except Option 1), the insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing health and recreation facilities.

**SA Objective 12: Economy and Employment**

Access to employment opportunities is dependent on proximity to employment sites and accessibility of public transport links to other employment centres. Accessibility to employment opportunities is expected to vary within each site. Some areas of the site are likely to be within walking distance of employment opportunities and sustainable transport links, whereas areas at the extremes of a site may have more limited access to employment sites.

The primary employment areas in Princes Risborough are the town centre and the Princes Estate, to the southwest of the town. There are also some employment opportunities at the Longwick Road Industrial area. Other employment centres that may be accessible by bus or by train include Aylesbury, High Wycombe and London.

The insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing employment in the town centre.

**SA Objective 13: Education**

Given the close proximity of the Strategic Growth Options to Princes Risborough Town, the options are all expected to be within 1km of an existing primary school. Princes Risborough School is within 2km of all options, thus providing access to secondary education. Should students need to travel to Aylesbury or Wycombe for secondary school, they would have likely have to walk to the A4010 for a bus or catch a train.

In using distance thresholds (see Table 2.5), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to education facilities, there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these facilities is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely
variance of accessibility to education facilities.

With regards to potential development sites to the west of the Aylesbury railway line (i.e. all Strategic Growth Options except Option 1) the insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing education facilities.
3.2 Option 1: Development of sites within the town's built-up area only with no greenfield expansion
This option is concerned with the development of PDL sites within the principal existing built extent of Princes Risborough town. Nearby nature conservation designations include Chiltern Beeches SAC, which is located within 500m to the east of the site. Windsor Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Grangelands and Pulpit Hill SSSI are located within 400m and 1.2km respectively. Whiteleaf Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Brush Hill LNR are both within 700m of this option. Habitat diversity at this location is low in comparison with the countryside surrounding the town. Habitats such as parkland, street trees, ponds and hedgerows are present within the redline of the option.

The effects of proposed development on biodiversity at these designations is uncertain. The close proximity of the SAC to Princes Risborough urban area, and the SAC’s sensitivities (air quality and visitor recreation), which could be exacerbated by development, will require careful consideration as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. In the absence of additional data, and for the purposes of this SA, the sustainability performance of SA Objective 1 is considered to be uncertain.

Landscape character and quality is dominated by the built form of the town. This includes residential properties and gardens, amenity grassland and employment sites. This option contains the Princes Risborough urban area. This site is located adjacent to the west of the Chilterns AONB. The Icknield Way Trail runs through the southern area of this option and along the eastern boundary. The Ridgeway National Trail runs adjacent to the eastern boundary. A network of public footpaths crosses through this spatial option and a railway line runs adjacent to the western boundary.

Development at this location will avoid encroaching upon the surrounding open countryside and lead to a consolidated urban concentration. The focus on brownfield land is likely to lead to short term, local positive impacts on SA Objective 2.
3.2.5 There are a number of listed buildings within the option area including: Church of St Dunstan (Grade I), Church of St Mary (Grade II*), Dovecote west of St Dunstans Church (Grade II*), Market House (Grade II*) and all Grade II listed: the library, Trey Childrens Wear, Premises of JB Heath Limited, the corner shop, and 28, 30, 32 and 34 High Street. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting may change.

3.2.6 Monks Risborough and Princes Risborough conservation areas lie wholly within the option area. Additionally a number of Archaeological Notification Sites (ANS) lie within the option area. Development is predicted to negatively affect these features and their setting. These impacts have been evaluated as leading to moderate adverse significant effects on SA Objective 3; cumulatively, they may amount to a major adverse effect.

3.2.7 There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 to the south of the existing urban area. Any development in or near to these areas may be at high risk of flooding. An increase in building densities associated with potential loss of green infrastructure features that provide flood attenuation benefits could exacerbate flooding (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

3.2.8 This option promotes development on previously developed land. Development in the urban area will reduce the area of agricultural land required to deliver development. Whilst the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy shows this area as containing chalk mineral deposits, these will already be sterilised on previously developed land. This option is expected to perform positively against SA Objective 8, as it is likely to protect best and most versatile agricultural land and mineral deposits.

3.2.9 Restricting development to the urban area is expected to provide a small quantum of housing, which is not expected to significantly exacerbate congestion. Public transport links are accessible in the town, including high-frequency links to other towns (SA Objective 9).

3.2.10 This option will contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. Whilst individual PDL sites may be small, it is assumed that this option will bring forward a mix of housing, including affordable housing (SA Objective 10).

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3.2.11 This option is within 1.5km from the Risborough Springs community leisure centre. Green spaces are within 600m of the option area, including on the option itself, providing recreational space for residents of the development. There are a number of GP surgeries within 1km of the option, including Cross Keys Clinic, Wellington House Practice, and BMI The Paddocks clinic private hospital. However, access to further health facilities is limited as there are no NHS hospitals within 8km (SA Objective 11).

3.2.12 Local employment opportunities are expected to be concentrated in the existing urban area, or at employment sites on the edge of this. Development in the existing urban area is expected to be in proximity to good public transport links, thus residents would also be able to access jobs in other towns (SA Objective 12).

3.2.13 See Table 3.1 for effects on SA Objective 5 and 13.
3.3 Option 2: Low Growth Scenario: 500 homes (Park Mill Farm site only)
3.3.1 Land use at this Strategic Growth Option consists of an arable field, sewage works and an area of rough grassland. Hedgerows, treelines and a pond are also present. Habitat connectivity across is limited and no biodiversity designations are directly associated with this location. Removal of hedgerows is likely to result in a loss of habitats of principal importance under s.41 of the NERC Act. Any protected species associated with this location may also be affected (SA Objective 1).

3.3.2 This option is characterised by very gently undulating topography adjacent to residential Princes Risborough. This option is crossed by a bridleway and footpath; a railway line runs adjacent to the western and eastern boundary of the option. Development with houses at this location will encroach on those features identified in the character assessment such as the rural mixed farmland landscape, inter visibility, open and large scale character, the absence of woodland and the open views. This option is partially screened with hedgerows and trees leading to restricted visibility from adjacent roads and residential properties. A negligible impact is expected on the AONB (SA Objective 2).

3.3.3 There are no designated features of architectural, archaeological or heritage interest within or adjacent to this option, however, an Iron Age settlement has been discovered at the site. Development at this option could therefore have a negative impact on this feature (SA Objective 3).

3.3.4 There is a very small area of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the south of the option area. Any development in or near to these areas may be at high risk of flooding and should therefore avoid these zones (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

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Ibid.
3.3.5 This option consists of Grades 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to a loss of this resource. The Birkett Electric historic landfill site lies beneath the southeastern part of the Longwick Road Industrial Area, which is adjacent to this site. There may be residual issues of contamination and gas, which could affect land surrounding the Longwick Road Industrial Area and should be investigated prior to development. Development would also lead to sterilisation of a small area of the chalk deposits that lie across much of Wycombe District (SA Objective 8).

3.3.6 This option would contribute 500 new homes towards housing provision in Princes Risborough. Due to the large size and strategic nature of this option, it is expected that a good mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing. This Option would provide approximately 3.3% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).

3.3.7 A construction yard and sewage treatment works lie to the south of the option, although employment opportunities with these businesses are likely to be limited. Princes Estate lies to the south of the site, although current access to this would be via Summerleys Road, which does not have a footpath along the entire route. This option is adjacent to the Longwick Road Employment Area (Hypnos site), which may provide nearby employment opportunities (SA Objective 12).

3.3.8 See Table 3.1 for effects on SA Objective 5, 9, 11 and 13.
3.4 **Option 3: 1500 homes: Between the main railway line, Crowbrook stream and Mill Lane**
3.4.1 This strategic option contains predominantly arable fields, hedgerows, an industrial estate and residential dwellings. There are several water related habitats and features at this location including a stream with tree/scrub lined banks, ponds/lakes and ditches.

3.4.2 The westernmost part of the option is coincident with Longwick Bog Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Development will lead to a partial loss of this site. A Biological Notification Site (BNS), Kingsmead Meadow, appears to be coincident with the options northern boundary and is likely to be adversely affected by development, if unmitigated (SA Objective 1).

3.4.3 This option is located adjacent to the west of the Princes Risborough urban area. A network of public footpaths and a bridleway crosses this option. A railway line runs adjacent to the western and eastern boundary. Development at this location will encroach on those features identified in the character assessment such as the rural mixed farmland landscape, the network of hedgerows, inter visibility, open and large scale character, the absence of woodland and the open views. This Strategic Growth Option will be visible from the nationally important Chilterns AONB and lead to moderate adverse impacts on the setting of this receptor (SA Objective 2).

3.4.4 There are a number of Grade II listed buildings within the option area: Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse, Barn Circa 40 metres to west of Alscot Farmhouse, Stable and attached wall adjacent to southwest of Alscot Farmhouse, and the Barn and Dairy adjacent to west of Alscot Farmhouse. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting is likely to change from largely rural to a stronger urban character.

3.4.5 Alscot conservation area lies wholly within the option area, and there is an ANS to the west. Development is likely to impact the setting of the conservation area (SA Objective 3).

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13 Data sourced from GIS files supplied by WDC courtesy of the Bucks and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre.
14 Ibid.
### 3.4.6
There is a very small area of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the south of the option area. Any development in or near to these areas may be at high risk of flooding and should therefore avoid these zones. There is also an area of land that is subject to surface water flooding along the stream at the northwestern edge of the strategic option, this should be avoided (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

### 3.4.7
This option consists of Grades 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to a loss of this resource. The Birkett Electric historic landfill site lies beneath the southeastern part of the Longwick Road Industrial Area. There may be residual issues of contamination and gas, which should be investigated prior to development. Development would also lead to sterilisation of a small area of the chalk deposits that lie across much of Wycombe District (SA Objective 8).

### 3.4.8
This option would contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. It is expected that a good mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing. This Option would provide approximately 10% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).

### 3.4.9
This option includes the Longwick Road Employment Area, a construction yard and sewage works, which may provide nearby employment opportunities for residents. Princes Estate lies to the south of the site, although current access to this would be via Summerleys Road, which does not have a footpath along the entire route. Accessibility of employment opportunities may be limited for residents in the northern part of the site (SA Objective 12).

### 3.4.10
See Table 3.1 for effects on SA Objectives 5, 9, 11 and 13.
3.5 Option 4: 2500 homes: between the main railway line, the B4009 and Mill Lane
3.5.1 Habitats present at this option include several arable fields, occasional rough pasture, a network of hedgerows with a range of features important for biodiversity considerations, a stream, ponds, a lake, and rough grassland. Man-made infrastructure such as residential estates, roads and a sewage works are present at this option. An LWS, Longwick Bog is present within the option area boundary, as well as Kingsmead Meadow and Pond BNS. Loss of these features will lead to moderate adverse effects (SA Objective 1).

3.5.2 Landscape character and quality is similar to Strategic Option 3. Again, this Strategic Growth Option will be visible from the nationally important Chilterns AONB and lead to moderate adverse impacts on the setting of this receptor (SA Objective 2).

3.5.3 There are a number of Grade II listed buildings on the option area. Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse, Barn Circa 40 metres to west of Alscot Farmhouse, Stable and attached wall adjacent to southwest of Alscot Farmhouse, and the Barn and Dairy adjacent to west of Alscot Farmhouse. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting will change from largely rural to edge of urban. Alscot conservation area lies wholly within the option area and there are two ANSs located to the south/west. Development may result in total loss of the ANS, and could negatively affect the setting of these features (SA Objective 3).

3.5.4 There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the southwest of the option area. Any development in or near to these areas may be at high risk of flooding. Thames Water has stated that there are constraints to the wastewater network within the vicinity of the AAP area.
3.5.5 This option consists of Grades 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to a loss of this resource. The Birkett Electric historic landfill site lies beneath the southeastern part of the Longwick Road Industrial Area. There may be residual issues of contamination and gas, which should be investigated prior to development. Development would also lead to sterilization of a small area of the chalk deposits that lie across much of Wycombe District (SA Objective 8).

3.5.6 This option could make a large contribution to housing provision in Princes Risborough. Due to the large size and strategic nature of the option, it is expected that a strong mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing. It is assumed that the housing at Alscot Lane and Kingsmead will be retained. This Option would provide approximately 16.7% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).

3.5.7 This option includes the Longwick Road Employment Area, a construction yard and sewage works, which may provide nearby employment opportunities for residents. Princes Estate lies to the south of the site, although current access to this would be via Summerleys Road, which does not have a footpath along the entire route. Accessibility of employment opportunities is likely to be limited for residents in the northern and western parts of the area (SA Objective 12).

3.5.8 See Table 3.1 for effects on SA Objectives 5, 9, 11 and 13.
3.6 Option 5: 3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the south in the Summerleys Rd/Horsenden area)
3.6.1 This option is comprised of a number of habitats, an LWS and BNS, which have previously been discussed in Strategic Option 4. Strategic Option 5 includes a more diverse range of habitat features including increased quantities of rough pasture and mature trees. Features that may for example be relevant to bats and barn owls. There is also another BNS present, Summerleys Cottage Wood, which may potentially be adversely affected by development at this location.

3.6.2 A railway embankment cuts through the southern part of the option and may act as a habitat corridor. Hedgerows and watercourses also provide habitat corridors across the option area. The collective assemblage of these linear features creates a landscape level ecological corridor the significance of which should be explored more fully. This would enable improved understanding of (1) it’s role for protected species, (2) the way in which it might support the wider network of habitats in and around Princes Risborough and the Vale of Aylesbury and (3) whether it acts as a refuge area for local populations of species that would otherwise not flourish in more exposed arable landscapes.

3.6.3 Landscape character and quality is similar to Strategic Option 3. There are additional landscape features which provide variance in character at a very local scale such as the smaller fields and increased frequency of mature trees to the south of the railway line. These provide a more intimate feel and distinctive sense of place likely to be experienced by horse riders and walkers using the bridleway from Park Mill to Summerleys Lane.

3.6.4 This Strategic Growth Option will be visible from the nationally important Chilterns AONB. The scale of development may lead to a doubling of the existing built footprint of Princes Risborough town and lead to major adverse impacts on the setting of this nationally important receptor (SA Objective 2).
3.6.5 There are a number of Grade II listed buildings within the option area: Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse, Barn Circa 40 metres to west of Alscot Farmhouse, Stable and attached wall adjacent to southwest of Alscot Farmhouse, and the Barn and Dairy adjacent to west of Alscot Farmhouse. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting is likely to change from largely rural to edge of urban. Additionally there are three Grade II listed buildings located on the edge of the option area: Gate Cottage, Dovecote at Gate Cottage, and Barn adjacent to east of Dovecote at Gate Cottage. Alscot conservation area lies wholly within the option area and Horsenden conservation area lies partially within the option area. It is likely that the setting of these features will be changed.

3.6.6 There are three ANSs within the option vicinity. One lies wholly within the option area, one lies partially within the option area and another is located just off the northwestern boundary. Development may lead to loss or damage of part of these features and their settings (SA Objective 3).

3.6.7 There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the southwest of the option area and northwest of Horsenden Lane. There are also areas identified as being subject to surface water flooding (SA Objective 4 and 6).

3.6.8 This option area consists of Grades 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to a loss of this resource. The Birkett Electric historic landfill site lies beneath the southeastern part of the Longwick Road Industrial Area. There may be residual issues of contamination and gas, which should be investigated prior to development. Development would also lead to sterilization of a small area of the chalk deposits that lie across much of Wycombe District (SA Objective 8).

3.6.9 This option would largely contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. Due to the large size and strategic nature of the option, it is expected that a strong mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing. This Option would provide approximately 21.7% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).
3.6.10 This option includes the Longwick Road Employment Area, Princes Estate, a construction yard and sewage works, which may provide nearby employment opportunities for residents. Accessibility of employment opportunities is likely to be limited for residents in the north and northwest of the site (SA Objective 12).

3.6.11 See Table 3.1 for effects on SA Objectives 5, 9, 11 and 13.
3.7 **Option 6: 3250 homes (based on Option 4 plus development to the north in the parcel of land to the west of Monks Risborough station)**
3.7.1 Strategic Option 6 is based on Strategic Option 4 plus land to the north (see section 3.5). In sustainability appraisal terms, Strategic Option 6 performs in the same way as Strategic Option 4. The following differences should be noted in respect of the land that has been added.

3.7.2 The biodiversity features of the land added are less diverse than the land parcels to the south of this option, being dominated by large arable fields, with occasional hedgerows, trees and pasture (SA Objective 1).

3.7.3 This Strategic Growth Option will be visible from the nationally important Chilterns AONB. The scale of development may lead to a doubling of the existing built footprint of Princes Risborough town and lead to major adverse impacts on the setting of this nationally important receptor (SA Objective 2).

3.7.4 Low-level risk of surface water flooding is recorded from parts of the northern area (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

3.7.5 Magic\(^{15}\) indicates that the majority of the northern area consists of Grades 2 and 3b agricultural land. The northern most part has no soil map data (SA Objective 8).

3.7.6 This option would contribute high quantities of housing. Due to the large size and strategic nature of the option, it is expected that a strong mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing. This Option would provide approximately 21.7% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).

3.7.7 This option includes the Longwick Road Employment Area, a construction yard and sewage works, which may provide nearby employment opportunities for residents. Accessibility of employment opportunities is likely to be limited for residents in the north and northwest of the site (SA Objective 12).

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3.8 Option 7: High Growth Option: 4000 homes (based on all the above options together)
3.8.1 This option is comprised of the combination of Options 5 and 6. Strategic Option 7 performs in a similar way to Strategic Options 5 and 6.

3.8.2 This Option would provide approximately 26.6% of Wycombe’s housing need (SA Objective 10).

3.8.3 Without further information as to what is being proposed, it is not possible to refine the SA results in more detail.
4 Assessment Results: Individual Site Options

4.1.1 Seven Individual Site Options have been identified by the Council and are presented in Table 1.2. The locations of these sites are shown on the map below.
4.2 Assessment uniformity

4.2.1 In some circumstances, due to geographic proximity of spatial options and limitations of baseline data, assessment results tend to repeat themselves. To avoid lengthy repetition of text, the following assessment findings presented in Table 4.1 apply to all Individual Site Options.

Table 4.1: Individual Site Options: Assessment uniformity

SA Objective 4: Water and Flooding

Thames Water has stated that there are constraints to the wastewater network within the vicinity of the AAP area. There have been incidents of sewer flooding in the area, including an incident at the Princes Risborough Water Treatment Plant. In the absence of upgrades to wastewater infrastructure, any development in the area poses a risk of water pollution.

Flooding was recorded in the following areas in the winter of 2013 – 14:
- Junction of Mill Lane and Crowbrook Road;
- Junction of Mill Lane and Kingsmead;
- Junction of Mill Lane and Lower Icknield Way;
- Longwick Road, where it is crossed by the stream near Alscot; and
- Junction of Lower Icknield Way and Chestnut Way.

This was associated with surcharging of the sewerage network. Development in or near these areas may be at risk of flooding.

SA Objective 5: Climate Change Mitigation

According to the Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study (2013), the A4129 and A4010, which pass through the area, suffer from significant congestion at certain periods. Even in the absence of significant new development in Princes Risborough, the junctions of New Road / Longwick Road /Aylesbury Road and A4010 / Grove Lane are likely to exceed capacity in the AM and PM peaks by 2031. The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) demonstrates that this is likely to be exacerbated by development in the plan area. The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) uses a model of 2000 – 2500 dwellings. Whilst any additional development is likely to contribute to congestion in Princes Risborough, it is not known whether this would be significant for smaller sites that are in proximity to good transport links.

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16 Environment Agency incident number: 1088205, significant environmental impact to water from Sewage Materials, 20th February 2013.
17 Tibbalds (2014) Princes Risborough Background Report, Draft
SA Objective 6: Climate Change Adaptation

Development at these Individual Site Options may lead to a loss of green infrastructure (GI). It is difficult to tell whether the whole of Princes Risborough is within the recognised Buckinghamshire GI network\(^{21}\). All Individual Site Options include elements of GI, such as hedgerows and footpaths. Development could lead to loss or reduction in quality of GI. This is also applicable to SA Objective 11.

SA Objective 9: Transport

According to the Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study (2013), the A4129 and A4010, which pass through the area, suffer from significant congestion at certain periods. Even in the absence of significant new development in Princes Risborough, the junctions of New Road / Longwick Road / Aylesbury Road and A4010 / Grove Lane are likely to exceed capacity in the AM and PM peaks by 2031\(^{22}\).

The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) demonstrates that this is likely to be exacerbated by development in the plan area\(^{23}\). The Princes Risborough Transport Study (2016) uses a model of 2000 – 2500 dwellings. Whilst any additional development is likely to contribute to congestion in Princes Risborough, it is not known whether this would be significant for smaller sites that are in proximity to good transport links.

With regard to sustainable transport networks, Princes Risborough and/or Monks Risborough train stations are located within 1km of each site. Option 7, the Old Hypnos site, is located immediately adjacent to Princes Risborough train station. Princes Risborough station offers frequent transport links to Banbury, London and other intervening destinations. The Monks Risborough station is on a branch line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury and offers more limited services.

There are a number of bus stops within approximately 400m of all individual site options, in addition to public footpaths. The nearest bus stops to Options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are only served by the Risborough Circular bus service. The Risborough Circular bus service is a community service, which is infrequent and does not provide a peak time service. This may be useful for accessing some local amenities but would be unsuitable for residents wishing to travel to and from work by bus. Commercial services also run in the town, offering access to surrounding towns. These primarily run along the A4010 and offer more extensive services than the Risborough Circular bus. The most frequent bus service is the 300 service to High Wycombe and Aylesbury.

In using distance thresholds (see Section 2.6), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to public transport (i.e. a train station or bus stop), there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely variance of accessibility to sustainable transport links.

Accessibility to a range of facilities is limited from Individual Site Options located to the west of Princes Risborough Town (all Individual Site Options except Option 7) as the Aylesbury railway line acts as a barrier to the town. Whilst pedestrian routes across the line do exist, these are arguably not sufficient for potential residents considering the large scale of development. Where public footpaths cross the Aylesbury railway line, these tend to be informal, open crossings.

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\(^{21}\) Buckinghamshire County Council (2014) Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire. Available at: http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/media/2294011/bucks_bioandplanning_lo_wres.pdf Accessed: 21/09/15

\(^{22}\) Jacobs (2014) Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study

\(^{23}\) Jacobs (2016) Princes Risborough Transport Study, Buckinghamshire County Council/ Wycombe District Council, Stage 1 Option Assessment Report
SA Objective 11: Health

In using distance thresholds (see Table 2.5), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to health and recreation facilities, there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these facilities is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely variance of accessibility to health and recreation facilities.

The majority of sites are within 1.5km from the Risborough Springs community leisure centre and green spaces are located within 600m. Most sites are within 1km of a GP surgery, such as Wellington House Practice or Cross Keys Practice. The majority of sites are further than 8km from an NHS hospital.

The insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing health and recreation facilities from development to the west of the Aylesbury railway line.

SA Objective 12: Economy and Employment

Access to employment opportunities is dependent on proximity to employment sites and accessibility of public transport links to other employment centres. Accessibility to employment opportunities is expected to vary within each site. Some areas of the site are likely to be within walking distance of employment opportunities and sustainable transport links, whereas areas at the extremes of a site may have more limited access to employment sites.

The primary employment areas in Princes Risborough are the town centre and the Princes Estate, to the southwest of the town. There are also some employment opportunities at the Longwick Road Industrial area. Other employment centres that may be accessible by bus or by train include Aylesbury, High Wycombe and London.

The insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing employment in the town centre.

SA Objective 13: Education

With the exception of Option 7, all sites are within 1km of an existing primary school. Princes Risborough School is within 2km of all options, thus providing access to secondary education. Should students need to travel to Aylesbury or Wycombe for secondary school, they would have likely have to walk to the A4010 for a bus or catch a train.

In using distance thresholds (see Table 2.5), variance within a site is not accounted for. Although the centre of a site may be within a sustainable distance (see Table 2.5) to education facilities, there may be large parts of potential developments from which access to these facilities is likely to be limited. The larger the site, the greater the likely variance of accessibility to education facilities.

The insufficient crossings across the Aylesbury railway line, as described above, may act as a barrier to accessing education facilities from development to the west of the Aylesbury railway line.
4.3  Option 1: Park Mill Farm (Housing)

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4.3.1 It should be noted that this individual site option is in the same location as Strategic Growth Option 2. Sustainability performance is expected to be the same.

4.4  Option 2: Park Mill Farm and Oak Tree Farm (Housing)

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4.4.1 It should be noted that this individual site option is in much of the same area as Strategic Growth Option 3, but Individual Site Option 2 does not include land north of Longwick Road. Sustainability performance is expected to be the same with the following notable differences.

4.4.2 There are a number of Grade II listed buildings on the site: Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse, Barn Circa 40 metres to west of Alscot Farmhouse, Stable and attached wall adjacent to southwest of Alscot Farmhouse, and the Barn and Dairy adjacent to west of Alscot Farmhouse. Alscot conservation area is opposite the site.

4.4.3 This option would contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. It is expected that a mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing (SA Objective 10).

4.4.4 As land north of Longwick Road is not included in this option, the site is assessed as having relatively good access to employment, given the proximity of the Longwick Road employment site and the Princes Estate (SA Objective 12).
4.5 Option 3: North of Longwick Road (Housing)

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4.5.1 Habitats present at this site include arable fields, hedgerows, a small area of woodland, a stream and a pond. Buildings are present on site. Kingsmead Meadow and Pond Biological Notification Site (BNS) is located within the site boundary. Development at this site is likely to result in the loss of habitats of principal importance listed as such under s.41 of the NERC Act. Any species associated with these habitats may also be lost. Habitat connectivity at the site is likely to be reduced due to hedgerow removal (SA Objective 1).

4.5.2 Development at this location will encroach on those features identified in the local landscape character assessment such as the rural mixed farmland landscape, inter visibility, open and large-scale character, the absence of woodland and the open views. This individual site option will be visible from the nationally important Chilterns AONB and lead to moderate adverse impacts on the setting of this receptor (SA Objective 2).

4.5.3 Alscot conservation area lies wholly within the site and is associated with a number of listed buildings. Development may change the setting of these features (SA Objective 3).

4.5.4 A low risk of surface water flooding has been recorded across parts of the site. The site consists primarily of Grades 2 and 3a agricultural land, with a small area of Grade 3b. As Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, development would lead to loss of this resource (SA Objective 8).

4.5.5 This option would contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. Due to the large size of the site it is expected that a mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing (SA Objective 10).

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24 Ibid.
4.5.6 This site is adjacent to the Longwick Road Employment Area (Hypnos site), which may provide nearby employment opportunities. Access to employment opportunities may be limited in the north and west of the site (SA Objective 12).

4.6 Option 4: Mill Lane Site (Housing)

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4.6.1 This site consists of a single large arable field. The site is bordered by hedgerows and trees on all sides. No biodiversity designations are associated with this site.

4.6.2 This site is characterised by gently undulating topography and arable land. A single public footpath crosses this site. A railway line runs adjacent to the eastern site boundary. Development at this location will encroach on those features identified in the character assessment such as the rural mixed farmland landscape, inter visibility, open and large-scale character, the absence of woodland and the open views. This site is exposed and overlooked by residential properties.

4.6.3 There are no features of architectural, archaeological or heritage interest within or adjacent to the site. Development at this site is not predicted to have any impact on SA Objective 3.

4.6.4 This site is in Flood Zone 1, which is at low risk of flooding. Surface water flooding has been recorded in the Environment Agency’s low risk category for parts of this site.

4.6.5 This site consists of Grade 3b agricultural land, which is not considered to be best and most versatile. There is a small area of chalk deposit in the west of the site, which would be sterilised by development (SA Objective 8).

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ibid.
4.6.6 With regards to transport, this site is adjacent to Monks Risborough train station, although this is served by low frequency services. Access to this and nearby bus stops is limited by the need to cross the Aylesbury railway line into Princes Risborough town. Due to the small size of this site, it is uncertain whether development would significantly increase congestion in Princes Risborough (SA Objective 9).

4.6.7 This option would contribute to housing provision in Princes Risborough. It is expected that a mix of housing will be provided, including affordable housing (SA Objective 10).

4.6.8 There are limited employment opportunities close to this site. The site is adjacent to Monks Risborough train station, which may provide access to employment opportunities elsewhere, but services are low frequency (SA Objective 12).

4.7 Option 5: Triangular area adjacent to Princes Estate (Employment)

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4.7.1 This site is primarily an arable field, with mature hedgerows and wooded boundaries. There are no biodiversity designations associated with this site. A railway embankment is adjacent to the northern boundary of the site, and provides a habitat corridor. The enclosed nature of the site and potentially valuable habitats that surround this location mean that it is unclear to evaluate biodiversity impacts without further research.

4.7.2 This site is characterised by gently undulating topography and arable land. It appears to be enclosed and screened to some extent from most visual receptors with hedgerows and trees leading to restricted visibility residential properties and transient visibility from the train (SA Objective 2).

4.7.3 Horsenden conservation area lies to the south of the site. Development may have an impact on the setting of this feature, however it is not clear without further research (SA Objective 3).
4.7.4 This site contains small areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the west of the site (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

4.7.5 It is difficult to tell from the maps presented in the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy\textsuperscript{26} whether this site contains chalk deposits. As such it is uncertain whether development would lead to sterilization of mineral deposits. This site consists of Grade 2 agricultural land, which is considered best and most versatile. Development on this site would lead to a loss of this resource (SA Objective 8).

4.7.6 Access to the nearby Princes Risborough train station and nearby bus stops is limited by the need to cross the Aylesbury railway line into Princes Risborough town. Due to the small size of this site, it is uncertain whether development would significantly increase congestion in Princes Risborough (SA Objective 9).

4.7.7 Allocating this site for employment would contribute to overall economic activity and employment opportunities in the area (SA Objective 12).

Option 6: Longwick road industrial area (Housing and Employment)

Housing

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Employment (no change)

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4.8.1 This site consists of an industrial estate and as such exhibits features associated with brownfield locations. In this case, these include rough grassland, scrub and water features, all of which can be important for biodiversity. Any species associated with these habitats may be lost (SA Objective 1).

4.8.2 This site lacks distinctive character and will probably benefit from carefully planned new development (SA Objective 2).

4.8.3 There are no recorded features of architectural, archaeological or heritage interest within or adjacent to the site. Development at this site is not predicted to have any impact on SA Objective 3.

4.8.4 This site is located in Flood Zone 1, which is at low risk of flooding. If this site is retained for employment, it is unlikely that there will be an increased demand on the wastewater infrastructure (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

4.8.5 As this site consists of previously developed land, there is not expected to be any loss of GI (SA Objective 6).

4.8.6 This site consists of previously developed land, therefore allocation of this site will not lead to a loss of agricultural land or mineral deposits. The eastern part of this site has been built on the Birkett Electric historic landfill site. It is not known if there are any issues of residual contamination from the landfill (SA Objective 8).
4.8.7 This site is within 1km of Princes Risborough train station and within 400m of a bus stop. The nearest bus stops to this site are served by low frequency services. Access to the train station and nearby bus stops is limited by the need to cross the Aylesbury railway line into Princes Risborough town. Due to the small size of this site, it is uncertain whether development would significantly increase congestion in Princes Risborough (SA Objective 9).

4.8.8 If this site were to be developed for housing, this may lead to a loss of current employment uses on the site. If this site were retained for employment uses, this would help to ensure continued economic activity on the site (SA Objective 12).

4.9 Option 7: Old Hypnos Site (Housing, Employment and Retail)

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4.9.1 This site is largely derelict factory buildings with a smaller area of brownfield land that is scrubbing over. No biodiversity designation is associated with this site. Development is likely to provide opportunities to enhance the landscape setting of this site. There are no recorded features of architectural, archaeological or heritage interest within or adjacent to the site.
4.9.2  This site contains small areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the southeast of the site. As this site consists of previously developed land, there is not expected to be any loss of GI (SA Objectives 6 and 11). By redeveloping previously developed land, this site would reduce the need for development on agricultural land and the need to sterilise mineral deposits (SA Objective 8).

4.9.3  This site is adjacent to Princes Risborough train station and is approximately 400m from a bus stop served by the high frequency 300 service. These transport links and the town centre are accessible from this site without the need to cross the Aylesbury railway line (SA Objective 9).

4.9.4  If developed for employment, this would bring a site that is currently derelict into employment use. If developed for a mix of housing and retail, this site will provide some, although limited, new employment opportunities through retail. The proximity of Princes Risborough train station and the town centre is likely to have positive effects with regards to accessibility of employment (SA Objective 12).

4.9.5  Princes Risborough School is within 1.5km of this site, thus providing access to secondary education. Should students need to travel to Aylesbury or Wycombe for secondary school, they would have to walk to the A4010 for a bus. The site is over 1km of a primary school (SA Objective 13).
5 Assessment Results: Road Options

5.1.1 Wycombe District Council has identified the Road Options (see Table 1.3) by using the Princes Risborough Transport Study, Stage 1 Options Assessment Report (2016 Transport Study). The option numbers reflect those in the 2016 Transport Study.

5.1.2 The ‘minimum scheme’ alternatives for Options 11b and 15b may consist of the following differences to other alternatives:

- No replacement of railway under-bridges;
- No widening or reconstruction of existing highways;
- No addition of positive drainage systems to existing highways; and
- Less expansive highway (sacrificing separate cycle paths or verges, for example).

5.1.3 It is assumed under the ‘No New Infrastructure’ scenario that existing roads, especially in the town centre, are likely to have more traffic, as no new roads will have been constructed. SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 13 are not expected to be affected.

5.1.4 The Road Options assessed below have potential to provide mitigation for any increases in congestion associated with development in Princes Risborough, including the development options discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

5.1.5 The assessments below consider each of the Road Options against the baseline environmental conditions. In assessing the Road Options, it has not been assumed that any other development will be taking place in Princes Risborough.

5.1.6 The map below shows the approximate routes of each Road Option.

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5.1.7 Table 5.1 presents a summary of assessment results for all Road Options. This table should be interpreted alongside the text below.

Table 5.1: Summary of assessments for Road Options

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5.2 SA Objective 1: Biodiversity

5.2.1 All routes primarily cross arable land, although development of a road may lead to some loss of hedgerows, a BAP habitat. The 2016 Transport Study suggests that development of a relief road could impact Chiltern Beechwoods SAC through poor air quality. The nearest part of all road routes to the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC is that which runs along the existing B4009, which is approximately 800m from the SAC. The Highways Agency’s Design Manual for Roads and Bridges28 (DMRB) suggests that transport emissions are only likely to have an effect within 200m of a road.

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5.2.2 Routes 11b and 15b pass within 200m of Longwick Bog (LWS). Development of a road may indirectly affect this site, through a reduction in air quality. Other impacts could include runoff of pollutants from the road entering the stream that runs into the LWS. These could lower the quality of the LWS and may damage the habitats and species for which it is designated.

5.2.3 In the case of Route 12, impacts are predicted on fields around the Roundabout BNS, as alignments are adjacent to this site. Development of a road may indirectly affect this site, through a reduction in air quality.

5.2.4 In the case of Route 17, this route will have a direct impact on Longwick Bog LWS, as the alignment passes directly through the site. This route may affect this site through a reduction in air quality and runoff, which may pollute the stream that runs into the LWS. These could lower the quality of the LWS and may damage the habitats and species for which it is designated. Summerleys Cottage Wood BNS is located to the east of the road and Fields Around Roundabout Wood BNS is located to the southwest. Consideration should be given to these designated sites prior to development.

5.3 SA Objective 2: Landscape

5.3.1 All routes are within the Longwick Local Character Area\(^29\) (LCA). This LCA is characterised by undulating topography, long-distance views and regular, geometric field patterns. Rural roads in this LCA are bordered by rough grass verges and hedgerows.

5.3.2 Routes 11b and 15b cross into the Risborough Chalk Foothills LCA. This LCA is characterized by arable farmland with large open parliamentary field enclosures and smaller fields near to settlements. Fields are defined by hedgerows with scattered trees and there are a significant number of archaeological sites in the area. The LCA recognises that several busy roads run parallel to the scarp and that roads contribute to a local audible and visual impact in some areas.

\(^{29}\) LUC (2011) Wycombe District Landscape Character Assessment
5.3.3 When assessed against baseline conditions, routes 11b and 15b will change the immediate landscape and the northwest section and would be particularly visible, as this is the highest elevation that the new section of road passes through. This could affect views from the Chilterns AONB. Route 11b and 15b would cross four public footpaths and would affect views from these and increase noise pollution. With the exception of Option 12, Road Options are likely to pass through new development for at least some of their length, as an expansion to Princes Risborough is proposed in the Plan. Option 17 passes through less of the development than other options. If integrated into the development, landscape impacts of developing this option are likely to be minimal, due to the surrounding development. The southern part of these routes lies within the Chilterns AONB, to the south of the town. Widening existing roads could have negative effects on landscape as this could lead to loss of hedgerows, which are characteristic of both LCAs and of the Chilterns AONB (SA Objective 2).

5.3.4 Option 12 crosses three public footpaths and would affect views from these and increase noise pollution. This road may pass through new development for some of its length, as an expansion to Princes Risborough is proposed in the Plan. If integrated into the development, landscape impacts should be considered on a cumulative basis with the new houses.

5.3.5 For Option 17, when assessed against baseline conditions, this road would negatively impact the landscape character. The northwest section would be particularly visible, as this is the highest elevation that the new section of road passes through. This could affect views from the Chilterns AONB. The route would cross two public footpaths and would affect views from these and increase noise pollution.

5.4 SA Objective 3: Cultural Heritage

5.4.1 Option 11b and 15b: There is a possibility these options could affect the setting of Alscot conservation area, although this effect is likely to be negligible if the land surrounding the conservation area is developed as part of the Princes Risborough Town Plan. The only listed feature in proximity to this option is a Signal Box (Grade II) associated with the railway junction north of Princes Risborough Station. It is not anticipated that this feature will be affected by development of this road, as it will remain within the setting of the railway.
5.4.2 The routes pass almost adjacent to the Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill (SAM) and an associated ANS. This part of the proposed routes is an existing road (Shootacre Lane), which may be widened. Widening of the road is not expected to affect the ANS. The setting of the SAM could be affected by increased congestion and noise pollution from the road (SA Objective 3).

5.4.3 Option 12: There is a possibility this option could affect the setting of Horsenden conservation area. There are a number of Grade II listed features in proximity to this option, in Horsenden. These include Glebe Cottage, Gate Cottage, Dovecote at Gate Cottage, and Barn adjacent to east of dovecote at Gate Cottage. It is not anticipated that these features will be directly affected by development of this road, however depending on the design of the road the setting may be changed from rural to that of urban infrastructure.

5.4.4 The 2016 Transport Study suggests that this may affect one or more scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) located around Saunderton and associated ANS’. There are also Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs) in this area associated with the SAMs, with this option travelling across one ANA, just south of Horsenden. This route passes almost adjacent to the Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill (SAM) and an associated ANS. This part of the route is an existing road (Shootacre Lane). Development of this Road Option could negatively impact these features and their setting, through increased congestion and noise pollution from the road (SA Objective 3).

5.4.5 Option 17: There is a possibility this option could affect the setting of Horsenden conservation area. There are a number of Grade II listed features located to the east of the proposed road, in Alscot and in Horsenden. These include Glebe Cottage, Gate Cottage, Dovecote at Gate Cottage Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse and features around Alscot Farmhouse. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting may change from largely rural to that of urban infrastructure.
5.4.6 The 2016 Transport Study suggests that this may affect one or more scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) located around Saunderton and associated ANSs. There are also ANAs in this area associated with the SAMs, with this option travelling across one ANA, just south of Horsenden. This route passes almost adjacent to the Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill (SAM) and an associated ANS. This part of the route is an existing road (Shootacre Lane). Development of this option could negatively impact these features and their setting, through increased congestion and noise pollution from the road. (SA Objective 3).

5.5 **SA Objective 4: Water and flooding**

5.5.1 All of the routes, to some extent, pass through the Kingsley Cuttle Brook WFD waterbody and its tributaries, which are designated as predominately Flood Zone 3. Options 11b and 15b cross the waterbody to the north of Summerleys Road, whilst Options 12 and 17 cross the waterbody to the southwest. Roads at these locations are therefore likely to be of high risk of flooding. Flooding was recorded around the junction of Mill Lane and Lower Icknield Way in the winter of 2013-14. Stretches of road at or near this junction may also be at high risk of flooding. These impacts are also applicable to SA Objective 6.

5.6 **SA Objective 5: Climate change mitigation**

5.6.1 The development of a relief road under Options 11b, 15b, 12 and 17 is intended to ease traffic flow through Princes Risborough town. As such, the road will result in lower levels of congestion, which will help to minimise carbon emissions associated with vehicular transport.

5.6.2 Under the do minimum scenario, congestion is likely to be high through Princes Risborough town. As such, this option may result in increased carbon emissions associated with vehicular transport. These impacts are also applicable to SA Objective 9.
5.7 SA Objective 6: Climate change adaptation

5.7.1 Development of the Road Options may lead to a loss of green infrastructure (GI). It is difficult to tell whether the whole of Princes Risborough is within the recognised Buckinghamshire GI network. The routes include elements of GI, such as hedgerows and footpaths that cross the routes, which may be lost to development of the road.

5.7.2 Options 11b, 12, 15b and 17 will include sustainable urban drainage, which is expected to help adapt to future climate change.

5.7.3 Option 15b is supported by planting proposed within the Manual for Streets: a summary (2007). This is likely to help soften the urban streetscape, creating visual and sensory interest and improving the air quality and microclimate. Option 11b would be supported by planting, but it is uncertain whether this would fully mitigate any loss of GI.

5.7.4 These impacts are also applicable to SA Objective 11.

5.8 SA Objective 8: Land resources

5.8.1 The routes lie across chalk deposits in its southeastern part. These deposits are largely in the urban area and likely to be already sterilized by existing development. It is uncertain whether this option would lead to sterilization of small areas of this resource. The Road Options would pass through Grade 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to some loss of this resource.

5.9 SA Objective 9: Transport

5.9.1 The development of a relief road under Options 11b, 15b, 12 and 17 is intended to ease traffic flow through Princes Risborough town, thereby increasing the efficiency of the transport network. As such, the road will result in lower levels of congestion, which will help to minimise carbon emissions associated with vehicular transport.

30 Buckinghamshire County Council (2014) Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire. Available at: http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/media/2294011/bucks_bioandplanning_lowres.pdf Accessed: 21/09/15
5.9.2 The proposed Road Options are expected to include provision of cycle lanes and footpaths along the route, including on existing roads. This may encourage more people to walk or cycle along these routes. Options 11b and 15b provide a connection to Station Approach, the road leading to the rail station. This may contribute towards encouraging travel by sustainable modes of transport. Alternatively, implementing an alternative route to travel from the north to the south of Princes Risborough may make travel by car more attractive than public transport, although this remains uncertain.

5.9.3 The ‘minimum scheme’ versions of Options 11b and 15b, as well as Option 12, are not expected to include provision of cycle lanes and footpaths along the whole route. The lack of opportunities for sustainable travel along these routes has resulted in a negative assessment against SA Objective 9.

5.9.4 It is uncertain whether slower road speeds, as per Option 15b, may lead to more congestion than if the speed limit were higher. Any differences are expected to be negligible, but this could be further investigated through transport modelling.

5.9.5 The ‘No new infrastructure’ option does not include provision of sustainable transport options. This may encourage reliance on travel by car, restricting the towns sustainable transport network and decreasing safety of residents crossing town centre roads.

5.10 **SA Objective 11: Health**

5.10.1 Sections of the routes, which are not coincident with existing roads, cross a number of public footpaths. Walkers along these routes would need to cross the road, which could be a risk to safety presently not associated with the pedestrian routes. In turn, this may discourage people from using these footpaths.

5.10.2 Alternatively, the introduction of footpaths and cycleways along the roads may make travel for pedestrians and cyclists safer along the proposed routes. The Ridgeway National Trail is a recreational route that includes the part of Upper Icknield Way that crosses Shootacre Lane. All of the options would need to cross the Ridgeway, which is likely to decrease safety at this point and reduce the high quality recreational experience associated with this National Trail.
5.10.3 For Option 15b, the Manual for Streets: A Summary (2007)\textsuperscript{31}, states that wide and unobstructed routes, which serve to enhance the environment for pedestrians, are desired. Option 15b proposes a 30mph speed limit, reducing the risk to users of these footpaths. The detailed design of the road will address crossing safety issues as part of the DMRB Road Safety Audit process.

5.11 \textbf{SA Objective 12: Economy}

5.11.1 Offering an alternative route through Princes Risborough may reduce commuting times through, in and out of the town and reduce missed work time due to traffic congestion. Good design may also make the area a more attractive location for businesses. Alternatively, a new route is likely to divert traffic away from the town centre, which may result in a reduction in spending from spontaneous stops in the town, thus adversely affecting local economic multipliers.

5.11.2 The ‘No new road infrastructure’ option will lead to greater congestion, in line with current traffic trends. This may reduce efficiency of travel to work and/or make the area less attractive for businesses to locate in Princes Risborough.

6 Assessment Results: Preferred Options

6.1.1 The following assessments are of policies included in the Preferred Options plan. These have been derived from the options put forward in Chapters 3-5. It should be noted that the Preferred Policy Options include mitigation considerations, whereas the Strategic Growth Options, Individual Site Options and Road Options do not (presented in Chapters 3-5). All options and policies have been assessed in the same way using the SA Framework.

6.2 PRTP 1 Princes Risborough expansion area & associated new employment space

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6.2.1 A review of desktop data shows the following habitats to be present at this site: arable fields, hedgerows, treelines, streams, standing water such as lakes and ponds and a parcel of woodland. Man-made infrastructure is present across the site, including buildings, roads and sewage works. An LWS and BNS are present within the proposed expansion area (SA Objective 1). Both features are proposed to be retained as part of the Crowbrook Stream Green Corridor. The wider loss of countryside and associated ecological integrity is likely to lead to short term adverse impacts on SA Objective 1.
6.2.2 A network of public footpaths and bridleways crosses this area. A railway line runs adjacent to the eastern and western site boundary. Development at this location will encroach on those features identified in the character assessment\textsuperscript{32} such as the rural mixed farmland landscape, the network of hedgerows, inter visibility, open and large scale character, the absence of woodland and the open views. Allowing for the masterplanned approach presented in the Concept Plan, the overall scale of new development at this greenfield location is likely to have short-term adverse effects on the setting of the AONB (SA Objective 2).

6.2.3 This policy aims to support the expansion of the town and associated new employment space using the land immediately adjacent to the existing town, to the northwest of the Aylesbury railway line.

6.2.4 There are a number of Grade II listed buildings within the development expansion area: Alscot Lodge, Alscot Farmhouse, Barn Circa 40 metres to west of Alscot Farmhouse, Stable and attached wall adjacent to southwest of Alscot Farmhouse, and the Barn and Dairy adjacent to west of Alscot Farmhouse. These will not be directly affected by development but their setting will change from largely rural to edge of urban.

6.2.5 Alscot conservation area lies wholly within the expansion area, and there is an ANS partially within the expansion area. Development may lead to loss or damage of part of these features and their settings (SA Objective 3). It is noted that the setting of the conservation area has been considered in the design of the Concept Plan, and minor residual effects are associated with this receptor. It is noted that ‘historic landscape features and hedgerows should be incorporated and protected within the development’\textsuperscript{33}.

6.2.6 There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the southwest of the expansion area. Any development in or near to these areas may be at high risk of flooding. Flooding was recorded around the junction of Mill Lane and Crowbrook Road, Longwick Road near Alscot and the junction of Mill Lane with Kingsmead in the winter of 2013 – 14. Development near these areas may be at risk of flooding so the allocation of Nature Conservation Areas on the Concept Plan will help avoid these areas.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} AAP Draft Plan Consultation Document, February 2016, p.60.
6.2.7 Thames Water has confirmed extra capacity can be achieved at the sewerage treatment works in line with development. Additionally, the policy highlights the integration of flood risk management and surface-water run off management, with the area expansion (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

6.2.8 The expansion area is within the Buckinghamshire strategic GI network, and includes elements of GI, such as hedgerows and footpaths, which cross the site. In line with Policy PRTP4, development will provide comprehensive GI, which is likely to improve connections to the wider GI network34 (SA Objectives 6 and 11).

6.2.9 It is unknown whether the development uses would increase waste generation per capita, leading to uncertain effects with regards to SA Objective 7.

6.2.10 The expansion area consists of Grades 2, 3a and 3b agricultural land. Grades 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, thus development would lead to a loss of this resource. The Birkett Electric historic landfill site lies beneath the southeastern part of the Longwick Road Industrial Area. There may be residual issues of contamination and gas, which should be investigated prior to development. Development would also lead to sterilization of a small area of the chalk deposits that lie across much of Wycombe District (SA Objective 8).

34 Wycombe District Council (2016) Princes Risborough Town Plan: Draft Plan Consultation Document
6.2.11 According to the Wycombe District Local Plan: Princes Risborough Area Transport Study (2013), the A4129, which passes through the area, is a highly trafficked road. With regard to sustainable transport networks, this policy looks to maximize the opportunity for joint public transport servicing of the existing and new housing areas (in line with Policy PRTP4). Monks Risborough and Princes Risborough train station are located within 1km of the site. Princes Risborough station offers frequent transport links to Aylesbury, London and other intervening destinations. There are a number of bus stops within 400m of the expansion area, in addition to public footpaths. The majority of these bus stops are served by the low frequency Risborough Circular bus service. Bus stops served by the high frequency 300 service are further than 400m from the site, although integration of new transport links into development are likely to make this insignificant. It is uncertain whether the districts’ contribution to climate change will increase as a result of development. Any change in levels of congestion as a result of development are uncertain due to the variety of sustainable transport modes provided at local and regional scale (SA Objectives 5 and 9).

6.2.12 In line with Policy PRTP4, development within the expansion area will provide homes that meet the local and District’s housing needs as identified and required by the council. This includes a mix of housing, including at least 40% of affordable housing35 (SA Objective 10).

6.2.13 The expansion area is within 1.5km of the Risborough Springs leisure centre, although the Aylesbury railway line may present a barrier in accessing this. Green spaces are within 600m of the site, and are proposed as part of the expansion area, in line with Policy PRTP4. This policy provides recreational space for residents of the existing and new housing areas. There are a number of GP surgeries within 1km of the expansion area, including Cross Keys Surgery and Wellington House Practice. The policy proposes two local centres within the expansion area, the uses of which may positively contribute to the health of residents (SA Objective 11).

6.2.14 This Policy allocates space for business expansion and start-ups in accordance with Policy PRTP7 (SA Objective 12).

35 Wycombe District Council (2016) Princes Risborough Town Plan: Draft Plan Consultation Document
PRTP 2 Comprehensive approach to the expansion area

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6.3.1 This policy and concept plan has been assessed in a non-geographically specific way, without considering other receptors associated with the location of the plan. These issues have been assessed in Policy PRTP1.

6.3.2 The concept plan includes elements of GI, such as local open space, strategic open space, and recognizes the designated local wildlife sites and nature areas. This will provide comprehensive GI with appropriate connections to the wider GI network\(^{36}\) (SA Objectives 6 and 11).

6.3.3 The principal trafficked route proposed through the expansion area aims to distribute traffic from the development into the wider network, reducing congestion in the town centre. The road will also accommodate cycleways, crossings and footways, contributing positively to the sustainable transport network of the area (SA Objective 5 and 9).

6.3.4 The concept plan shows low, medium and high density housing areas, contributing to the housing need within the area (SA Objective 10).

6.3.5 The policy proposes two local centres and a primary school within the concept plan. Community uses within these centres are likely to reduce the need for residents to travel further afield for convenience items. These provisions are likely to positively contribute to the economy and education of current and future residents of the enhancement area (SA Objectives 12 and 13).

6.3.6 The concept plan allocates an employment area. This is likely to increase accessibility of suitable employment within Princes Risborough (SA Objective 12).

\(^{36}\) Wycombe District Council (2016) Princes Risborough Town Plan: Draft Plan Consultation Document
6.4  **PRTP 3 Settlement Boundary**

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6.4.1 This policy performs positively for SA Objective 1 as restricted development protects greenfield habitats surrounding the town. This settlement boundary also performs positively for SA Objective 2, restricting urban sprawl and coalescence, thereby safeguarding the character of the landscape.

6.5  **PRTP 4 Expansion area development principles**

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6.5.1 This policy aims to provide homes and community facilities, and sustain small businesses (SA Objectives 10, 11 and 12).

6.5.2 The policy requires development to deliver a strong landscape character and ecological enhancement. Development would incorporate well-managed open spaces, tree lined streets and other landscaping and natural areas, which are expected to conserve and enhance local character. This is likely to have positive affects on amenity, wildlife, and address effects of climate change (SA Objective 1, 2, and 6).

6.5.3 The policy requires development to protect, manage and enhance heritage assets. These will include listed buildings and Alscot conservation area, which are within the development area (SA Objective 3).

6.5.4 The policy looks to maximize opportunities for delivering sustainable development including but not limited to on site renewables and communication technology. This positively addresses SA Objective 5, encouraging use of energy from renewable sources.
6.5.5 The policy is likely to have a positive effect on transport, ensuring high quality development and infrastructure through direct road links and encouraging travel by sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport (SA Objective 9).

6.6 **PRTP 5 Development requirements**

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6.6.1 This Policy requires development to incorporate open spaces, tree-lined streets and wildlife habitats. This integrated approach to GI looks to address the effects of climate change through habitat creation and connectivity (SA Objectives 1 and 6).

6.6.2 This Policy addresses the issue of flood risk within the area. Integrated flood risk management and surface-water run-off management measures are highlighted as an integrated part of the development (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

6.6.3 This Policy has a positive effect on SA Objective 5, encouraging the opportunity for on site renewable energy generation where appropriate.

6.6.4 Policy PRTP4 aims to address congestion by providing appropriate access points onto the existing highway network, increasing parking provision in the town centre, and supporting a sustainable transport network. Enhanced walking and cycling routes, and high quality bus services will be included in the development, incorporating key destinations of the town (SA Objectives 5 and 9).

6.6.5 Comprehensive GI is proposed in accordance with the concept plan, connecting to the wider GI network of the town (SA Objective 6). This will increase access to green space for residents/employees within the concept plan area, having a positive effect on health. Additionally the provision of indoor sports and leisure facilities highlighted within the Policy allow good access to recreational/sports facilities (SA Objective 11).
6.6.6 The Policy requires development to provide homes that meet the local and District’s housing needs as identified and required by the council. This includes a mix of housing, including at least 40% of affordable housing\textsuperscript{37} (SA Objective 10).

6.6.7 The policy performs positively for SA Objective 12 as it contributes to the delivery of new business development in the town and ensures local employment is sustained.

6.6.8 Sufficient new primary school and secondary school places are proposed within this policy to meet the needs of the development, positively contributing to SA Objective 13.

6.7 PRTP 6 Provision and safeguarding of transport infrastructure

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6.7.1 The impact of this new road infrastructure on SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, are dependent on development design.

6.7.2 This policy is assessed as having a positive effect on SA Objectives 9 and 5 as the proposed new infrastructure is set to alleviate congestion on the existing road network and the A4010 through the town. This may have a positive impact on air pollution.

6.7.3 The road is likely to facilitate access to education and employment opportunities, improving accessibility for businesses operating in and around Princes Risborough (SA Objectives 12 and 13).

\textsuperscript{37} Wycombe District Council (2016) Princes Risborough Town Plan: Draft Plan Consultation Document
6.8 PRTP 7 Expansion of the Princes Estate

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6.8.1 This site is primarily an arable field, with mature hedgerows and wooded boundaries. There are no biodiversity designations associated with this site. A railway embankment is adjacent to the northern boundary of the site, and provides a habitat corridor. The enclosed nature of the site and potentially valuable habitats that surround this location mean that it is unclear to evaluate biodiversity impacts without further research.

6.8.2 This site is characterised by gently undulating topography and arable land. It appears to be enclosed and screened to some extent from most visual receptors with hedgerows and trees leading to restricted visibility residential properties and transient visibility from the train (SA Objective 2).

6.8.3 The Policy supports the preservation of Horsenden conservation area, avoiding any adverse impact on the feature and its setting (SA Objective 3).

6.8.4 This site contains small areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the west of the site (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

6.8.5 It is unknown whether the employment use would increase waste generation per capita, leading to uncertain effects with regards to SA Objective 7.

6.8.6 It is difficult to tell from the maps presented in the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy whether this site contains chalk deposits. As such it is uncertain whether development would lead to sterilization of mineral deposits. This site consists of Grade 2 agricultural land, which is considered best and most versatile. Development on this site would lead to a loss of this resource (SA Objective 8).

6.8.7 Princes Risborough train station is within 1km of the site and bus stops served by the low frequency Risborough Circular service are within 400m. Access to the nearby Princes Risborough train station and bus stops is limited by the need to cross the Aylesbury railway line into Princes Risborough town. Due to the small size of this site, it is uncertain whether development would significantly increase congestion in Princes Risborough (SA Objective 9).

6.8.8 This Policy supports the provision of employment land for new or relocating businesses at Princes Risborough, positively addressing SA Objective 12.

6.9 PRTP 8 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

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6.9.1 Relocating Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites facilitates the fulfilment of the GI network. This increases the accessibility to GI for all, enhancing the area and improving connectivity (SA Objectives 6 and 11).

6.9.2 This Policy is assessed as uncertain for SA Objective 8 as relocated sites may be within areas of best and most versatile land (SA Objective 8).

6.9.3 This Policy assists the provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation for any relocated households (SA Objective 10).

6.10 PRTP 9 Town centre traffic and public realm enhancements

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6.10.1 The Policy aims to improve the public realm through the provision of a relief road. The relief road will help to reduce congestion in the area, which could improve quality of life and have a positive effect on SA Objectives 3, 5 and 9.
6.10.2 The expansion of the town includes enhancing landscape and tree planting, increasing the area and connectivity of GI (SA Objective 6). This provision of GI will increase accessibility to open space, having a positive effect on the health of the town (SA Objective 11).

6.10.3 The road is likely to facilitate access to education and employment opportunities, improving accessibility for businesses operating in and around Princes Risborough (SA Objectives 12 and 13).

6.10.4 This Policy aims to support the enhancement of the Princes Risborough town centre, maintaining economic competitiveness and supporting growth of local businesses (SA Objective 15).

6.11 PRTP 10 Town centre site: Land fronting New Road

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6.11.1 This policy relates to an area located within the Princes Risborough conservation area. As this site is already developed, and the policy proposes to provide improved boundary treatments in accordance with guidance outlined in the Princes Risborough conservation area Character Survey, no negative overall impacts on the conservation area are predicted. Additional treescaping proposed with the development to improve the streetscape may provide habitats/corridors for associated species.

6.11.2 Redevelopment at this town centre site is not expected to have a negative impact on the features identified in the character assessment. The proposal states that the design of the development must have regard to New Road, resulting in major visual improvements, and providing environmental improvements to the area (SA Objective 2).

6.11.3 Improved links between New Road and High Street may impact the setting of a number of Grade II listed buildings located on the High Street. These include: 30, 46 and 48 High Street, Lloyds Bank, and The Old Cross Keys. The extent of this impact is dependent on the development design.

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39 Ibid.
6.11.4 Princes Risborough conservation area lies partially within the town centre site area. Depending on design, development may lead to loss or damage of part of this feature and its setting (SA Objective 3).

6.11.5 This town centre site is located in Flood Zone 1. Development is therefore not at risk of flooding (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

6.11.6 The policy states that development will provide comprehensive GI, which is likely to improve connections to the wider GI network\(^\text{40}\) (SA Objectives 6 and 11).

6.11.7 It is unknown whether the small-scale mixed uses of the development would increase waste generation per capita, leading to uncertain effects with regards to SA Objective 7.

6.11.8 This site promotes development on previously developed land. Development in the urban area will reduce the area of agricultural land required to deliver development (SA Objective 8).

6.11.9 This site is approximately 1km from both Princes Risborough train station and Monks Risborough train station. Princes Risborough train stations offers frequent links to Aylesbury, London and other intervening destinations. There are a number of bus stops within 400m of the site, in addition to new/improved pedestrian links and crossing points proposed within the policy. It is not predicted that the districts’ contribution to climate change will increase as a result of development. Any change in levels of congestion as a result of development are likely to be positive due to the variety of sustainable transport modes, and additional crossings and links proposed for the A4010 (SA Objective 5).

6.11.10 Development within the town centre area will provide homes, contributing to meeting the local and district’s housing needs as identified and required by the council, although this will be limited (SA Objective 10).

\(^{40}\) Wycombe District Council (2016) Princes Risborough Town Plan: Draft Plan Consultation Document
6.11.1 The town centre site is within 1.5km of the Risborough Springs leisure centre. Green spaces are within 600m of the site, and are proposed within the policy. Green space provides recreational space for residents of the existing and new residential areas. Cross Keys Surgery is within 1km of the site. The policy proposes mixed-use development suitable for main town centre uses, the uses of which may positively contribute to the health of residents (SA Objective 11).

6.11.2 This Policy allocates mix-use development suitable for main town centre uses, which could increase accessibility of suitable employment within Princes Risborough (SA Objective 12).

6.12 PRTP 11 Town centre site: Land south of Horns Lane

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6.12.1 Habitats such as trees are present within the site area. As this site is already developed, no negative overall impacts on SA Objective 1 are predicted.

6.12.2 Redevelopment at this town centre site is not expected to have a negative impact on the features identified in the character assessment. The proposal states that the design of the development must protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre area (SA Objective 2).

6.12.3 Part of the Princes Risborough conservation area lies within the town centre site area. Depending on design, development may lead to loss or damage of part of this feature and it's setting (SA Objective 3).

6.12.4 This town centre site is located in Flood Zone 1. Development is therefore not at risk of flooding (SA Objectives 4 and 6).

6.12.5 It is unknown whether the small-scale mixed uses of the development would increase waste generation per capita, leading to uncertain effects with regards to SA Objective 7.

41 Ibid.
6.12.6 This site promotes development on previously developed land. Development in the urban area will reduce the area of agricultural land required to deliver development (SA Objective 8).

6.12.7 With regard to sustainable transport networks, Princes Risborough and Monks Risborough train stations are located approximately 1km from the site, offering frequent transport links to Aylesbury, London and other intervening destinations. There are a number of bus stops within 400m of the site, in addition to new pedestrian crossing points proposed within the policy. It is not predicted that the districts’ contribution to climate change will increase as a result of development. Any change in levels of congestion as a result of development are likely to be positive, due to the variety of sustainable transport modes, and increased accessibility to the site (SA Objective 5).

6.12.8 The town centre site is within the target distance of 1.5km from the Risborough Springs leisure centre, and leisure development itself is proposed within the Policy. Green spaces are within 600m of the site, providing recreational space for residents of the existing and new residential areas. Wellington House GP surgery is within 1km of the site, however, there are no hospitals within 8km of the site. The policy proposes mixed-use development suitable for community facilities, which may positively contribute to the health of residents (SA Objective 11).

6.12.9 This Policy allocates mix-use development suitable for community facilities, business, hotel and leisure development, which could increase accessibility of suitable employment within Princes Risborough (SA Objective 12).

6.13 PRTP 12 Molins Sports Ground

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6.13.1 The Sports Ground is on land situated in both the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Chilterns AONB. Bringing the Sports Ground back into use increases access to green space and GI, contributing positively to the Buckinghamshire GI network (SA Objective 6 and 11).
6.13.2 Bringing the Sports Ground back into use for sports activities and recreation improves access for all to recreational activities having a positive effect on health (SA Objective 11).

6.14 PRTP 13 Railway Station Site

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<th>10 Housing</th>
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6.14.1 The Policy states that appropriate flood risk, archaeological, and landscape and visual impact assessments are undertaken. As the outcomes of these assessments are uncertain, the impact on SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are unknown.

6.14.2 Open space provision is proposed in accordance with the current policy, increasing access for residents to possible recreational areas (SA Objective 11). This open space may also connect to the wider GI network of the town, having a positive effect on SA Objective 6.

6.14.3 This site consists of previously developed land (SA Objective 8).

6.14.4 Sustainable transport methods are already present at the site, including a bus stop within 400m and the train station within the site. This policy is expected to have a further positive effect on SA Objective 9, as it will contribute to this sustainable transport network by providing a bus loop serving the station, and an improved approach to the railway station.

6.14.5 Residential development proposed by the Policy performs positively against SA Objective 10, however the number of dwellings proposed is unknown.

6.14.6 There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 within the site boundary, and to the northwest of the site. Development in these areas may be at high risk of flooding. The Policy states that flood risk assessments will be undertaken, however it is not known the extent of proposed flood risk management.
6.14.7 This site is within the target distance of 1.5km from the Risborough Springs leisure centre. Green spaces are within 600m of the site, and open space is proposed within the Policy, providing recreational space for residents of the development. There are a number of GP surgeries within 1km of the site, including Cross Keys Surgery and Wellington House Practice. Thame community hospital is approximately 8km from the site, furthering healthcare access for residents (SA Objective 11).

6.14.8 This site is allocated for mixed use. The retail space proposed within the development site is likely to contribute positively to the economic growth of the town. Additionally, development proposals for a hotel in this location will be considered. This would further support the economic growth of the town, providing local jobs and possibly increasing tourism in the area (SA Objective 12).

6.15 PRTP 14 Delivery of infrastructure

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6.15.1 This Policy guides the delivery of new infrastructure in accordance with PRTP 5 and PRTP 6. The Policy requires a detailed phasing and infrastructure delivery master plan for the expansion area. This suggests focus on ensuring development is appropriate to the location and responds to community needs (SA Objectives 11 and 12).

6.15.2 The distribution of infrastructure, following Policy PRTP5, will demonstrate consideration for housing, employment, the town centre, green infrastructure, flood management, ecology, community, recreation, education and leisure. Addressing these factors leads to a positive assessment for SA objectives 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.
Mitigation Considerations and recommendations

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The information presented in this chapter has been prepared in response to negative or uncertain assessment findings associated with the pre-mitigation stage. In circumstances where negative or uncertain circumstances have not been identified within an objective, e.g. SA Objective 10: Housing, the narrative includes best practice recommendations for sustainable development. For each objective, information is presented about mitigation considerations and recommendations. Mitigation considerations identify the key issues that have arisen during assessment. Recommendations are identified for the purpose of either informing local planning policy or to inform conditions when considering planning applications.

7.1.2 The mitigation hierarchy is a policy for ensuring activities do not have unnecessary impacts on the environment:

- In the first instance harm should be avoided, for instance by locating development at a different site.
- Where this is not possible the impacts should be mitigated, for instance through the detailed design of the development.
- Lastly any residual impacts should be compensated for, for instance by restoring or recreating habitat elsewhere.

7.2 SA Objective 1: Biodiversity

Mitigation consideration (1) Habitat loss

7.2.1 It is possible that habitats lost through development may be important. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that the planning system should provide net gains in biodiversity, where possible. The European Union (EU) has committed to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2020, principally by introducing the ‘no net loss’ initiative, which works to ensure that there is no net loss of ecosystems and their services.

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42 DEFRA (2013) Biodiversity offsetting in England: Green paper
43 As they may be rare, irreplaceable or support protected species
7.2.2 Loss or fragmentation of habitats should be reduced by avoiding loss and providing buffers to important habitats, where possible. If habitat loss is unavoidable, this may be mitigated by the introduction of compensation and offsetting schemes help to ensure no net loss in local biodiversity, and to replace those which will be lost through development.

Mitigation consideration (2) Habitat connectivity

7.2.3 Development may result in the loss of wildlife corridors such as hedgerows and patches of woodland. Loss of habitat corridors is likely to cause fragmentation and problems to species that rely on habitat connectivity, such as bats.

7.2.4 The Lawton review\textsuperscript{45} concluded that England’s designated wildlife sites did not comprise a coherent wildlife and ecological network. The report suggests making the network of sites bigger, better and more joined up.

Mitigation consideration (3) Sites designated for their biodiversity or geodiversity interest

7.2.5 Designated sites are those that are allocated due to the importance of their qualifying biodiversity features. Sites can be either statutory or non-statutory. Development that would result in loss or degradation of a designated site may directly remove an area of importance for biodiversity or geodiversity, thus having an impact on local biodiversity and geodiversity. Depending on the designation assigned to the site, the scale of impact (i.e. local, regional, national, international) will vary. Ideally, development should avoid being located in or next to designated areas.

7.2.6 Statutory wildlife sites that are found in the study area include: A Special Area of Conservation, a National Nature Reserve, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserves. Non-statutory sites that are found in the study include: Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA), Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites, Biological Notification Sites, Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites.

7.2.7 Where possible, development inside a designation such as a BOA should ensure that the BOA is still able to reach targets as set out in the BOA statement.

Biodiversity mitigation recommendations

7.2.8 Biodiversity recommendation 1: Where habitats present may have the potential to support protected species, surveys should be undertaken to determine presence/absence and population size. This will determine as to whether protected species are likely to be lost if the site were to be developed.

7.2.9 Biodiversity recommendation 2: Where possible, development should seek to ensure ‘no net loss’ in biodiversity at any given site.

7.2.10 Biodiversity recommendation 3: Habitat features can be incorporated into developments and help overcome the effects of habitat fragmentation. Where possible, removal of existing linear features such as hedgerows, tree lines and aquatic networks should be avoided.

7.2.11 Biodiversity recommendation 4: Development should be avoided in designated areas. Development schemes should take necessary steps to ensure any impacts associated with new development, for example, recreational or air quality impacts are subject to the mitigation hierarchy.

7.3 SA Objective 2: Landscape

Mitigation consideration (1) Landscape character and local distinctiveness

7.3.1 Landscape character is a distinctive quality that should be upheld when considering impacts and designing new development. One of the core planning principles listed in Para 17 of the NPPF includes the requirements to ‘recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside’. Mitigation is best served through careful design. This may have the added benefit of green infrastructure.

Mitigation consideration (2) Protect and enhance visual amenity, including light and noise pollution

7.3.2 Paragraph 109 of the PPG states that the planning system should ‘prevent both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution’.
7.3.3 Mitigation should be prepared in response to adverse impacts identified with specific receptors. Key land use designations and receptors (people) relevant to the Princes Risborough landscape include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Chilterns AONB;
- Public viewpoints including from residential, work and transitory locations; and
- Green Belt.

7.3.4 Mitigation is often in the form of new planting schemes and landscape buffers.

**Mitigation consideration (3) Chilterns AONB**

7.3.5 The NPPF makes it clear that greater weight should be given to landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs. Paragraph 115 states that “Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty”.

7.3.6 The NPPF makes it clear that greater weight should be given to landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs. Any development should retain the distinctive landscape features of designated sites and their settings. Development should be in keeping with existing development in the area, in terms of both pattern and style. Mitigation may also be provided through landscape buffers and planting schemes.

**Landscape mitigation recommendations**

7.3.7 Landscape recommendation 1: Where possible, development should incorporate mitigation through careful design including planting strategies. Key characteristics for Landscape Character Areas should be maintained where possible. Development should not hinder the successful delivery of management prescriptions for Landscape Character Areas.

7.3.8 Landscape recommendation 2: New development should seek to avoid introducing light or noise pollution by following sensitive design principles.
7.3.9 Landscape recommendation 3: New development should seek to incorporate new planting schemes or landscape buffers into the development design in keeping with the local character.

7.4 SA Objective 3: Cultural Heritage

Mitigation consideration (1) Loss of architectural or historic interest

7.4.1 Features of archaeological/historic interest include, and are not limited to the following:

- Iron Age settlement;
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
- Conservation areas;
- Archaeological Notification Sites;
- Non-designated recorded historic or archaeological sites and associated assets; and
- Grade I, II* and II listed buildings.

7.4.2 Any harm to or loss of features of architectural or historic interest should require clear and convincing justification. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be for the assets’ conservation.

7.4.3 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that ‘Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional’. Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Loss or impact on features can be mitigated by new development considering sensitive design.

Mitigation consideration (2) Loss of archaeological sites/remains

7.4.4 Archaeological sites/remains can be of particular importance, and are often vulnerable to loss\(^\text{47}\). Paragraph 40 of the NPPF states that ‘Where an asset is thought to have archaeological interest, the potential knowledge which may be unlocked by investigation may be harmed even by minor disturbance, because the context in which archaeological evidence is found is crucial to furthering understanding.’ Where possible, mitigation should be prepared in response to adverse impacts identified. Features should be excavated where appropriate, or preserved and enhanced through careful development design.

Mitigation consideration (3) The setting of cultural assets

7.4.5 The setting of a cultural/heritage asset is the surroundings in which it is experienced; often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Paragraph 013 of the NPPF states that ‘although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.’

7.4.6 Development that may affect the setting of a heritage asset may need to consider the cumulative implications of change. Paragraph 013 of the NPPF further highlights that development that materially detracts from the asset’s significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future. This then threatens the assets’ ongoing conservation.

Cultural heritage mitigation recommendations

7.4.7 Cultural Heritage recommendation 1: Loss of heritage features is an irreversible adverse effect. Excavation of features prior to development should be carefully documented and added to the local historic record.

7.4.8 Cultural Heritage recommendation 2: Where possible, cultural features should be designed into new development to recognize and help develop a strong sense of place. New development should avoid compromising existing qualities.

7.5 SA Objective 4: Water

Mitigation consideration (1) Risk of flooding

7.5.1 NPPF paragraph 100 states that development should be directed away from areas of highest flood risk. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

7.5.2 Environment Agency flood zone maps provide an indication of likelihood of flooding from rivers and the sea in an area. In Flood Zones 2 and 3, it will be necessary to conduct flood risk assessments to determine the extent of impact in terms of displaced water flow and associated increased risk of flooding. Flooding in Princes Risborough is also present as surface water flooding and insufficient capacity of existing drainage infrastructure.

Mitigation consideration (2) Risk of water pollution

7.5.3 NPPF paragraph 109 states that the planning system should prevent ‘both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of...water...pollution’.

Water mitigation recommendations

7.5.4 Water recommendation 1: If only part of a site is in Flood Zone 2 or 3, it is recommended that this is retained as open space.

7.5.5 Water recommendation 2: Where development in an area at high risk of flooding is unavoidable, mitigation should involve implementing drainage schemes, such as sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) or GI features such as attenuation and balancing ponds. GI features can also slow surface water runoff and increase absorption of floodwater (this is also applicable to SA Objective 6).

7.5.6 Water recommendation 3: Wastewater infrastructure should be upgraded in line with any development, to ensure that there is sufficient wastewater infrastructure capacity to serve existing and new development.
7.6 SA Objective 5: Climate Change mitigation

Mitigation consideration (1) Carbon footprint

7.6.1 Paragraph 95 of the NPPF states that to support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should:

- Plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and
- When setting any local requirement for a building’s sustainability, do so in a way consistent with the Government’s zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards.

7.6.2 The NPPF goes on to state that ‘to support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This could include reducing reliance on personal vehicles and supporting low carbon transport.’

7.6.3 In line with the NPPF, new developments should deliver appropriate mitigation mechanisms to reduce per capita carbon footprint.

Climate change mitigation recommendations

7.6.4 Climate Change mitigation recommendation 1: Mitigation methods include supporting sustainable transport modes, i.e. through reducing the need to travel, minimizing walking distance to public transport links, and increasing frequency of public transport services.

7.6.5 Climate Change mitigation recommendation 2: Where possible development should maximize renewable energy generation and use of energy from renewable sources.

7.7 SA Objective 6: Climate Change Adaptation

Mitigation consideration (1) Risk of flooding

7.7.1 Please see mitigation consideration 1 for SA Objective 4: Water.
Mitigation consideration (2) Loss of Green Infrastructure

7.7.2 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. GI provides a variety of benefits for both health and wellbeing (SA Objective 11) and adaptation to climate change (SA Objective 6). Benefits to health and wellbeing include promotion of social interaction, inclusion and cohesion, improved levels of physical activity and improved psychological health. Benefits of GI in terms of climate change adaptation include heat amelioration reduced flood risk and improved air and water quality. Additional benefits of GI include increasing land and property value, enhancing quality of place and providing habitats for wildlife.

7.7.3 Loss of GI would lead to reduction in or loss of these benefits. Many options assessed may be within the strategic GI network recognized in Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire. Due to the strategic nature of the GI network, the Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire document identifies broad areas of GI. Many options are within these broad areas of GI but contain relatively low-level GI features, such as grassland that is not accessible to the public. Providing more complex and publically accessible GI could mitigate loss of such GI features.

Climate change adaptation recommendations

7.7.4 See recommendations 1 and 2 for SA Objective 4: Water.

7.7.5 Climate change adaptation recommendation 1: Retain existing GI and incorporate this into the development where possible. Seek to augment and strengthen Buckinghamshire’s strategic network of GI.

7.7.6 Climate change adaptation recommendation 2: Incorporate new, high-quality GI into the development, including a variety of habitats and publically accessible green space. This should be well connected to the existing GI network.

48 Forest Research (2010) Benefits of Green Infrastructure
50 Ibid
7.8 SA Objective 7: Waste

Mitigation considerations (1) Minimise waste generation and encourage recycling of waste

7.8.1 The Waste Management Plan for England\(^{51}\) sets out the Government’s ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. In 2012 the Government amended the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 \(^{52}\), supporting local authorities in improving quality and quantity of recycling.

7.8.2 DEFRA work to ensure that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognizing the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities\(^ {53}\). Mitigation methods include improved waste collection schemes and supporting the use of recyclates, minimizing the landfilling or incineration of such recyclates whenever possible.

Waste mitigation recommendations

7.8.3 Waste recommendation 1: Sufficient opportunities should be identified to meet the needs of the development area for management of waste streams.

7.8.4 Waste recommendation 2: Where economically and environmentally practical, development should promote re-use of recycled materials, and high quality recycling facilities.

7.9 SA Objective 8: Land Resources

Mitigation consideration (1) Utilise previously developed, degraded and under-used land

7.9.1 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.’


\(^{53}\) ibid.
Mitigation consideration (2) Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land

7.9.2 Any loss of Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land is a permanent loss and represents an adverse effect. The economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land should be taken into account prior to development. The Government has reaffirmed the importance of protecting our soils and the services they provide in the Natural Environment White Paper The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (June 2011), including the protection of best and most versatile agricultural land.

Mitigation consideration (3) Potential sterilization of mineral deposits

7.9.3 Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that ‘minerals are essential to support sustainable economic growth and our quality of life’ and that ‘minerals must be maintained in sufficient supply.’ A number of the sites are located within mineral safeguarding areas. Development is likely to sterilize these resources. The Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and minerals, published November 2006, aims to prevent unnecessary sterilization of mineral resources by providing national policy for mineral safeguarding. It should be considered what measures can be taken to safeguard aggregate resources within the local area.

Land resources mitigation recommendations

7.9.4 Land Resources recommendation 1: Where possible development should re-use previously developed land.

7.9.5 Land Resources recommendation 2: Where possible, Grades 1 or 2 or 3a agricultural land should be maintained.

7.9.6 Land Resources recommendation 3: Apply the mitigation hierarchy when seeking to conserve and safeguard mineral resources.

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7.10 SA Objective 9: Transport

Mitigation consideration (1) Sustainable transport modes

7.10.1 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF gives one of the core planning principles as focusing development in areas which are, and can be made sustainable, by making use of public transport, walking and cycling.

7.10.2 Section 4 of the NPPF relates to promoting sustainable transport. This includes making sustainable transport the most prominent and easiest option for people, particularly by tailoring transport solutions for different areas. Development with poor public transport links and limited local services and amenities may result in residents being reliant on car use. Due to the existing road infrastructure and capacity, this may lead to increased congestion and decreased road safety. Development should avoid contributing to congestion issues in the area, and instead increase accessibility. This includes developing supporting infrastructure to accommodate sustainable development. Transport Statements or Transport Assessments and a Travel Plan are required for developments that generate ‘significant’ amounts of movement. The NPPF supports plans that minimize the need to travel and maximize use of sustainable transport modes. The NPPF encourages maximization of the accessibility of services, amenities and streets, and sustainable transport for all.

Transport mitigation recommendations

7.10.3 Transport recommendation 1: Development should look to improve the existing sustainable transport network and encourage behavioural change to promote the use of sustainable transport.

7.10.4 Transport recommendation 2: To mitigate potential impacts on local and national road networks, development should aim to be located near to existing amenities and transport links, as well as including new amenities and new sustainable transport links, particularly in larger developments.
7.11 **SA Objective 10: Housing**

**Housing recommendations**

7.11.1 Housing recommendation 1: Careful consideration should be given to density, design and future proofing in terms of climate change and potential expansion.

7.11.2 Housing recommendation 2: Development should provide a mix of housing, in line with local needs.

7.12 **SA Objective 11: Health**

**Mitigation consideration (1) Loss of Green Infrastructure**

7.12.1 Please see mitigation consideration 2 for SA Objective 6: Climate Change Adaptation.

**Mitigation consideration (2) Limited accessibility to health and recreation facilities**

7.12.2 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF states that the Local Plan’s strategic priorities should deliver health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities. Some sites are further than the recommended distances (Barton et al, 2010) from formal health and recreation facilities. Such distances have been measured from the centre of each site to represent the average distance residents or workers would have to travel, although some would be nearer and some would be further away.

**Health mitigation recommendations**

7.12.3 Health recommendation 1: Where health and recreation facilities are not within the recommended distances, it may be possible to provide these on site. Where this is not possible, facilities should be easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport, e.g. via affordable, frequent bus services.
7.13 | **SA Objective 12: Economy and employment**

**Mitigation consideration (1) Loss of existing businesses/accessible employment**

7.13.1 Section 1 of the NPPF considers building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 19 of the NPPF states that sustainable economic growth should be supported. Local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of businesses and support an economy fit for the 21st century. Paragraph 21 further states that local planning authorities should set criteria for local and inward investment to match the strategy and meet anticipated needs over the plan period.

**Economy and employment mitigation recommendation**

7.13.2 Economy and employment recommendation 1: If operating businesses will be removed from the site, there should be suitable alternative business premises nearby. Existing businesses could be given support in finding new premises and moving over from one to the other.

7.13.3 Economy and employment recommendation 2: Access to employment opportunities should be maximised by either providing employment opportunities within a development, or by ensuring easy access to employment elsewhere, via sustainable modes of transport.

7.14 | **SA Objective 13: Education**

**Mitigation consideration (1) Limited access to education and training opportunities**

7.14.1 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that great importance is attached to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education.

**Education mitigation recommendation**

7.14.2 Education recommendation 1: Existing schools could be given support in expansion, alteration or finding new premises and moving over from one to the other, if necessary. Sustainable transport should be promoted as a safe and easy way to access educational facilities. This may require improvements to road infrastructure to make it more pedestrian-friendly or dedicated school transport services.
8 Conclusions and next steps

8.1 Best performing option: Strategic Growth Options

8.1.1 SA assessments for Strategic Growth Options demonstrated that all sites would have mixed effects with regards to sustainability. Option 1 has the highest number of positive performing sustainability objectives. This suggests that it is the best performing option; and in this sense, it is. It should be noted that performance is not simply the sum of the assessed sustainability objectives, and the nature of the plan must be born in mind, especially it's objectives.

8.1.2 All options were assessed as performing negatively against SA Objectives 3 (Cultural Heritage), 4 (Water) and 6 (Climate change adaptation). All options were assessed as performing negatively against SA Objective 1 (Biodiversity) and 2 (Landscape), except Option 1, which had an uncertain assessment for SA Objective 1 (Biodiversity) and a positive assessment for SA Objective 2 (Landscape). All options were assessed as performing negatively against SA Objective 8 (Land Resources), with the exception of Option 1, which performed positively. All options, except Options 1 and 2, were assessed as having negative effects with regards to SA Objectives 5 (Climate change mitigation) and 9 (Transport), due to likely exacerbation of congestion issues in Princes Risborough.

8.1.3 All options were assessed as having uncertain effects against SA Objectives 11 (Health), 12 (Economy) and 13 (Education), except Option 1 which performed positively and Option 2, which performed positively with regards to SA Objective 12.

8.1.4 All options performed positively against SA Objective 10 (Housing), although quantum of housing provision varies between options. Option 1 is expected to deliver limited housing numbers.

8.1.5 All options performed neutrally against SA Objective 7 (Waste).

8.2 Best performing option: Individual Site Options

8.2.1 It was not possible to identify a best performing option with regards to sustainability. Options 6 and 7 arguably perform better than Options 1 to 5 because they involve development on previously developed land.
8.2.2 All options were assessed as performing negatively against SA Objective 4 (Water), with the exception of Option 7 (Employment) and Option 2.

8.2.3 All options were assessed as performing either positively or neutrally against SA Objective 10 (Housing).

8.2.4 Most options were assessed as having uncertain effects against SA Objective 5 (Climate change mitigation), except Options 2 and 3, which were assessed as having negative effects. All housing only options (Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 7(H) and 8(H)) were assessed as neutral against SA Objective 7 (Waste) and all options including employment or retail (Options 6, 7(E), 8(E) and 8(H&R)) were assessed as having uncertain effects against this objective.

8.2.5 Mixed sustainability effects were recorded against SA Objective 1 (Biodiversity), SA Objective 2 (Landscape), SA Objective 3 (Cultural Heritage), SA Objective 6 (Climate Change Adaptation), SA Objective 8 (Land Resources), SA Objective 9 (Transport), SA Objective 11 (Health), SA Objective 12 (Economy) and SA Objective 13 (Education).

### 8.3 Best performing option: Road Options

8.3.1 SA assessments for Road Options demonstrated that all options would have mixed effects with regards to sustainability. The No new infrastructure option was assessed as having largely neutral effects, with negative assessments recorded against SA Objectives 5 (Climate change mitigation), 9 (Transport) and 11 (Health). Due to the uncertainty recorded against other Road Options, it is not possible to identify a best performing option.

8.3.2 All options were assessed as performing positively with regards to SA Objective 5 (Climate change mitigation), except the No new infrastructure option.

8.3.3 With the exception of the No new infrastructure option, all options performed negatively with regards to SA Objectives 1 (Biodiversity), 2 (Landscape), 3 (Cultural heritage), 4 (Water), 6 (Climate change adaptation) and 8 (Land resources).

8.3.4 All options were assessed as having neutral effects with regards to SA Objectives 7 (Waste), 10 (Housing) and 13 (Education).
8.3.5 All options were assessed as having uncertain effects against SA Objective 12 (Economy). Options 11b, 15b, and 17 were assessed as having uncertain effects with regards to SA Objectives 9 (Transport) and 11 (Health), whereas Option 12, the minimum scheme alternatives for Options 11b and 15b and No new infrastructure were assessed as having negative effects against these objectives.

8.4 Preferred Policy Options

8.4.1 The Preferred Options were derived from the reasonable alternatives for Strategic Growth Options, Individual Site Options and Road Options. The Council have not identified any alternatives to each of the Preferred Policy Options themselves.

8.4.2 Preferred Options generally performed positively or neutrally against all SA Objectives. Some uncertainty was recorded against all SA Objectives except SA Objectives 10 (Housing), 12 (economy) and 13 (Education). Negative results were recorded against SA Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 8. Negative and uncertain effects generally relate to policies that allocate sites for development.

8.5 Next steps

8.5.1 This report represents the latest stage of the SA process. This report presents assessment results for both reasonable alternatives and Preferred Options. This SA Report should be read alongside the Draft Princes Risborough Town Plan (Feb, 2016). The SA process will take on-board any comments on this SA Report and use them during the next round of assessments for the next iteration of the Plan.

8.5.2 Once finalised, the Plan will be subject to further SA, via the preparation of an Environmental Report, also known as a full SA Report. This Environmental Report will meet all of the legal requirements set out in Annex I of the SEA Directive.
Appendix A: SA Framework
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal...</th>
<th>Indicators to help inform the decision making criteria (this list is not exhaustive)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biodiversity and geodiversity: Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.</td>
<td>Q1a Will it conserve and enhance biodiversity?</td>
<td>• Number and diversity of European Protected Species, BAP species and Section 41 species in the area.</td>
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<td>Q1b Will it contribute to habitat creation and connectivity?</td>
<td>• Area and condition of BAP priority habitats</td>
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<td>Q1c Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their biodiversity or geodiversity interest and increase their area?</td>
<td>• Area and condition of sites designated for biological and geological interest, particularly Chiltern Beechwoods SAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and townscape: Conserve and enhance the landscape and, in particular, those areas designated for their landscape / townscape value. Ensure development is of a high quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.</td>
<td>Q2a Will it safeguard and enhance the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness and identity?</td>
<td>• Wycombe Landscape Character Assessment profiles</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2b Will it protect and enhance visual amenity, including light and noise pollution?</td>
<td>• Tranquility rating of area</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2c Will it compromise the function of the Green Belt, including/or leading to coalescence of settlements and/or urban sprawl?</td>
<td>• Impact of development on areas within the Green Belt and/or AONB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2d Will it protect and enhance the characteristics and setting of the Chilterns AONB, including views to and from the AONB?</td>
<td>• Rate of encroachment into countryside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3b Will it preserve or enhance archaeological sites/remains?</td>
<td>• Coalescence of settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage: Conserve and enhance the historic environment, and, in particular, those areas designated for their heritage importance.</td>
<td>Q3a Will it preserve features of architectural, cultural or historic interest and, where necessary, encourage their conservation and renewal?</td>
<td>• Number and type of features and areas of historic designations in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3b Will it preserve or enhance archaeological sites/remains?</td>
<td>• Statutory and non-statutory sites in the Historic Environment Record (HER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA Objective</td>
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<td>Indicators to help inform the decision making criteria (this list is not exhaustive)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3c Will it preserve or enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Water and flooding:** Maintain and enhance the quality and quantity of water sources, achieve sustainable water resources management and reduce the risk of flooding. | Q4a Will it maintain and enhance water quality and reduce the risk of water pollution? | • Ecological and chemical quality of water bodies  
• Number of water pollution incidents, including drainage and sewer overflows  
• Number of properties at risk of flooding  
• Number of developments incorporating SUDS or other flood-reduction measures  
• Water use efficiency  
• Water availability including restrictions on water abstraction licenses |
| 4            | Q4b Will it avoid development in areas at high risk of flooding? |                                                                                     |
|              | Q4c Will it lead to more efficient use of water resources and minimise water abstraction? |                                                                                     |
| **Climate change mitigation:** Reduce contributions to climate change through a) sustainable building practices and design, b) maximising potential for renewable energy and c) energy conservation and minimising use of fossil fuels. | Q5a Will it encourage sustainable building practices and design? | • Proximity to public transport links  
• Frequency of nearby public transport services  
• Distance to local services and amenities  
• Energy efficiency of buildings and transport  
• Percentage of energy in the area generated from renewable sources |
<p>| 5            | Q5b Will it encourage renewable energy generation or use of energy from renewable sources? |                                                                                     |
|              | Q5a Will it help reduce the per capita carbon footprint of Princes Risborough? |                                                                                     |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Climate change adaptation:</strong> Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.</td>
<td>Q6a Will it increase the area and connectivity of Green Infrastructure?</td>
<td>• Area of new greenspace created per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q6b Will it promote use of technologies and techniques to adapt to the impacts of climate change?</td>
<td>• Connectivity of GI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q6c Will it minimise future increases in flood risk that are associated with climate change?</td>
<td>• Implementation of adaptive techniques, such as SUDS and passive heating/cooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waste:</strong> Reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste.</td>
<td>Q7a Will it encourage recycling of waste?</td>
<td>• Number and capacity of waste management facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q7b Will it minimise and where possible eliminate generation of waste?</td>
<td>• Reuse of recycled materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Amount of waste generated and percentage of this that is recycled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land resources:</strong> Improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings. Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (soil) and mineral deposits.</td>
<td>Q8a Will it utilise previously developed, degraded and under-used land?</td>
<td>• Re-use of previously developed land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q8b Will it lead to the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land?</td>
<td>• Area of best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q8c Will it improve existing infrastructure, particularly water infrastructure?</td>
<td>• Area of mineral deposits sterilised as a result of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q8d Will it remediate contaminated land, or avoid development on contaminated land?</td>
<td>• Area of contaminated land</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Q8e</td>
<td>Will it help to protect mineral deposits?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9a</td>
<td>Will it reduce the need to travel?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Q9b          | Will it increase efficiency of the transport network and promote travel via a variety of transport options, particularly sustainable transport? | • Distance to place of work  
• Distance to local amenities and key services  
• Distance to existing or proposed bus routes  
• Frequency of bus services  
• Proximity and connectivity of walking and cycling links  
• Distance to train station  
• Levels of congestion |
| Q9c          | Will it help to reduce congestion?                  |                                                                                  |
| Q9d          | Will it provide adequate means of access to a range of facilities by a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e. walking/cycling/public transport)? |                                                                                  |
| Q9e          | Will air quality be affected by proposals in the plan? |                                                                                  |
| Q10a         | Will it provide a mix of good-quality housing?       | • Varied housing mix  
• Housing affordability  
• Percentage of dwellings delivered as affordable housing |
<p>| Q10b         | Will it provide specialist forms of housing, particularly housing suitable for the growing elderly population? |                                                                                  |</p>
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|              | Q10c | Will it provide decent, affordable homes? | • Number of extra care homes and other specialist homes  
• Number of homes meeting Lifetime Homes design criteria |
| Health and wellbeing: Maintain and improve the health, well-being and community cohesion of the population and reduce social deprivation.  
11 | Q11a | Will it improve access for all to health, leisure and recreational facilities? | • Travel time by public transport to nearest health centre and sports facilities  
• Provision of and accessibility of open accessible greenspace and GI  
• Accessibility to sports facilities e.g. football pitches, playing fields, tennis courts and leisure centres  
• Accessibility of healthcare facilities  
• Area of community floorspace per resident |
|              | Q11b | Will it improve and enhance the area’s green infrastructure network? | |
| Economy and Employment: Promote a strong, balanced and sustainable economy. Retain existing businesses and associated employment, while developing new businesses and associated employment opportunities.  
12 | Q12a | Will it increase accessibility of suitable employment within Princes Risborough? | • Accessibility of employment opportunities  
• Levels of employment and unemployment |
<p>|              | Q12b | Will it enable retention and growth of existing business and protect existing employment land that has a continued economic role? | |</p>
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<td>Q12c Will it help new businesses to establish in the area?</td>
<td>• Number of new business start-ups as a result of the development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 13 Education, skills and training: Raise educational attainment and develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness. | Q13a Will it improve access for all to education and training opportunities? | • Distance to education and training, particularly primary schools and secondary schools  
• Provision of new education and training facilities and opportunities |
|              | Q13b Will it encourage a diversity of education and training opportunities? | • Accessibility of education and training facilities by public transport  
• Capacity of local schools to meet demand from new development |