



Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan

Volume 2 of 3: Regulation 19 SA Report

| | |
|----------------|--|
| LC-1421 | Document Control Box |
| Client | Warwick District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council |
| Report title | Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan – Volume 2 of 3: Regulation 19 SA Report |
| Status | Draft |
| File name | <u>LC-1421 Vol 2of3 Reg19 SA South Warks 6 150526LB.docx</u> |
| Date | May 2026 |
| Author | LB, EG, BT, BET |
| Reviewed | ND |
| Approved | ND |

Front Cover: Stratford-upon-Avon – JBP

About this report & notes for readers

Lepus Consulting Ltd (Lepus) has prepared this report for the use of Warwick District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council. There are a number of limitations that should be borne in mind when considering the results and conclusions of this report. No party should alter or change this report whatsoever without written permission from Lepus.

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

The conclusions below are based on the best available information, including information that is publicly available. No attempt to verify these secondary data sources has been made and they have been assumed to be accurate as published.

This report was prepared between April and May 2026 and is subject to and limited by the information available during this time. This report has been prepared with reasonable skill, care and diligence

within the terms of the contract with the client. Lepus Consulting accepts no responsibility to the client and third parties of any matters outside the scope of this report. Third parties to whom this report or any part thereof is made known rely upon the report at their own risk.

Client comments can be sent to Lepus using the following address:

Eagle Tower
Montpellier Drive
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 1TA

Telephone: 01242 525222

E-mail: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

Website: www.lepusconsulting.com

DRAFT

Contents

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| 1 | Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 | Purpose of this report..... | 1 |
| 1.2 | Sustainability Appraisal..... | 1 |
| 1.3 | Strategic Environmental Assessment..... | 2 |
| 1.4 | Integrated approach to SA and SEA..... | 2 |
| 1.5 | Legislative context..... | 4 |
| 1.6 | How to read and understand the R19 SA Report..... | 4 |
| 2 | Sequencing of the Local Plan and SA process..... | 6 |
| 2.1 | Geography of the Plan area..... | 6 |
| 2.2 | The South Warwickshire Local Plan..... | 8 |
| 2.3 | The iterative SA process..... | 8 |
| 2.4 | Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations..... | 10 |
| 3 | Evolution of the environment without the SWLP..... | 11 |
| 3.1 | Overview..... | 11 |
| 4 | Methodology..... | 14 |
| 4.1 | Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal..... | 14 |
| 4.2 | Best practice guidance..... | 15 |
| 4.3 | Appraisal process..... | 16 |
| 4.4 | Impact assessment and determination of significance..... | 17 |
| 4.5 | Significant effects..... | 18 |
| 4.6 | Limitations of predicting effects..... | 20 |
| 5 | Reasonable alternatives..... | 21 |
| 5.1 | Context..... | 21 |
| 5.2 | Different types of reasonable alternatives..... | 21 |
| 5.3 | Housing options..... | 24 |
| 5.4 | Employment options..... | 26 |
| 5.5 | Spatial options..... | 28 |
| 5.6 | Strategic-scale development sites..... | 29 |
| 5.7 | New settlements..... | 37 |
| 5.8 | Non-strategic development sites..... | 41 |
| 5.9 | Policy options..... | 45 |
| 6 | The preferred approach..... | 46 |
| 6.1 | SWLP policies..... | 46 |
| 6.2 | Assessment of site allocations..... | 48 |
| 6.3 | Whole plan appraisal..... | 51 |
| 7 | Air..... | 52 |
| 7.1 | Baseline..... | 52 |
| 7.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on air..... | 53 |
| 8 | Biodiversity, flora and fauna..... | 55 |
| 8.1 | Baseline..... | 55 |
| 8.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on biodiversity, flora and fauna..... | 59 |
| 9 | Climatic factors..... | 62 |
| 9.1 | Baseline..... | 62 |
| 9.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on climatic factors..... | 64 |
| 10 | Cultural heritage..... | 68 |
| 10.1 | Baseline..... | 68 |
| 10.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on cultural heritage..... | 69 |
| 11 | Human health..... | 72 |
| 11.1 | Baseline..... | 72 |
| 11.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on human health..... | 74 |

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 12 | Landscape | 77 |
| 12.1 | Baseline | 77 |
| 12.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on landscape | 79 |
| 13 | Population and material assets | 83 |
| 13.1 | Baseline | 83 |
| 13.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on population and material assets | 89 |
| 14 | Soil | 93 |
| 14.1 | Baseline | 93 |
| 14.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on soil | 94 |
| 15 | Water | 96 |
| 15.1 | Baseline | 96 |
| 15.2 | Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on water | 98 |
| 16 | Cumulative effects assessment | 100 |
| 16.1 | About this chapter | 100 |
| 17 | Monitoring | 105 |
| 17.1 | Context | 105 |
| 17.2 | Monitoring proposals | 105 |
| 18 | How the SA has influenced the Plan | 107 |
| 18.1 | The role of the SA | 107 |
| 18.2 | Recommendations | 107 |
| 19 | Conclusions | 115 |
| 19.1 | Residual effects following mitigation | 115 |
| 19.2 | Consultation and next steps | 118 |

Appendices (see Volume 3)

Appendix A: SA Framework

Appendix B: Plan, Policy and Programme Review

Appendix C: Consultation Responses to the SA

Appendix D: Assessment of Additional Housing and Employment Options

Appendix E: Site Assessment Methodology and Assumptions

Appendix F: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Strategic Growth Locations (Pre-Mitigation)

Appendix G: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative New Settlements (Pre-Mitigation)

Appendix H: Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Non-Strategic Sites (Pre-Mitigation)

Appendix I: Assessment of Policies

Appendix J: Post-Mitigation Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

Appendix K: Reasons for Selection and Rejection of Reasonable Alternative Sites

Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1.1: Some key purposes of the SA process | 1 |
| Figure 1.2: Sustainability appraisal process alongside local plan stages | 3 |
| Figure 2.1: The South Warwickshire Local Plan area | 7 |
| Figure 2.2: The SWLP and SA process so far | 9 |
| Figure 2.3: SEA checklist..... | 10 |
| Figure 5.1: The identification, description and evaluation of reasonable alternatives considered at different stages during the plan-making process for the SWLP..... | 23 |
| Figure 6.1: Map showing the location of development sites allocated in the SWLP | 50 |
| Figure 8.1: Biodiversity designations in South Warwickshire | 58 |
| Figure 9.1: Flood risk within South Warwickshire | 63 |
| Figure 10.1: Heritage assets within South Warwickshire..... | 69 |
| Figure 11.1: Healthcare facilities and green spaces across South Warwickshire | 74 |
| Figure 12.1: Landscape designations across South Warwickshire | 79 |
| Figure 13.1: Transport links in South Warwickshire | 87 |
| Figure 14.1: Agricultural Land Classification in South Warwickshire | 94 |

Boxes

| | |
|---|----|
| Box 4.1: Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations..... | 16 |
| Box 5.1: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of housing options..... | 26 |
| Box 5.2: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of employment options..... | 28 |
| Box 5.3: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of spatial options | 29 |
| Box 7.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: air quality..... | 53 |
| Box 8.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: biodiversity, flora and fauna | 57 |
| Box 9.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: climatic factors | 64 |
| Box 10.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: cultural heritage | 69 |
| Box 11.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: human health | 73 |
| Box 12.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: landscape..... | 79 |
| Box 13.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: population and material assets | 89 |
| Box 14.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: soil..... | 94 |
| Box 15.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: water | 98 |

Tables

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 3.1: Likely evolution without the SWLP | 11 |
| Table 4.1: Summary of the SA Objectives | 15 |
| Table 4.2: Impact sensitivity..... | 17 |
| Table 4.3: Impact magnitude..... | 18 |
| Table 4.4: Guide to scoring significant effects | 18 |
| Table 5.1: SWLP housing number options identified during the SA process..... | 25 |
| Table 5.2: Summary scoring matrix for housing number options assessed in the SA process (see Appendix D) | 25 |
| Table 5.3: SWLP employment number options identified during the SA process..... | 27 |
| Table 5.4: Summary scoring matrix for employment number options assessed in the SA process (see Appendix D)..... | 27 |
| Table 5.5: Summary scoring matrix for spatial growth options assessed in the Issues and Options SA..... | 29 |
| Table 5.6: Summary scoring matrix for broad locations assessed in the Issues and Options SA | 31 |
| Table 5.7: Summary scoring matrix for small settlements assessed in the Issues and Options SA..... | 33 |
| Table 5.8: Summary scoring matrix for SGLs assessed in the Preferred Options SA..... | 34 |
| Table 5.9: Summary scoring matrix for strategic growth locations assessed in Appendix F | 37 |
| Table 5.10: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in the Issues and Options SA..... | 38 |
| Table 5.11: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in the Preferred Options SA..... | 39 |
| Table 5.12: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in Appendix G | 40 |
| Table 5.13: Summary scoring matrix for non-strategic sites assessed in Appendix H | 42 |
| Table 6.1: SWLP policies..... | 46 |
| Table 6.2: Summary of policy assessments (extracted from Appendix I)..... | 48 |
| Table 6.3: Impact matrix of selected New Settlement and SGLs (extracted from Appendix I)..... | 51 |
| Table 7.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on air..... | 54 |
| Table 8.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on biodiversity, flora and fauna..... | 59 |
| Table 9.1: Total and per capita carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the SWLP area in 2023 | 62 |
| Table 9.2: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on climatic factors..... | 65 |
| Table 10.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on cultural heritage..... | 70 |
| Table 11.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on human health..... | 74 |
| Table 12.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on landscape | 80 |
| Table 13.1: Percentage of the working population (16-64) who are employed, self-employed or unemployed ... | 84 |
| Table 13.2: Percentage of population aged 16-64 at each NVQ level..... | 85 |
| Table 13.3: Household waste and recycling percentages for the SWLP area during 2023-24 and 2024-25 | 88 |
| Table 13.4: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on population and material assets..... | 89 |
| Table 14.1: Most prominent/common soils in Warwickshire | 93 |
| Table 14.2: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on soil..... | 95 |
| Table 15.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on water..... | 98 |
| Table 16.1: Cumulative effects assessment of the SWLP | 100 |
| Table 17.1: Proposals for monitoring adverse sustainability impacts of the SWLP | 105 |
| Table 18.1: Recommendations for the SGLs and New Settlements from the Preferred Options SA Report (2024) and actions taken [pending further comment / review from Councils] | 107 |
| Table 18.2: Recommendations for the draft SWLP policies and policy directions from the Preferred Options SA Report (2024)..... | 111 |
| Table 19.1: Likely residual positive sustainability effects of the SWLP..... | 115 |
| Table 19.2: Likely residual adverse sustainability effects of the SWLP | 116 |

Acronyms & abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| A&E | Accident and Emergency |
| ALC | Agricultural Land Classification |
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| AQMA | Air Quality Management Area |
| BMV | Best and Most Versatile |
| BNG | Biodiversity Net Gain |
| CA | Conservation Area |
| CAMS | Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy |
| CCC | Committee on Climate Change |
| CNL | Cotswolds National Landscape |
| CO₂ | Carbon Dioxide |
| CP | Country Park |
| CRoW | Countryside and Rights of Way |
| DLUHC | Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities |
| DWMP | Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan |
| GBBC | Greater Birmingham and the Black Country |
| GBI | Green and Blue Infrastructure |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gas |
| GI | Green Infrastructure |
| GP | General Practice |
| GT | Gypsy and Traveller |
| HEDNA | Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment |
| HELAA | Housing and Land Availability Assessment |
| HER | Historic Environment Record |
| HMA | Housing Market Area |
| HRA | Habitats Regulations Assessment |
| IMD | Index of Multiple Deprivation |
| IRZ | Impact Risk Zone |
| LB | Listed Building |
| LGS | Local Geological Sites |
| LNR | Local Nature Reserve |
| LPA | Local Planning Authority |
| LSOA | Lower Layer Super Output Areas |
| LTP | Local Transport Plan |
| LVA | Landscape and Visual Appraisal |
| LVIA | Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment |
| LWS | Local Wildlife Site |
| MHCLG | Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government |
| MSA | Mineral Safeguarding Area |
| NCA | National Character Area |
| NERC | Nature and Rural Communities (Act) |
| NHS | National Health Service |
| NNR | National Nature Reserve |
| NO₂ | Nitrogen Dioxide |
| NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| PDL | Previously Developed Land |
| PM | Particulate Matter |
| PPG | Planning Practice Guidance |
| PPP | Policy, Plan and Programme |
| PRoW | Public Right of Way |
| RAG | Red-Amber-Green |
| RBMP | River Basin Management Plan |
| RPG | Registered Park and Garden |
| RTPI | Royal Town Planning Institute |
| SA | Sustainability Appraisal |
| SAC | Special Area of Conservation |
| SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment |
| SFRA | Strategic Flood Risk Assessment |
| SGL | Strategic Growth Location |
| SLA | Special Landscape Area |
| SM | Scheduled Monument |
| SPA | Special Protection Area |
| SPZ | Source Protection Zone |
| SSSI | Sites of Special Scientific Interest |
| SuDS | Sustainable Drainage Systems |
| SWFR | Surface Water Flood Risk |
| SWLP | South Warwickshire Local Plan |
| WCS | Water Cycle Study |
| WFD | Water Framework Directive |
| WMSESS | West Midlands Strategic Sites Study |
| WRMP | Water Resources Management Plan |
| WwTW | Wastewater Treatment Works |
| ZOI | Zone of Influence |

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting Ltd (Lepus) has been instructed by Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process, incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), for the emerging South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP) 2025-2050.

1.1.2 This Regulation 19 SA Report has been prepared to present details of the SA process to date and inform Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council's preparation of the SWLP. Principal purposes of the SA process include those shown in **Figure 1.1**.

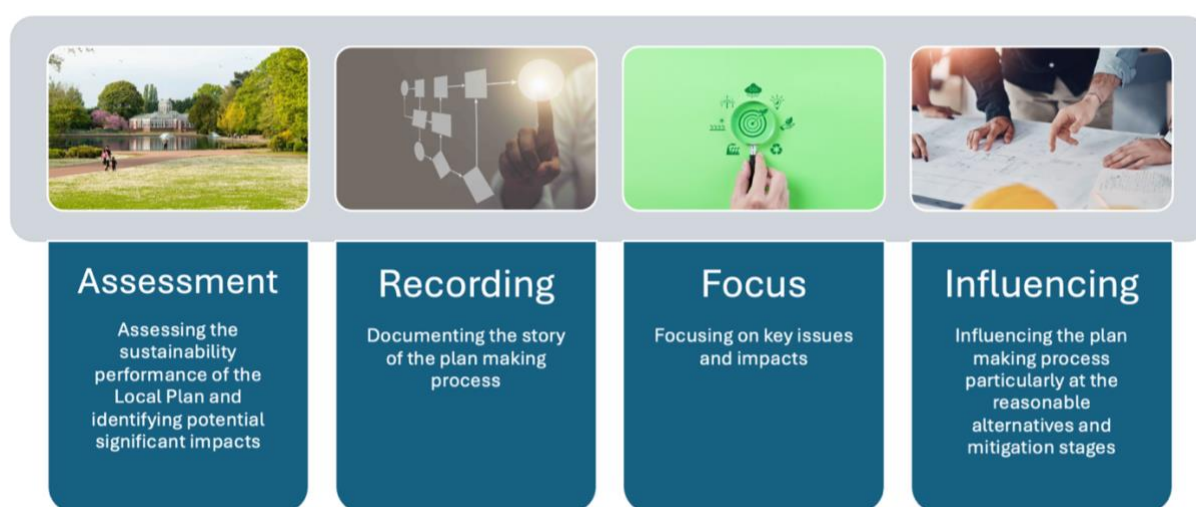


Figure 1.1: Some key purposes of the SA process

1.1.3 This SA report is one of a series of reports that have been prepared to present a record of the iterative SA process. Such an approach enables the Council to demonstrate that it has identified, described and evaluated reasonable alternatives during the making of the Local Plan. **Chapter 2** provides further details of the SA process to date.

1.2 Sustainability Appraisal

1.2.1 A sustainability appraisal (SA) is a systematic process that must be carried out during the preparation of local plans and spatial development strategies¹. The role of SA is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.

¹ DLUHC and MHCLG (2025) Government guidance on plan making. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making> [Date accessed: 07/05/26]

- 1.2.2 The SA process provides an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to sustainable development, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have. By doing so, it can help make sure that plan proposals are appropriate when compared to reasonable alternatives. It can be used to test the evidence underpinning the plan and help to demonstrate how the tests of soundness have been met. SA should be applied as an iterative process informing the development of the plan.

1.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.3.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are part of the process of preparing certain plans and programmes. Its purpose is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, with a view to promoting sustainable development. SEA considers only the environmental effects of a plan, whereas sustainability appraisal considers the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts².
- 1.3.2 In the SEA procedure, an environmental report is prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed plan or programme and its reasonable alternatives are identified. The public and relevant environmental authorities are informed and consulted on the draft plan or programme and the environmental report.

1.4 Integrated approach to SA and SEA

- 1.4.1 The SEA Directive applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes, including land use plans (see Article 3(2)) of the SEA Directive³). The Directive has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations, SI no. 1633⁴).
- 1.4.2 SEA is a systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of proposed plans or programmes to ensure environmental issues are fully integrated and addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making. The SEA Directive and SEA Regulations require an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment are identified for local plan proposals and reasonable alternatives.
- 1.4.3 SA is a UK-specific procedure used to appraise the impacts and effects of development plans in the UK. It is required by S19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and should be an appraisal of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of development plans. The present statutory requirement for SA lies in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.4.4 This Regulation 19 SA Report has been prepared to meet the requirements of an SEA Environmental Report.

² DLUHC and MHCLG (2020) Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

³ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament of the Council of 27 June 2001 (SEA Directive). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

⁴ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004). Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

1.4.5 The SWLP is at the plan-making stage Regulation 19, known as ‘Publication’ in the Local Plan Regulations 2012⁵, as shown in Stage C of **Figure 1.2**.

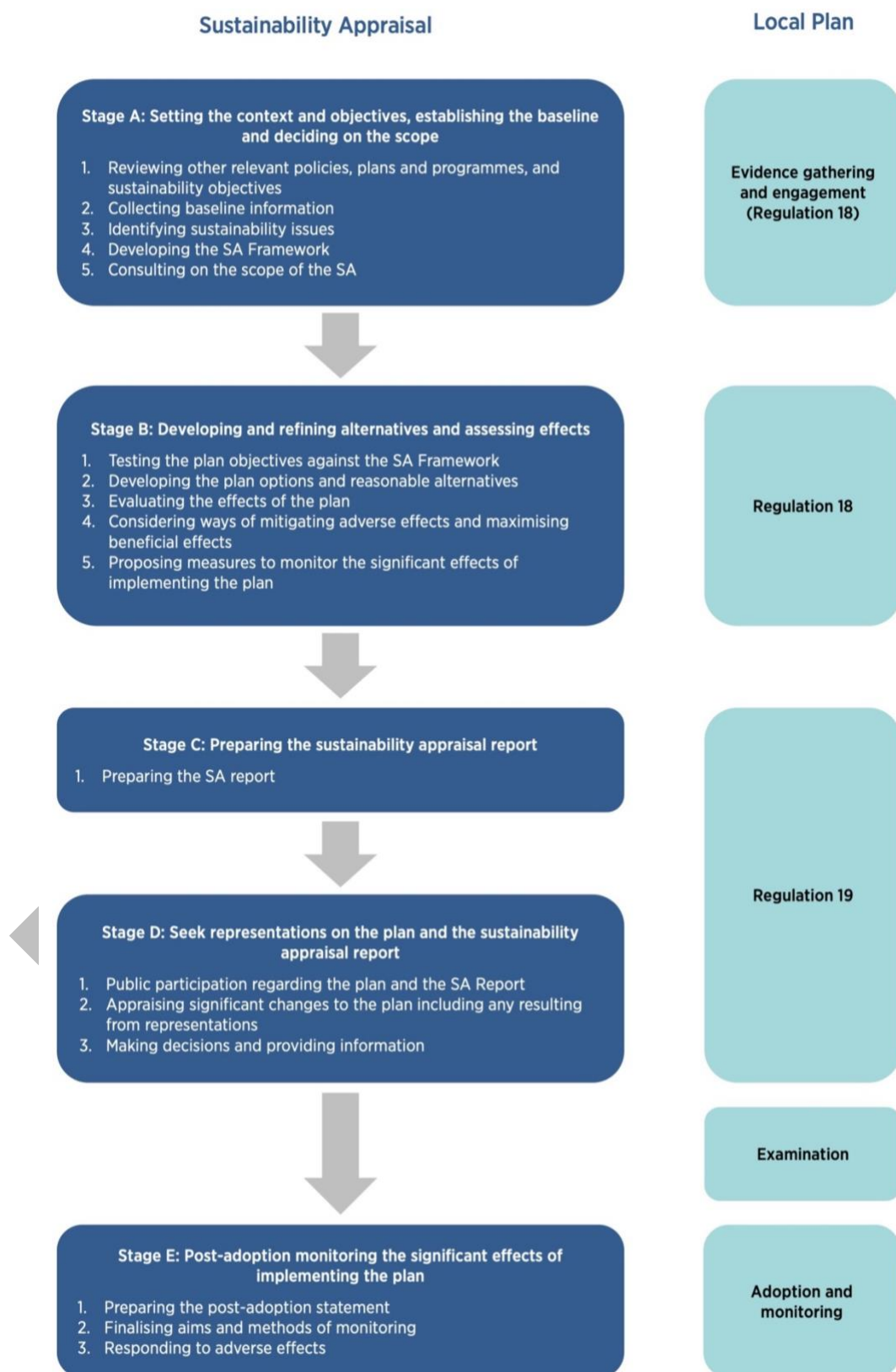


Figure 1.2: Sustainability appraisal process alongside local plan stages

⁵ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. SI 767.

1.5 Legislative context

- 1.5.1 When submitting their local plan to the Secretary of State, section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act⁶ requires that local planning authorities (LPAs) must have prepared and be able to submit an SA at the same time.
- 1.5.2 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations⁷ (SEA Regulations) require that Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) be prepared for a wide range of plans and programmes, including Local Plans.
- 1.5.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advocates that the SA process should integrate the requirements of the SEA Regulations. On this basis, this SA report incorporates the requirements of the SEA regulations.
- 1.5.4 PPG on SEA and SA⁸ states: “Sustainability appraisals incorporate the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (commonly referred to as the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations’). Sustainability appraisal ensures that potential environmental effects are given full consideration alongside social and economic issues”.

1.6 How to read and understand the R19 SA Report

- 1.6.1 This report should be read alongside the Regulation 19 version of the SWLP. The various appendices provide essential contextual information to the main body of the report. The contents of this SA Report are as follows:
- **VOLUME 1: Non-Technical Summary** provides a summary of the Regulation 19 SA work.
 - **VOLUME 2: Main SA Report** (this document)
 - **Chapter 1** presents an introduction to this report.
 - **Chapter 2** sets out information about the South Warwickshire Local Plan and the SA process to date.
 - **Chapter 3** presents the evolution of the environment without the Local Plan.
 - **Chapter 4** sets out the SA methodology.
 - **Chapter 5** presents details of the reasonable alternatives considered throughout the SA process.
 - **Chapter 6** presents details on the preferred approach as set out in the Local Plan.
 - **Chapters 7 to 15** set out the likely significant effects on the environment, per SEA topic.
 - **Chapter 16** summarises the cumulative effects identified.
 - **Chapter 17** sets out a range of monitoring recommendations for the Local Plan.

⁶ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

⁷ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

⁸ MHCLG (2020) Guidance: Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

- **Chapter 18** summarises ways in which the SA has influenced the Local Plan throughout the plan making process, including through recommendations made in the SA.
- **Chapter 19** outlines the conclusions, residual effects and next steps.
- **VOLUME 3: Appendices**
 - **Appendix A** presents the SA Framework.
 - **Appendix B** presents a review of other relevant policies, plans and programmes (PPPs).
 - **Appendix C:** summarises the consultation responses received during the SA process and how these have been considered.
 - **Appendix D:** presents the assessment of additional housing and employment options.
 - **Appendix E:** sets out the methodology and assumptions applied in the assessment of reasonable alternative sites.
 - **Appendix F:** presents the pre-mitigation assessment of reasonable alternative strategic growth locations (SGLs).
 - **Appendix G:** presents the pre-mitigation assessment of reasonable alternative new settlements.
 - **Appendix H:** presents the pre-mitigation assessment of reasonable alternative non-strategic sites.
 - **Appendix I:** presents the assessment of SWLP policies.
 - **Appendix J:** considers the mitigating influence of SWLP policies on the pre-mitigation assessment of new settlements, SGLs and non-strategic sites.
 - **Appendix K:** sets out the Councils' reasons for selection and rejection of reasonable alternative sites evaluated during the SA process.

2 Sequencing of the Local Plan and SA process

2.1 Geography of the Plan area

- 2.1.1 Stratford-on-Avon District and Warwick District Councils together comprise roughly 126,390ha, with a combined population of approximately 283,200 people according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census data for 2021⁹.
- 2.1.2 Stratford-on-Avon District and Warwick District lie within the south of Warwickshire County. As illustrated in **Figure 2.1**, Stratford-on-Avon District is largely rural in nature, whereas Warwick District covers a smaller geographic area and is more densely populated.
- 2.1.3 The most populous town in the Plan area is Royal Leamington Spa, which is adjoined to the towns of Warwick in the west and Whitnash in the south, and is adjacent to Cubbington village. The River Leam runs through Royal Leamington Spa.
- 2.1.4 The medieval market town of Stratford-upon-Avon has a population of approximately 30,000 people and is situated on the River Avon. The town has strong heritage interests including numerous Grade I, II* and II listed buildings (LBs).
- 2.1.5 Together the two authorities contain important biodiversity sites, high quality landscapes, and a wealth of historic assets. Notable features include the Cotswolds National Landscape which covers a small proportion of Stratford-on-Avon District in the south, the Grade I Listed Warwick Castle, and the significant amount of Green Belt land which covers the northern area of both districts.
- 2.1.6 In general, the SWLP area has good connections through national and regional transport infrastructure, although there are some issues with rural accessibility.

⁹ ONS (2022) Population and household estimates, England and Wales: Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021> [Date accessed: 03/10/24]

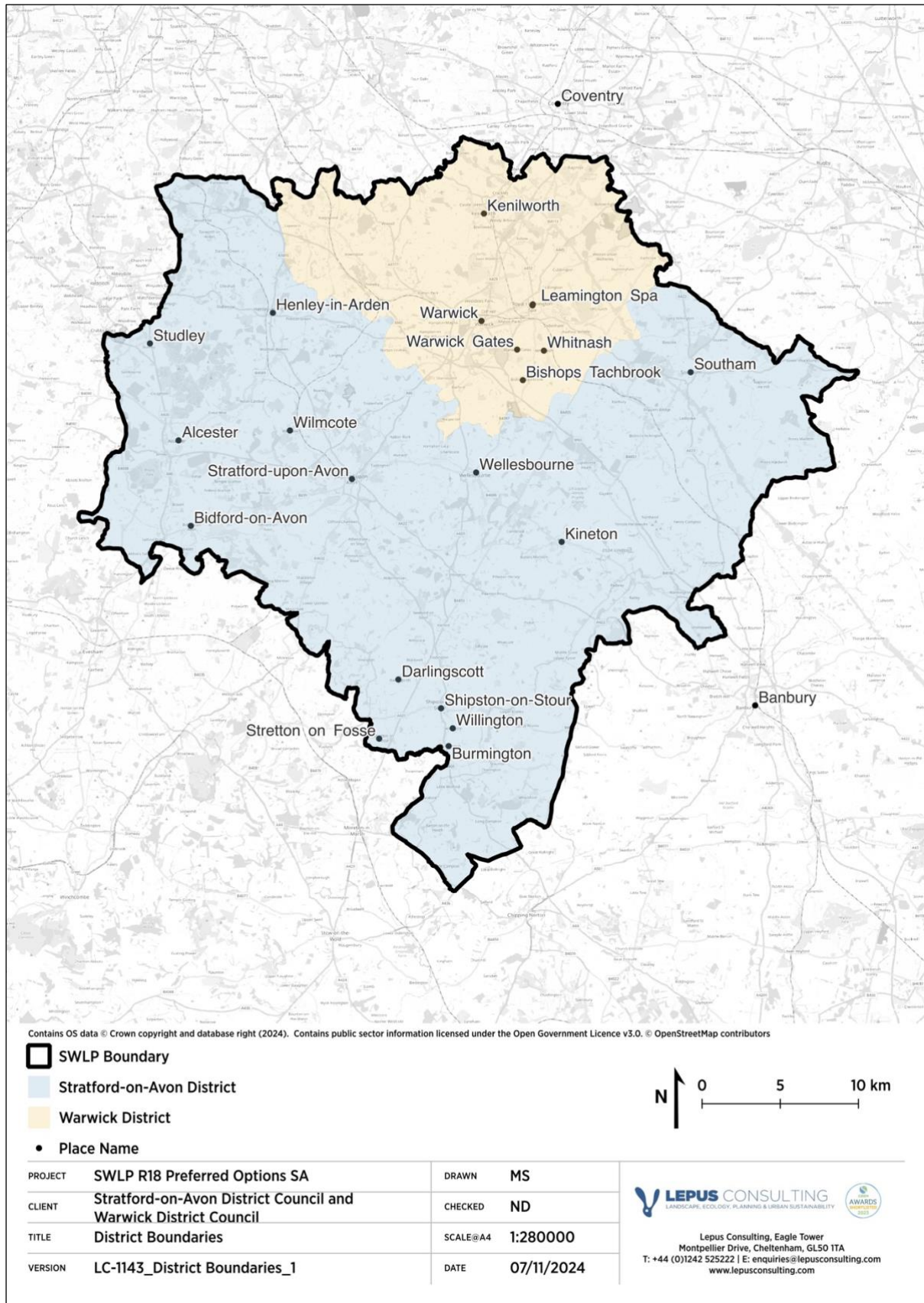


Figure 2.1: The South Warwickshire Local Plan area

2.2 The South Warwickshire Local Plan

2.2.1 The SWLP 2025-2050 has been prepared jointly by Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils and will set out the spatial planning strategy for South Warwickshire. The Plan reviews and updates the policies contained within the adopted plans across both districts, to ensure they remain effective and consistent with current planning policy requirements and best practice. The SWLP establishes the long-term strategy for how and where development should take place, including the distribution of new homes, services and employment sites. It also sets out how communities can meet their housing and development needs, while responding to climate change.

2.2.2 The SWLP includes a vision setting out what South Warwickshire will be like in 2050. The vision is accompanied by eight strategic objectives, and a suite of policies which are the means to achieving these goals. The vision, objectives, and policies have been evaluated during the iterative SA process, with the latest assessment found in **Appendix I**.

2.2.3 To date, the Councils have held three public consultations to help shape the emerging SWLP, details of which can be found on the Council's website¹⁰:

- The initial **Scoping and Call for Sites Consultation** (2021) provided the opportunity for landowners to submit site suggestions for development, or other land use, for consideration through the SWLP process;
- The **Issues and Options Consultation** (2023) contained a number of issues that the SWLP seeks to address, and respondents were asked which options they thought were most appropriate; and
- The **Preferred Options Consultation** (2025) contained draft policies and policy directions covering issues identified at earlier stages of the SWLP preparation process and sought views on the proposed Growth Strategy.

2.2.4 Once adopted, the SWLP will form part of the statutory development plan for the district covering the period up to 2050, replacing and updating the current Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy and Warwick District Local Plan.

2.3 The iterative SA process

2.3.1 **Figure 2.2** provides a summary of the main plan making stages and includes SA outputs that were prepared at each stage. Comments received during each consultation stage relating to the SA, and how these comments have been considered during the SA process, are summarised in **Appendix C**.

2.3.2 The preparation of a Scoping Report was the first phase of the SA process, which set the criteria for assessment (including the SA Objectives) and established the baseline data and key sustainability issues for the area, including a review of relevant policies, programmes and plans (PPPs). The output of this phase was the SA Scoping Report (2022)¹¹ which was issued to the statutory bodies Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency for consultation between 23rd June and 4th August 2022.

¹⁰ The South Warwickshire Local Plan. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/> [Date accessed: 08/05/26]

¹¹ Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Scoping Report. June 2022. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

2.3.3 The Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA (2023)¹² provided an evaluation of various options considered by the Councils in the preparation of the SWLP at the Issues and Options stage, and was published alongside the SWLP Issues and Options document for consultation with statutory consultees, stakeholders and the general public between 9th January and 13th March 2023.

2.3.4 The Regulation 18 Preferred Options SA Report (2024)¹³ was prepared to evaluate the likely sustainability effects of reasonable alternatives and draft policy directions identified by the Councils as part of this plan making stage. The Preferred Spatial Options Consultation was held between 10th January and 7th March 2025.

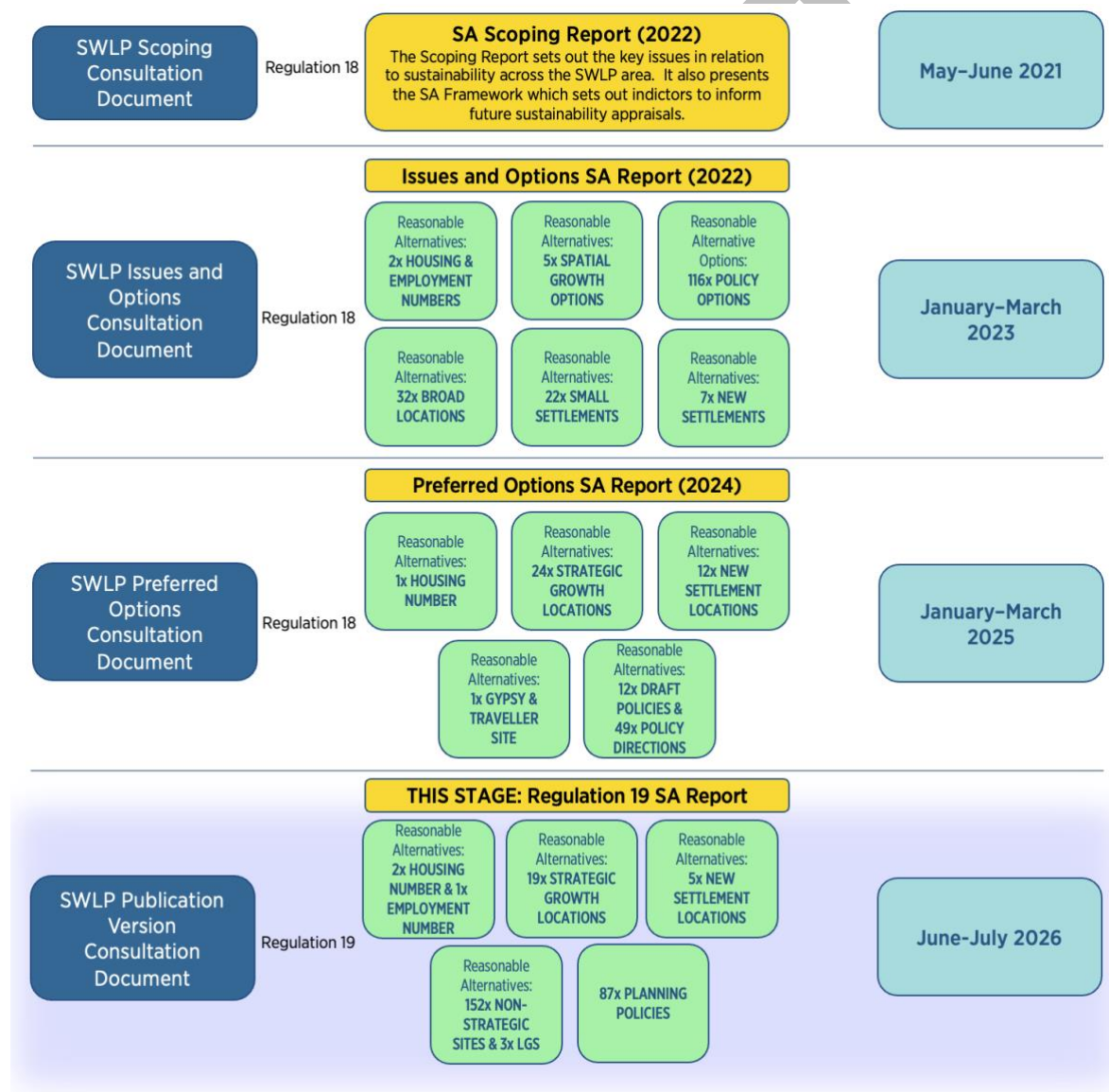


Figure 2.2: The SWLP and SA process so far

¹² Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 18 Issues and Options Stage. Volumes 1-3. November 2022. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

¹³ Lepus Consulting (2024) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 18 Preferred Options. Volumes 1-2. December 2024. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

2.4 Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations

2.4.1 There are certain requirements that this report must satisfy in order for it to qualify as an ‘environmental report’, as set out in the SEA Regulations. These requirements, and where in the report they have been met, are presented in **Figure 2.3**.



Figure 2.3: SEA checklist

3 Evolution of the environment without the SWLP

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The SEA Regulations requires the Environmental Report to present “*information on the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme*”.

3.1.2 Without the SWLP, no new plan-led development would occur within the South Warwickshire area over and above that which is currently proposed in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy (2011-2031) and Warwick District Local Plan (2011-2029). In this scenario, an appeal-led system would predominate. The nature and scale of development that may come forward under an appeal-led system is uncertain. However, in a ‘no plan’ scenario, other plans and policies would continue to be a material consideration in planning decisions and legislative protection would continue to be in place.

3.1.3 **Table 3.1** considers the likely evolution of the baseline within South Warwickshire in the absence of the SWLP, considering information gathered at the Scoping stage as well as more up-to-date data and statistics.

Table 3.1: Likely evolution without the SWLP

| Theme | Likely evolution of the environment without the SWLP |
|-------|---|
| Air | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary sources of air pollution in the UK include road transport, industry, imports and agriculture. These sources would not be expected to change. • Traffic and congestion are likely to increase with population growth, particularly around the towns of Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa and Stratford-on-Avon, with implications in particular for air quality, residents and wildlife, especially those within 200m of main roads. • Air Quality Annual Status Reports indicate that air quality within some of the SWLP area’s Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) is improving and would be expected to continue to improve. Continuing to monitor air quality, especially within AQMAs, and implementation of measures outlined in Air Quality Action Plans will ensure that objectives are in place to decrease exceedances over time. • National trends suggest there is an increasing uptake of lower emission vehicle types, such as electric cars, which will be likely to help limit road transport associated emissions in the SWLP area and would be likely to further improve air quality. |

| Theme | Likely evolution of the environment without the SWLP |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites designated for their national and international biodiversity and/or geodiversity value would continue to benefit from legislative protection. • Biodiversity net gain of at least 10% at development sites will continue to be required in line with the Environment Act. • The NPPF and its policies relating to biodiversity, would continue to be material considerations in planning decisions. It is uncertain if development proposals would voluntarily adopt additional biodiversity enhancement measures. • Without the SWLP, there would be less opportunity to establish a coordinated strategic green infrastructure network across South Warwickshire and align this with the Warwickshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, potentially limiting the achievement of significant biodiversity net gains through planned development in accordance with the NPPF. • Without the SWLP, it may be difficult to ensure that development is of appropriate type, scale and location to avoid adverse impacts on either biodiversity/geodiversity designations (of international, national or local significance) or on the functioning ecological network of the SWLP area and the various essential ecosystem services this provides. |
| Climatic Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk of flooding will be likely to increase over time due to the changing climate increasing the occurrence of extreme weather events as well as the increasing urbanisation of the SWLP area. • Total carbon emissions are expected to continue to decrease over time as renewable energy becomes an increasingly competitive force in the UK energy market. • It is uncertain if there would be an opportunity to seek aspirational targets in regard to energy efficiency within development in association with meeting the target of carbon neutrality by 2050 in the absence of the SWLP. • Technological advances, which may include renewable energies, electric vehicles, and efficient electricity supplies, would be expected to occur. • It is uncertain if new residents would be located in close proximity to essential services and if new residents would be encouraged to reduce reliance on private car use. • The lack of a planned growth strategy could lead to increased carbon emissions as development is unlikely to be located in sustainable locations. • It is uncertain what proportion of residents in the SWLP area would choose to use sustainable transport modes. However, the Local Transport Plan will continue to be implemented and is likely to have a positive impact on the local road network by helping to relieve congestion and improve public transport provision across the plan area, with associated benefits for transport-related greenhouse gas emissions. |
| Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated heritage assets would continue to benefit from legislative and policy protection. • The Heritage at Risk Register will continue to be managed by Historic England who will continue to work with stakeholders to protect these assets. • Heritage assets, including underground archaeological features, would be likely to be discovered in the future. • It is uncertain if connectivity with places, local distinctiveness and culture would be emphasised and protected in the absence of the SWLP. |
| Human Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population across the two authorities is expected to continue to increase. This is likely to place greater pressure on the capacity of key services and amenities, including health and leisure facilities and housing. • The life expectancy of men and women is anticipated to rise over time. • It is uncertain if existing public green spaces would be maintained and enhanced, to encourage residents to live healthy and active lifestyles. |

| Theme | Likely evolution of the environment without the SWLP |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape would still be protected by legislation, policies set out in the NPPF, the Cotswolds Management Plan and the PPG. • Pressure is likely to increase for development in the open countryside. The quality and distinctiveness of some rural views and landscape features may potentially be compromised in the absence of Plan-led development. • It is uncertain the extent to which development would seek to conserve and enhance the character of local landscape and townscapes. In the absence of Plan-led development, there could potentially be a rise in the quantity of new development which discords with the local character by altering the style, scale or rural/urban divide. |
| Population and Material Assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is uncertain whether future housing provision would fully meet local needs in terms of type, affordability and location. In particular, unmet housing need could exacerbate pressures on affordability, potentially contributing to rising house prices, homelessness and overcrowding. • Without the SWLP, there may be reduced ability to shape the housing mix to respond to changing demographic needs, including provision for specialist housing such as accommodation for older people. • The quantity of self- and custom-build housing is likely to increase over the plan period in response to national policy requirements and local demand. • Without a plan-led approach, there could be reduced control over the location of new housing, increasing the risk of development being directed towards less sustainable locations, including open countryside and areas with poorer access to public transport. • Sustainable access to key services, including schools in rural communities, is unlikely to improve significantly without the SWLP. • Without the SWLP, there is likely to be reduced certainty around long-term economic growth, as the Plan would otherwise provide a framework aligned with wider economic strategies and local investment priorities. • Recycling rates per capita are expected to increase over the plan period in line with national and international policy drivers and targets, regardless of the SWLP. |
| Soil | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates of soil erosion and loss of soil fertility will be likely to continue to rise due to the impacts of agriculture and climate change. |
| Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population in the SWLP area will be likely to rise and water demand will subsequently be likely to rise also. In the absence of plan-led development, the efficiency and sustainability of water consumption may be unlikely to improve. • There could potentially be new developments that result in over-capacity issues at wastewater treatment works (either cumulatively or individually). • Water abstraction, consumption and treatment in the local area will continue to be managed by the Environment Agency and water companies through the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP), Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) and Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) in line with the EU Water Framework Directive. |

4 Methodology

4.1 Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal

4.1.1 The purpose of the SA Scoping Report is to establish the scope of the sustainability appraisal. It includes information about:

- The SA Framework (see **Appendix A**);
- Relevant plans, programmes and their environmental objectives which may have a bearing on the SA of the SWLP (see **Appendix B**);
- Baseline information;
- Environmental issues and problems; and

4.1.2 The SA Scoping Report for the South Warwickshire Local plan was prepared by Lepus in 2022¹⁴. The Scoping Report was subject to a consultation between 23rd June and 4th August 2022 with the statutory consultees (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency). **Appendix C** presents a summary of comments received during each stage of consultation on the SA, including the Scoping Report.

4.1.3 The appraisal uses objective geographic information relating to environmental receptors, the SA Framework and established standards (where available) to help make the assessment decisions transparent and robust.

4.1.4 The SA Framework is comprised of SA Objectives and decision-making criteria. Acting as yardsticks of sustainability performance, the SA Objectives are designed to represent the topics identified in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations¹⁵. The SA Objectives and the SEA Topics to which they relate are set out in **Table 4.1**.

4.1.5 Each SA Objective is considered when appraising Local Plan site allocations, policies and reasonable alternatives. The order of SA Objectives in the SA Framework does not infer prioritisation. The SA Objectives are at a strategic level and can potentially be open-ended. In order to focus each objective, decision making criteria are presented in the SA Framework to be used during the appraisal of policies and sites.

¹⁴ Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Scoping Report. June 2022. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

¹⁵ Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations identifies the likely significant effects on the environment, including “issues such as (a) biodiversity, (b) population, (c) human health, (d) fauna, (e) flora, (f) soil, (g) water, (h) air, (i) climatic factors, (j) material assets, (k) cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, (l) landscape and (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).”

Table 4.1: Summary of the SA Objectives

| | SA Objective | Relevance to SEA Regulations – Schedule 2 |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Climate change: Reduce the SWLP authorities' contribution towards the causes of climate change. | Climatic factors |
| 2 | Flood risk: Plan for anticipated levels of climate change. | Climatic factors and water |
| 3 | Biodiversity and geodiversity: Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity. | Biodiversity, flora and fauna |
| 4 | Landscape: Protect, enhance and manage the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes. | Landscape |
| 5 | Cultural heritage: Protect, enhance and manage sites, features and areas of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance. | Cultural heritage |
| 6 | Environmental Pollution: Mitigate adverse impacts from existing air, water, soil and noise pollution and avoid generating further pollution. | Air, water and material assets |
| 7 | Natural resources: Protect and conserve natural resources including soil, water and minerals. | Soil and material assets |
| 8 | Waste: Reduce waste generation and disposal and support sustainable management of waste. | Material assets |
| 9 | Housing: Provide affordable, high quality and environmentally sound housing for all. | Population |
| 10 | Human Health: Safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing. | Population and human health |
| 11 | Accessibility: Improve accessibility, increase the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and reduce the need to travel. | Population and material assets |
| 12 | Education: Increase access to education and improve attainment to develop and maintain a skilled workforce. | Population and material assets |
| 13 | Economy: Ensure sufficient employment land and premises are available to develop and support diverse, innovative and sustainable growth. | Population and material assets |

4.2 Best practice guidance

4.2.1 Government policy recommends that both SA and SEA are undertaken under a single SA process, which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. This can be achieved through integrating the requirements of SEA into the SA process. The approach for carrying out an integrated SA and SEA is based on best practice guidance:

- European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment¹⁶.
- Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive¹⁷.

¹⁶ European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

¹⁷ Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) (2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁸.
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and MHCLG (2024) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹⁹.
- Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans²⁰.

4.3 Appraisal process

4.3.1 The purpose of this document is to provide an appraisal of the South Warwickshire including reasonable alternatives in line with Regulation 12 of the SEA Regulations²¹ which states that:

4.3.2 *“Where an environmental assessment is required by any provision of Part 2 of these Regulations, the responsible authority shall prepare, or secure the preparation of, an environmental report ... [which] shall identify, describe and evaluate 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”.*

4.3.3 This document also provides information in relation to the likely characteristics of effects, as per the SEA Regulations (see **Box 4.1**).

Box 4.1: Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations²²

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations)

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

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets out 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; and
- 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).

¹⁸ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

¹⁹ DLUHC & MHCLG (2024) Planning practice guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

²⁰ RTPI (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans. Available at: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/practice-rtpi/2018/january/strategic-environmental-assessment-seasa-for-land-use-plans/> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

²¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

²² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

Box 4.1: Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations²²

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations)

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; and
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

4.4 Impact assessment and determination of significance

4.4.1 Significance of effect is a combination of the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of anticipated impacts. Sensitivity can be expressed in relative terms, based on the principle that the more sensitive the resource, the greater the magnitude of the change, and as compared with the do-nothing comparison, the greater will be the significance of effect.

Sensitivity

4.4.2 Sensitivity has been measured through consideration as to how the receiving environment will be impacted by a plan proposal. This includes assessment of the value and vulnerability of the receiving environment, whether or not environmental quality standards will be exceeded, and, for example, if impacts will affect designated areas or landscapes.

4.4.3 A guide to the range of scales used in determining sensitivity is presented in **Table 4.2**. For most receptors, sensitivity increases with geographic scale.

Table 4.2: Impact sensitivity

| Scale | Typical criteria |
|----------------------------|--|
| International/ national | Designations that have an international aspect or consideration of transboundary effects beyond national boundaries. This applies to effects and designations/receptors that have a national or international dimension. |
| Regional | This includes the regional and sub-regional scale, including county-wide level and regional areas. |
| Local | This is the district and neighbourhood scale. |

Magnitude

4.4.4 Magnitude relates to the degree of change the receptor will experience, including the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact. Impact magnitude has been determined on the basis of the susceptibility of a receptor to the type of change that will arise, as well as the value of the affected receptor (see **Table 4.3**).

Table 4.3: Impact magnitude

| Impact magnitude | Typical criteria |
|------------------|--|
| High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely total loss of or major alteration to the receptor in question; Provision of a new receptor/feature; or The impact is permanent and frequent. |
| Medium | Partial loss/alteration/improvement to one or more key features; or The impact is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent and short-term; Frequent and reversible; Long-term (and frequent) and reversible; Long-term and occasional; or Permanent and occasional. |
| Low | Minor loss/alteration/improvement to one or more key features of the receptor; or The impact is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reversible and short-term; Reversible and occasional; or Short-term and occasional. |

4.5 Significant effects

4.5.1 A single value from **Table 4.4** has been allocated to each SA Objective for each reasonable alternative. Justification for the classification of the impact for each SA objective is presented in an accompanying narrative assessment text for all reasonable alternatives that have been assessed through the SA process.

4.5.2 The assessment of impacts and subsequent evaluation of significant effects is in accordance with Schedule 2 (6) of the SEA Regulations²³, where feasible, which states that the effects should include: “*secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, cumulative and synergistic effects*”.

Table 4.4: Guide to scoring significant effects

| Significance | Definition (not necessarily exhaustive) |
|----------------------|--|
| Major Negative -- | The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of a quality receptor, such as a feature of international, national or regional importance; Cause a very high-quality receptor to be permanently diminished; Be unable to be entirely mitigated; Be discordant with the existing setting; and/or Contribute to a cumulative significant effect. |
| Minor Negative - | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The size, nature and location of development proposals would be likely to: Not quite fit into the existing location or with existing receptor qualities; and/or Affect undesignated yet recognised local receptors. |

²³ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

| Significance | Definition (not necessarily exhaustive) |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Negligible 0 | Either no impacts are anticipated, or any impacts are anticipated to be negligible. |
| Uncertain +/- | It is uncertain whether impacts would be positive or adverse. |
| Minor Positive + | The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the local scale; • Fit into, or with, the existing location and existing receptor qualities; and/or • Enable the restoration of valued characteristic features. |
| Major Positive ++ | The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale; • Restore valued receptors which were degraded through previous uses; and/or • Improve one or more key elements/features/characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific international, national or regional designation. |

- 4.5.3 When selecting a single value to best represent the sustainability performance, and to understand the significance of effects in terms of the relevant SA Objective, the precautionary principle²⁴ has been used. This is a worst-case scenario approach; if a positive effect is identified in relation to one criterion (see the second column of the SA Framework in **Appendix A**) and a negative effect is identified in relation to another criterion within the same SA Objective, the overall impact has been assigned as negative for that objective. It is therefore essential to appreciate that the impacts provide only an indicative summary, and the accompanying assessment text provides a fuller explanation of the sustainability performance of the option.
- 4.5.4 The assessment considers, on a strategic basis, the degree to which a location can accommodate change without adverse effects on valued or important receptors (identified in the baseline).
- 4.5.5 Significance of effect has been categorised as minor or major. **Table 4.4** sets out the significance matrix and explains the terms used to evaluate each reasonable alternative or proposal against each SA Objective of the SA Framework. The nature of the significant effect can be either positive or negative depending on the type of development and the design and mitigation measures proposed.
- 4.5.6 It is important to note that the assessment scores presented in **Table 4.4** are high level indicators. The assessment narrative text should always read alongside the significance scores. Likely impacts are not intended to be summed.
- 4.5.7 A number of topic-specific methodologies and assumptions have been applied to the appraisal process for reasonable alternative sites against each of the SA Objectives (see **Appendix E**). These should be borne in mind when considering the assessment findings.

²⁴ The European Commission describes the precautionary principle as follows: "If a preliminary scientific evaluation shows that there are reasonable grounds for concern that a particular activity might lead to damaging effects on the environment, or on human, animal or plant health, which would be inconsistent with protection normally afforded to these within the European Community, the Precautionary Principle is triggered".

4.6 Limitations of predicting effects

- 4.6.1 SA/SEA is a tool for predicting potential significant effects. Predicting effects relies on an evidence-based approach and incorporates expert judgement. It is often not possible to state with absolute certainty whether effects will occur, as many impacts are influenced by a range of factors such as the design and the success of mitigation measures.
- 4.6.2 The assessments in this report are based on the best available information, including secondary data provided to Lepus by the Council and information that is publicly available. Every attempt has been made to predict effects as accurately as possible.
- 4.6.3 SA operates at a strategic level which uses available secondary data for the relevant SA Objective. Throughout the SA process, all identified reasonable alternatives, options and proposals will be assessed in the same way using the same method. Sometimes, in the absence of more detailed information, forecasting the potential impacts can require making reasonable assumptions based on the best available data and trends. However, all options must be assessed in the same way, and any introduction of site-based detail should be made clear in the SA report as the new data could potentially introduce bias and skew the findings of the assessment process.
- 4.6.4 It is noted that, in some instances, more detailed evidence prepared by the Councils is available for preferred options. This additional detail has not been factored into the reasonable alternative site assessments presented in **Appendices F, G and H** to ensure consistency and comparability across all options. However, this evidence has been taken into account where relevant in the appraisal of the SWLP as a whole, as set out in **Chapters 7-16**.

5 Reasonable alternatives

5.1 Context

5.1.1 Regulation 12 of the SEA Regulations²⁵ states that: *“Where an environmental assessment is required by any provision of Part 2 of these Regulations, the responsible authority shall prepare, or secure the preparation of, an environmental report ... [which] shall identify, describe and evaluate 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”.*

5.1.2 PPG²⁶ 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”.*

5.1.3 The Council has therefore demonstrated how they have identified, described and evaluated reasonable alternatives as part of the plan making process within this SA Report (which includes the requirements of an SEA Environmental Report). The following sections of this chapter document the process of identifying and evaluating different types of reasonable alternative, when and where the Council considered reasonable alternatives, and how the SA influenced the preparation of the SWLP.

5.2 Different types of reasonable alternatives

5.2.1 It is possible to derive reasonable alternatives for different aspects of a local plan. There is no prescribed formula or procedure about which aspects of a local plan require reasonable alternatives.

5.2.2 The reasonable alternatives considered within the SA have been identified by the Councils throughout the plan-making process. Alternatives have emerged at different stages through engagement with stakeholders and the public, the preparation and review of the evidence base for the Plan area, and a range of Call for Sites exercises.

5.2.3 A range of reasonable alternatives have been considered throughout the plan making process (see **Figure 2.2**), for the following different attributes of the SWLP:

5.2.4 **Housing and employment growth options** were assessed to explore the potential scale of development to be delivered through the SWLP. This included two housing growth options and one employment growth option at the Issues and Options stage (2022), a further housing growth option at the Preferred Options stage (2024), and two updated housing growth options alongside an updated employment growth option at the Regulation 19 stage (**Appendix D**).

²⁵ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

²⁶ MHCLG (2020) Planning Practice Guidance: Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

- 5.2.5 **Spatial options** were assessed to consider alternative approaches to the broad distribution of future housing and employment growth across South Warwickshire. Five spatial growth options were evaluated at the Issues and Options stage (2022).
- 5.2.6 **Broad location options** comprise medium-scale, primarily residential-led development opportunities associated with the Main Settlements, including Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon and Southam. A total of 32 broad location options, each capable of accommodating up to approximately 2,000 homes alongside supporting infrastructure, were assessed at the Issues and Options stage (2022).
- 5.2.7 **Small settlement options** represent intermediate-scale development opportunities, typically associated with villages and smaller settlements such as Wootton Wawen and Radford Semele. The SA assessed 22 small settlement options at the Issues and Options stage (2022), generally accommodating between 50 and 500 homes.
- 5.2.8 **Strategic Growth Locations (SGLs)** comprise reasonable alternative large-scale sites capable of accommodating substantial levels of growth and supporting infrastructure. The SA assessed 24 SGL options at the Preferred Options stage (2024) and 19 updated SGL options at the Regulation 19 stage (**Appendix F**).
- 5.2.9 **New settlement options** comprise freestanding development locations separate from existing towns and villages. The SA assessed seven new settlement options at the Issues and Options stage (2022), 12 options at the Preferred Options stage (2024), and four updated options at the Regulation 19 stage (**Appendix G**).
- 5.2.10 **Non-strategic site options** comprise smaller-scale reasonable alternative development sites assessed primarily using red-line boundaries and high-level site information. The Regulation 19 SA assessed 152 non-strategic site options and three Local Green Space sites (**Appendix H**).
- 5.2.11 **Policy alternatives** were assessed throughout the plan-making process to inform the development of the SWLP policy framework. This included 116 policy options at the Issues and Options stage (2022), 11 draft policies and 49 policy directions at the Preferred Options stage (2024), and 87 policies at the Regulation 19 stage (**Appendix I**).
- 5.2.12 **Figure 5.2** summarises the reasonable alternatives considered throughout the plan making process, and at which chronological stage of the SA process these alternatives have been identified, described and evaluated.

Quick guide to reasonable alternatives

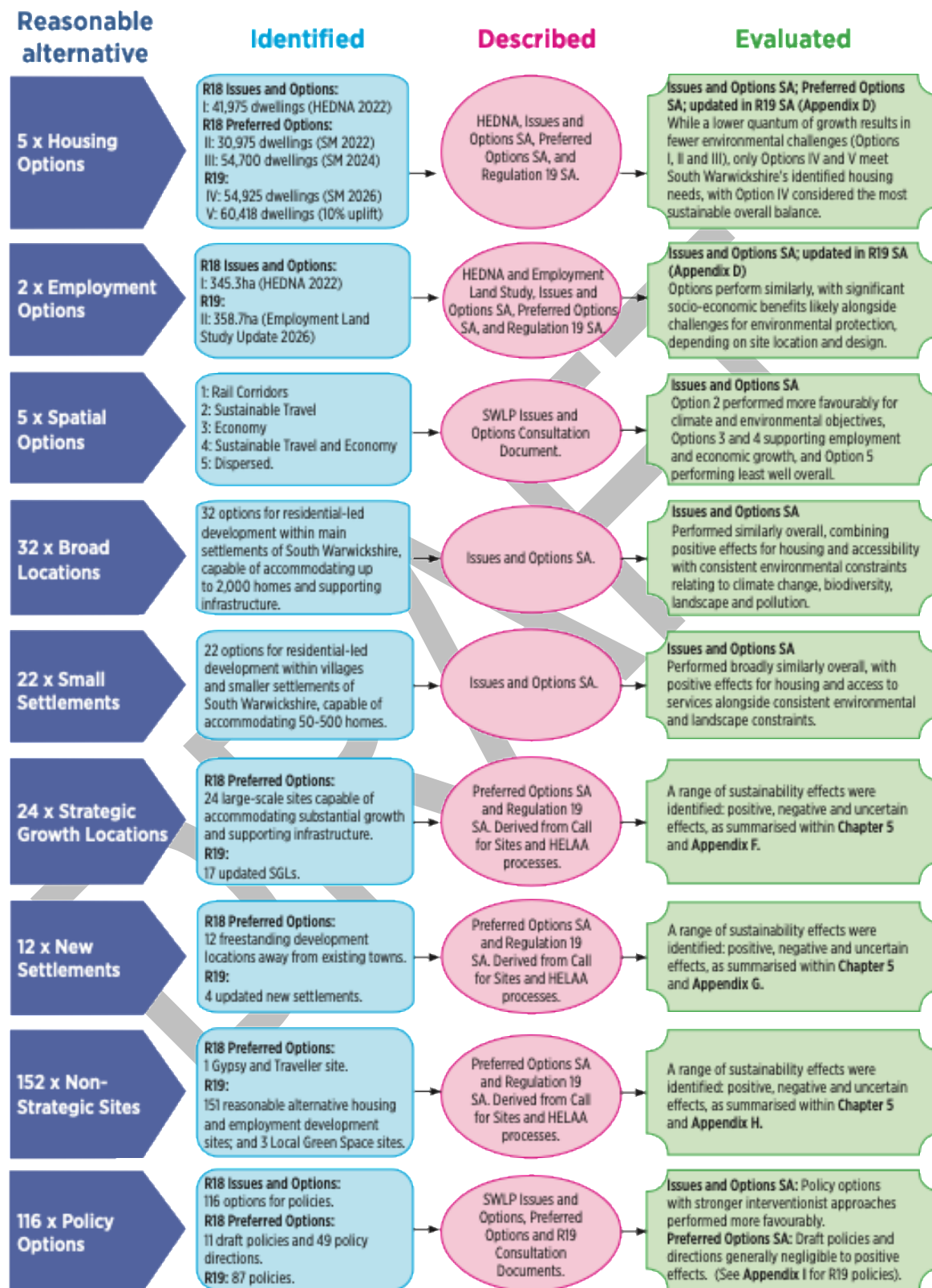


Figure 5.1: The identification, description and evaluation of reasonable alternatives considered at different stages during the plan-making process for the SWLP

5.3 Housing options

- 5.3.1 Paragraph 62 of the NPPF (2024)²⁷ states that the minimum number of homes needed in an area should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method outlined in PPG²⁸. The Councils therefore identified ‘housing options’, which are high-level options for the scale of housing growth to be delivered through the new Local Plan. Five options have been identified across the SA process, as summarised in **Table 5.1**.
- 5.3.2 Two housing growth options were identified during the Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation stage and evaluated in the accompanying SA Report (2022)²⁹, derived from (I) the standard method calculation at the time of preparation; and (II) local trend-based calculation from the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)³⁰.
- 5.3.3 An additional housing option was identified during the Regulation 18 Preferred Options consultation stage and evaluated in the accompanying SA Report (2024)³¹. This option was derived from the revised standard method for calculating housing need, as part of the government’s reforms to the NPPF in December 2024³². For South Warwickshire, this resulted in a need to provide 1,062 homes in Warwick District and 1,126 homes in Stratford-on-Avon District per annum, totalling 54,700 homes across South Warwickshire for the Plan period to 2050.
- 5.3.4 Following the Preferred Options stage, the SWLP authorities identified a further reasonable alternative housing option relating to the potential accommodation of unmet housing needs from neighbouring authorities within the Coventry and Warwickshire and Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Areas (HMAs). In addition, the previously assessed Standard Method option (Option III) was updated to reflect the latest evidence, resulting in a slight increase in housing numbers. Consequently, Options IV and V were assessed in the Regulation 19 SA (see **Appendix D**).

²⁷ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. December 2024. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf> [Date accessed: 30/03/26]

²⁸ MHCLG (2024) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-supply-and-delivery [Date accessed: 30/03/26]

²⁹ Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 18 Issues and Options Stage. Volumes 1-3. November 2022. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

³⁰ Icen (2022) Coventry & Warwickshire Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

³¹ Lepus Consulting (2024) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage. Volumes 1-2. December 2024. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

³² MHCLG (2025) National Planning Policy Framework. December 2024. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

Table 5.1: SWLP housing number options identified during the SA process

| Housing option | SA stage | Description |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Option I | R18 Issues and Options (2022) | The HEDNA trend-based projections point to a need for 41,975 dwellings in total throughout the Plan period with 868 dwellings per annum in Stratford-on-Avon and 811 dwellings per annum needed in Warwick. Combined total of 1,679 per annum . |
| Option II | R18 Preferred Options (2024) | The previous Standard Method calculation (as per 2022) identified a need for 30,975 dwellings in total throughout the Plan period, with 564 dwellings per annum in Stratford-on-Avon and 675 dwellings per annum needed in Warwick. Combined total of 1,239 per annum . |
| Option III | R18 Preferred Options (2024) | The updated Standard Method calculation (as per 2024) identified a need for 54,700 dwellings in total throughout the Plan period, with 1,126 dwellings per annum in Stratford-on-Avon and 1,062 dwellings per annum needed in Warwick. Combined total of 2,188 per annum . |
| Option IV | R19 (Appendix D) | The updated Standard Method calculation identified a need for 54,925 dwellings in total throughout the Plan period, with 1,112 dwellings per annum in Stratford-on-Avon and 1,085 dwellings per annum needed in Warwick. Combined total of 2,197 per annum . |
| Option V | R19 (Appendix D) | The updated Standard Method calculation, plus a 10% uplift to provide for the unmet need from other local planning authorities as a contingency, resulting in a need for 60,418 dwellings in total throughout the Plan period. Combined total of c.2,417 per annum . |

5.3.5 **Table 5.2** provides a comparison of all housing options considered during the SA process. From a purely environmental perspective, a lower quantum of development is likely to result in less severe adverse effects. However, national policy requires that Local Plans are based on the Standard Method calculation of housing need. For the purpose of ‘reasonable alternatives’, a growth option that does not satisfy the calculated housing need for South Warwickshire, as a minimum, would not allow for a ‘sound’ plan and in that sense would not be considered reasonable. As such, the Councils do not consider Options I, II and III to represent reasonable alternatives at this stage. The assessment therefore reflects the need to balance environmental considerations with the requirement to meet identified housing needs and support sustainable patterns of growth.

5.3.6 Due to the strategic nature of the housing options, the appraisal has been undertaken at a high level, as detailed location and site information is not available. Both Options IV and V perform similarly overall against the SA objectives, although the higher level of growth under Option V is likely to result in effects of a greater magnitude, both positive and negative. Option IV performs more favourably in environmental terms due to the lower quantum of development, while Option V may provide greater flexibility to meet unmet housing needs and support socio-economic benefits. Overall, Option IV is considered to perform more favourably in sustainability terms.

Table 5.2: Summary scoring matrix for housing number options assessed in the SA process (see Appendix D)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Housing Number Option | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity & Geodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| Option I | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | - | -- | - | ++ | +/- | +/- | +/- | + |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Housing Number Option | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity & Geodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| Option II | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | - | -- | - | ++ | +/- | +/- | +/- | + |
| Option III | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | -- | -- | -- | ++ | +/- | +/- | +/- | ++ |
| Option IV | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | -- | -- | -- | ++ | +/- | +/- | +/- | ++ |
| Option V | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | -- | -- | -- | ++ | +/- | +/- | +/- | ++ |

Box 5.1: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of housing options

As outlined in the SWLP Growth Strategy Topic Paper, the accepted housing requirement for South Warwickshire is 54,925 dwellings per annum. The Councils' selection of Option IV (54,925 dwellings) reflects the application of the standard method Local Housing Need over the plan period and is therefore treated as the appropriate minimum requirement in line with national policy. The evidence indicates that no strategic constraints were identified that would justify planning for a lower figure, and the Sustainability Appraisal instead focuses on testing a reasonable alternative around potential 10% uplift to respond to unmet needs from neighbouring authorities, but this were found likely to result in additional allocations in less sustainable locations and increased environmental effects, while lower or zero-flexibility approaches risk under-delivery. As such, the chosen approach represents a policy-compliant baseline, balanced with an appropriate degree of flexibility, rather than a departure to either a materially lower or significantly higher housing requirement.

5.4 Employment options

5.4.1 The South Warwickshire Councils have considered the overall employment land needs for the SWLP. The 'employment number options' are high-level options for the scale of employment growth to be delivered through the emerging SWLP. Two options have been identified across the SA process, as summarised in **Table 5.3**.

5.4.2 One employment option was identified during the Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation stage and evaluated in the accompanying SA Report (2022)³³, derived from the HEDNA (2022)³⁴.

³³ Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 18 Issues and Options Stage. Volumes 1-3. November 2022. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

³⁴ Icen (2022) Coventry & Warwickshire Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/technical-evidence.cfm> [Date accessed: 28/04/26]

5.4.3 Following the Preferred Options stage, the SWLP authorities identified an updated reasonable alternative employment growth option based on the latest economic and commercial market evidence, including the South Warwickshire Employment Land Study Update (2026)³⁵, the West Midlands Strategic Sites Study (WMSESS) (2024)³⁶ and the Coventry & Warwickshire HEDNA and WMSESS Alignment Paper (2024)³⁷. The updated option incorporates both strategic and non-strategic employment land requirements, taking account of committed supply and completions since 2021 to align with the SWLP period. No further reasonable alternatives were identified, and the previously assessed Option I is no longer considered reasonable.

Table 5.3: SWLP employment number options identified during the SA process

| Employment option | SA stage | Office (ha) | Strategic employment (industrial) (ha) | Non-strategic employment (industrial) (ha) | Total (ha) |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--|--|------------|
| Option I | R18 Issues and Options (2022) | 23.0 | - | 322.3 | 345.3 |
| Option II | R19 (Appendix D) | 7.1 | 125.0 | 226.6 | 358.7 |

5.4.4 **Table 5.4** provides a comparison of both employment options, which perform the same against the high-level SA scoring system. Due to the strategic nature of the employment option and the absence of site-specific information, the appraisal has been undertaken at a high level. Overall, both options are expected to deliver significant economic benefits, including major positive effects for the economy and minor positive effects for education. However, the scale of development, including strategic employment provision to a greater extent under Option II, is also likely to give rise to notable environmental effects, particularly in relation to climate change, landscape, pollution and natural resources. Minor adverse effects are also anticipated for biodiversity, waste, health and accessibility, while effects on flood risk remain uncertain depending on site-specific circumstances.

Table 5.4: Summary scoring matrix for employment number options assessed in the SA process (see Appendix D)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Employment Number Option | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity & Geodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| Option I | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | -- | -- | - | 0 | - | - | + | ++ |
| Option II | -- | +/- | - | -- | +/- | -- | -- | - | 0 | - | - | + | ++ |

³⁵ Icení (2026) South Warwickshire Employment Land Study. Update 2026.

³⁶ Mace & Icení (2024) West Midlands Strategic Employment Sites Study 2023/24. August 2024. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/doc/213166/name/WMSESS%20Final%20Report%20Aug%202024.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

³⁷ Icení (2024) Coventry & Warwickshire HEDNA – WMSESS Alignment Paper. November 2024. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/doc/213167/name/CW%20HEDNA%20WMSESS%20Alignment%20Paper%20Amended%20151124%20.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

Box 5.2: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of employment options

As outlined in the SWLP Growth Strategy Topic Paper, the Councils' approach to employment land provision, as set out under Option II in the SA, is informed by the economic evidence base, which identifies the scale and type of land required to support forecast job growth over the plan period. The Topic Paper indicates that this approach seeks to deliver a balanced portfolio of employment land, including a range of site types and sizes to meet different market needs, and is aligned with the spatial strategy by directing provision towards accessible and sustainable locations. It also reflects the need to support economic growth, job creation and key sectors, while providing flexibility and choice within the market. As such, the preferred approach represents a proportionate and evidence-led response to employment needs.

5.5 Spatial options

5.5.1 The Councils identified five spatial growth options, which set out the different locations across the plan area where development may be directed to meet the needs of South Warwickshire to 2050. The options seek to provide homes, jobs, green spaces and other infrastructure in the most suitable and sustainable places. The Councils identified five Spatial Growth Options as follows:

- Option 1: Rail Corridors;
- Option 2: Sustainable Travel;
- Option 3: Economy;
- Option 4: Sustainable Travel and Economy; and
- Option 5: Dispersed.

5.5.2 The five options were evaluated in the Issues and Options SA (2022). The high-level assessment of the spatial growth options (which are not all fully distinct, with the exception of Option 5) means that sustainability performance can only be considered with several caveats. In particular, the lack of detailed locational information limits the ability to identify effects with precision. The scores in **Table 5.5** are therefore indicative only and do not represent a detailed diagnostic assessment. Mitigation has not been applied at this stage, as this is best considered once more detailed spatial information is available.

5.5.3 The options are likely to perform differently across individual SA objectives, making it difficult to identify a single best-performing option overall. Option 5 performs least well overall, while Option 2 is likely to offer the strongest alignment with climate change objectives and performs relatively better in relation to pollution and natural resources due to its more concentrated form of development. In contrast, Options 3 and 4 perform more strongly in relation to employment and economic objectives. For waste and housing objectives, all options perform broadly similarly in the absence of further spatial detail.

Table 5.5: Summary scoring matrix for spatial growth options assessed in the Issues and Options SA

| Spatial Option | SA Objective | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | SA1: Climate Change | SA2: Flood Risk | SA3: Biodiversity | SA4: Landscape | SA5: Cultural Heritage | SA6: Environmental Pollution | SA7: Natural Resources | SA8: Waste | SA9: Housing | SA10: Health | SA11: Accessibility | SA12: Education | SA13: Economy |
| Rail Corridors | - | 0 | +/- | - | +/- | + | + | - | ++ | +/- | ++ | +/- | + |
| Sustainable Travel | - | 0 | - | + | +/- | + | + | - | ++ | +/- | + | +/- | + |
| Economy | - | 0 | - | - | +/- | +/- | - | - | ++ | +/- | - | +/- | ++ |
| Sustainable Travel & Economy | - | 0 | - | - | +/- | +/- | - | - | ++ | +/- | + | +/- | ++ |
| Dispersed | -- | 0 | -- | + | + | +/- | 0 | - | ++ | -- | -- | - | - |

Box 5.3: SWLP Councils selection and rejection of spatial options

As outlined in the SWLP Growth Strategy Topic Paper, the chosen spatial growth strategy for South Warwickshire is Sustainable Rail and Economy. This approach directs growth towards urban areas, locations with good access to sustainable transport (particularly rail), proximity to employment areas, and areas of socioeconomic deprivation, and is considered to represent the most appropriate distribution of development. The strategy is supported by wider considerations including density, the potential for new settlements, and the use of brownfield land, and is translated into a series of key principles and priority areas that underpin the identification of New Settlements and Strategic Growth Locations. In addition, smaller-scale development is directed to Local Growth Locations to support housing land supply, alongside windfall development within existing built-up areas and rural exception sites, ensuring a comprehensive and flexible approach to growth consistent with national policy.

5.6 Strategic-scale development sites

5.6.1 The SWLP Councils identified opportunities for strategic-scale development at different stages of the plan-making process, beginning with Broad Locations and Small Settlements at the Issues and Options stage, which informed the later identification of Strategic Growth Locations at the Preferred Options stage.

Broad Locations

5.6.2 The SWLP Councils and Lepus identified 32 Broad Locations around key settlements, informed by the South Warwickshire Settlement Analysis and the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood. The 32 Broad Locations related to indicative areas around the main settlements of: Alcester; Kenilworth; Royal Leamington Spa; Shipston; Southam; Stratford-upon-Avon; Warwick; and Whitnash.

5.6.3 Broad Locations were identified where at least 50% of a land parcel lies within 800m of key services, including public transport hubs, GP surgeries, primary schools, local shops and/or publicly accessible green space. Land was excluded where subject to key constraints, including Flood Zones 2 and 3, Cotswolds National Landscape, Grade 1 agricultural land, Scheduled Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG) and ancient woodland.

5.6.4 Broad Locations were assumed to accommodate up to 2,000 dwellings at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare, with 40% of each site is retained or provided as green infrastructure.

- 5.6.5 **Table 5.6** summarises the assessment findings for the Broad Locations against each SA Objective, based on the worst-performing indicator within each objective. Detailed assessments of all indicators are provided in Appendix B of the Issues and Options SA (2022).
- 5.6.6 The 32 Broad Locations were found to perform in a broadly similar way due to their consistent scale and development assumptions. Effects are mixed, with limited flood risk implications but potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, environmental pollution and loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Climate change and waste objectives are assessed as having major adverse effects across all locations due to the scale of residential development, while accessibility, health, education and employment objectives generally perform positively given proximity to services, transport links and job opportunities. Overall, the Broad Locations are considered to deliver a major positive effect in relation to housing provision, but with notable environmental constraints that apply consistently across the options.

DRAFT

Table 5.6: Summary scoring matrix for broad locations assessed in the Issues and Options SA

| Broad Locations | SA Objective | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | SA1: Climate Change | SA2: Flood Risk | SA3: Biodiversity | SA4: Landscape | SA5: Cultural Heritage | SA6: Environmental Pollution | SA7: Natural Resources | SA8: Waste | SA9: Housing | SA10: Health | SA11: Accessibility | SA12: Education | SA13: Economy |
| Alcester Northeast | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Alcester South | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Alcester West | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Kenilworth North | -- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | ++ | + | + |
| Kenilworth Northeast | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Kenilworth Northwest | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Kenilworth South | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | + | - | + |
| Kenilworth Southeast | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Kenilworth West | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa East | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa Northeast | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa Northwest | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa South | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa Southeast | -- | + | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | ++ | + | + | + |
| Royal Leamington Spa Southwest | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Shipston East | -- | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Shipston North | -- | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Shipston Southwest | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Shipston West | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Southam Northeast | -- | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Southam Northwest | -- | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Southam Southeast | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Southam Southwest | -- | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Stratford-upon-Avon East | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Stratford-upon-Avon Northeast | -- | 0 | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | ++ | + | + |
| Stratford-upon-Avon Northwest | -- | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Stratford-upon-Avon South | -- | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | ++ | + | + |
| Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest | -- | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Warwick Northeast | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Warwick Northwest | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Warwick West | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| Whitnash | -- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | + | + |

Small Settlements

- 5.6.7 The SWLP Councils and Lepus identified 22 Small Settlements with potential to accommodate further growth: Barford; Bearley; Bidford; Bishop's Tachbrook; Claverdon; Cubbington; Earlswood; Hampton Magna; Hatton Park; Hatton Station; Henley; Kineton; Kingswood; Long Itchington; Radford Semele; Salford Priors; South Coventry; Studley; Wellesbourne; Wilmcote; Wood End; and Wootton Wawen.
- 5.6.8 Small Settlements were identified where at least 50% of a land parcel lies within 400m of a settlement edge, and within 800m of at least one key service, including public transport hubs, GP surgeries, primary schools, local shops and/or publicly accessible green space. Land was excluded where subject to key constraints, including Flood Zones 2 and 3, Cotswolds National Landscape, Grade 1 agricultural land, Scheduled Monuments, SSSI, RPG and ancient woodland.
- 5.6.9 Small Settlements were assumed to accommodate 50-500 dwellings at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare, with 40% of each site retained or provided as green infrastructure.
- 5.6.10 **Table 5.7** summarises the assessment findings for the Small Settlements against each SA Objective, based on the worst-performing indicator within each objective. Detailed assessments of all indicators are provided in Appendix C of the Issues and Options SA (2022).
- 5.6.11 The 22 Small Settlements performed similarly overall, with major positive effects for housing provision and generally positive effects for health, accessibility and primary education where services and transport links were available. However, potential adverse effects were consistently identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, pollution, loss of BMV agricultural land, climate change and waste, while flood risk effects were generally negligible due to the avoidance of flood zones.

Table 5.7: Summary scoring matrix for small settlements assessed in the Issues and Options SA

| Small Settlement | SA Objective | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | SA1: Climate Change | SA2: Flood Risk | SA3: Biodiversity | SA4: Landscape | SA5: Cultural Heritage | SA6: Environmental Pollution | SA7: Natural Resources | SA8: Waste | SA9: Housing | SA10: Health | SA11: Accessibility | SA12: Education | SA13: Economy |
| Barford | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Bearley | - | + | -- | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Bidford | - | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Bishop's Tachbrook | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Claverdon | - | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Cubbington | - | 0 | - | -- | - | 0 | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Earlswood | - | + | - | -- | - | 0 | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Hampton Magna | - | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | + |
| Hatton Park | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Hatton Station | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Henley | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Kineton | - | 0 | - | -- | -- | - | -- | - | ++ | - | ++ | + | + |
| Kingswood | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | + |
| Long Itchington | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Radford Semele | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| Salford Priors | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| South Coventry | - | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Studley | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Wellesbourne | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Wilmcote | - | 0 | -- | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| Wood End | - | 0 | -- | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | + |
| Wootton Wawen | - | 0 | - | -- | - | - | -- | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | + |

Strategic Growth Locations

5.6.12 Drawing on the earlier Broad Locations and Small Settlements evaluated in the Issues and Options SA, at the Regulation 18 Preferred Options stage, the South Warwickshire Councils identified 24 reasonable alternative Strategic Growth Locations (SGLs) to accommodate strategic-scale housing and employment growth over the SWLP period (2025-2050). The 24 SGLs were assessed in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options SA (2024) using the red line boundaries and development information provided by the Councils, for the following:

- SG01 South of Coventry
- SG02 Stoneleigh Park Employment
- SG03 Coventry Airport
- SG04 South of Kenilworth

- SG05 East of Lillington
- SG06 North of Leamington
- SG07 Wedgnoek Park Farm Employment
- SG08 West of Warwick
- SG09 South of Europa Way
- SG10 Bishop’s Tachbrook
- SG11 South East of Whitnash
- SG12 Southam
- SG13 Gaydon Lighthorne Heath
- SG14 East of Gaydon
- SG15 North of Wellesbourne
- SG16 South of Wellesbourne
- SG17 Shipston-on-Stour
- SG18 West of Stratford-upon-Avon
- SG19 East of Stratford-upon-Avon
- SG20 Bidford-on-Avon
- SG21 Alcester
- SG22 West of Studley
- SG23 North of Henley-in-Arden
- SG24 Hockley Heath

5.6.13 The appraisal identified several SGLs as performing relatively well overall, particularly SG05, SG03, SG22, SG09 and SG04, which generally performed strongly against objectives relating to flooding, accessibility, health, biodiversity, pollution, cultural heritage and the economy (see **Table 5.8**). SG05 emerged as the best performing option overall, while SG22 was expected to generate the greatest number of positive effects across the SA Framework despite potential landscape concerns.

5.6.14 In contrast, SG15, SG21, SG02, SG01 and SG18 performed least favourably overall, particularly in relation to flooding, biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, pollution, accessibility and natural resources, and were expected to result in comparatively greater adverse effects. All rankings were noted to be indicative and subject to change as further evidence, mitigation measures and infrastructure proposals emerge.

Table 5.8: Summary scoring matrix for SGLs assessed in the Preferred Options SA

| SGL no. | Strategic Growth Location | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---------|----------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| | | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| SG01 | South of Coventry | -- | 0 | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG02 | Stoneleigh Park Employment | +/- | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG03 | Coventry Airport | +/- | + | - | +/- | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | +/- |
| SG04 | South of Kenilworth | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG05 | East of Lillington | -- | + | - | - | - | 0 | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG06 | North of Leamington | -- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |

| SGL no. | Strategic Growth Location | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| | | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| SG07 | Wedgnock Park Farm Employment | +/- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG08 | West of Warwick | -- | - | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| SG09 | South of Europa Way | -- | + | - | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG10 | Bishops Tachbrook | -- | 0 | - | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG11 | South East of Whitnash | -- | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG12 | Southam | -- | 0 | - | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG13 | Gaydon Lighthorne Heath | -- | + | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG14 | East of Gaydon | -- | + | -- | - | 0 | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG15 | North of Wellesbourne | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG16 | South of Wellesbourne | -- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG17 | Shipston-on-Stour | -- | - | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG18 | West of Stratford-Upon-Avon | -- | 0 | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG19 | East of Stratford-Upon-Avon | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG20 | Bidford-on-Avon | -- | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG21 | Alcester | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG22 | West of Studley | -- | + | - | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG23 | North of Henley-in-Arden | -- | + | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | - |
| SG24 | Hockley Heath | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |

5.6.15 Since the Preferred Options stage, the SGL options have been refined through updated evidence and site assessment work. Of the original 24 options, 13 SGLs have been carried forward with amendments to their boundaries (SG01, SG02, SG04, SG05, SG07, SG09, SG10, SG12, SG13, SG16, SG19, SG20 and SG18 split into SG18-N and SG18-S), five are unchanged (SG03, SG06, SG08, SG15, SG23), and the remaining options are no longer considered to be reasonable alternatives at this stage. The 19 updated SGLs have been evaluated in **Appendix F**.

5.6.16 **Table 5.9** summarises the pre-mitigation assessment of the 19 reasonable alternative SGLs.

Best Performing Options

5.6.17 Drawing on the relative performance of each SGL against the SA Objectives, the emerging best performing options include Bishop’s Tachbrook (SG10), East of Lillington (SG05), North of Leamington (SG06) and South of Kenilworth (SG04).

5.6.18 The Bishop’s Tachbrook (SG10) SGL is identified as one of the best performing overall. This SGL performs strongly in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11), health (SA Objective 10) and economy (SA Objective 13), reflecting its proximity to existing services and employment opportunities. It is expected to result in a high number of positive effects overall and is not identified to be amongst the worst performing for any SA Objectives.

- 5.6.19 The East of Lillington (SG05) SGL also performs well overall. This SGL is identified as performing strongly in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11), education (SA Objective 12) and health (SA Objective 10), whilst also performing positively across a range of environmental objectives. It is expected to result in predominantly positive effects, with limited significant negative effects identified.
- 5.6.20 Similarly, the North of Leamington (SG06) SGL performs favourably against a number of SA Objectives. This SGL benefits from strong connectivity to the existing urban area and is identified as performing well in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11), economy (SA Objective 13) and community-related objectives. Although some environmental constraints are identified, there is potential for these to be mitigated.
- 5.6.21 The South of Kenilworth (SG04) SGL also performs relatively well overall. This SGL is identified as performing positively in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11), health (SA Objective 10) and community cohesion, whilst also avoiding the most significant environmental constraints identified at other locations. It is not identified to be amongst the worst performing options for any SA Objectives.
- 5.6.22 Other SGLs which also appear to perform relatively well include West of Warwick (SG08), Southam (SG12) and Stratford-upon-Avon South (SG19). These SGLs are also likely to result in a number of positive effects overall, although performance is more mixed across certain environmental objectives. All ranking at this stage is indicative and will be subject to change as further evidence emerges regarding the potential for mitigation and infrastructure provision.

Worst Performing Options

- 5.6.23 Drawing on the relative performance of each SGL against the SA Objectives, the emerging worst performing options include North of Wellesbourne (SG15), South of Coventry (SG01), South of Europa Way (SG09) and Stoneleigh Park Employment (SG02).
- 5.6.24 The North of Wellesbourne (SG15) SGL is identified as one of the worst performing options overall. This SGL performs less favourably in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11), reflecting its distance from higher order services and facilities, and is also identified as performing poorly against a number of environmental objectives. It is not identified to be amongst the best performing for any SA Objectives.
- 5.6.25 The South of Coventry (SG01) SGL is also identified as performing less favourably overall. This SGL performs poorly in relation to biodiversity (SA Objective 3), landscape (SA Objective 4) and natural resources (SA Objective 7), and is also associated with potential negative effects in relation to pollution (SA Objective 6). It is not identified to be amongst the best performing options for any objective.
- 5.6.26 Similarly, the South of Europa Way (SG09) SGL performs less favourably overall. This SGL is identified as performing poorly in relation to accessibility (SA Objective 11) and is subject to a number of environmental constraints. Although there may be opportunities for mitigation, the SGL is currently identified as being amongst the weaker performing options.
- 5.6.27 The Stoneleigh Park Employment (SG02) SGL is also identified as one of the worst performing options. This SGL performs poorly in relation to biodiversity (SA Objective 3), cultural heritage (SA Objective 5) and natural resources (SA Objective 7), and is associated with a number of uncertain effects reflecting the employment-led nature of development. It is not identified to be amongst the best performing for any SA Objectives.

5.6.28 Other SGLs which also appear frequently within the lower performing group include Coventry Airport (SG03) and South East of Whitnash (SG07). These SGLs are also likely to result in a higher number of negative or uncertain effects compared to other options.

Table 5.9: Summary scoring matrix for strategic growth locations assessed in Appendix F

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Strategic Growth Locations | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity & Geodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| SG01 | -- | 0 | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| SG02 | +/- | 0 | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG03 | +/- | 0 | - | 0 | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | +/- |
| SG04 | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG05 | -- | + | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG06 | -- | 0 | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG07 | +/- | + | -- | -- | - | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG08 | - | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| SG09 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | -- | - | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| SG10 | -- | 0 | - | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG12 | -- | 0 | - | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| SG13 | +/- | + | -- | - | - | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG15 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| SG16 | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| SG18(N) | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG18(S) | -- | + | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG19 | -- | + | -- | -- | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| SG20 | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| SG23 | -- | + | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | - |

5.6.29 The South Warwickshire Councils' outline reasons for selection or rejection of each reasonable alternative SGL are set out in **Appendix K**.

5.7 New settlements

5.7.1 The Councils explored new settlements as a potential source of housing growth for the SWLP period, intended to create communities capable of meeting most day-to-day needs locally and reducing the need to travel. The Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA (2022) included an assessment of seven reasonable alternative new settlements using broad 250ha search areas identified through the Issues and Options Consultation:

- A1 – Land South of Tanworth-in-Arden
- B1 – Land at Hatton
- C1 – Land South of Kingswood
- E1 – Long Marston Airfield
- F1 – Land to the West of Ufton
- F2 – Land South of Deppers Bridge
- F3 – Land North East of Knightcote

5.7.2 The potential new settlements performed broadly similarly overall, with strong positive effects identified for housing provision, the economy and connectivity to rail, greenspace and active travel networks (see **Table 5.10**). However, all locations were assessed as having major adverse effects in relation to climate change and waste due to the scale of development, alongside likely adverse impacts on landscape, natural resources and biodiversity, including Local Wildlife Sites and, in some cases, SSSI. Performance varied between locations in relation to flood risk, pollution, health, education and cultural heritage.

Table 5.10: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in the Issues and Options SA

| New Settlements | SA Objective | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | SA1: Climate Change | SA2: Flood Risk | SA3: Biodiversity | SA4: Landscape | SA5: Cultural Heritage | SA6: Environmental Pollution | SA7: Natural Resources | SA8: Waste | SA9: Housing | SA10: Health | SA11: Accessibility | SA12: Education | SA13: Economy |
| A1 | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| B1 | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| C1 | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| E1 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| F1 | - | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| F2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| F3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |

5.7.3 At the next stage of plan making, using the HELAA Part A methodology and an updated New Settlement Methodology, the Councils identified 12 reasonable alternative new settlement locations for assessment in the Preferred Options SA (2024), comprising the original seven options and five additional alternatives:

- A2 – Land East of Wood End
- BW – Land at Bearley and Wilmcote
- G1 – Land to the West of Knightcote
- X1 – Land South of Leamington/North of Wellesbourne/east of Barford
- X2 – Land East of Leamington Spa/Whitnash and west of B445 Fosse Way

5.7.4 In the Preferred Options SA (2024), these 12 SGLs were assessed using updated red line boundaries and development information provided by the Councils (see **Table 5.11**). New Settlement X1 was identified as the best performing option overall, particularly for pollution, health and employment, although potential heritage impacts were identified that may be mitigated through design and green infrastructure. In contrast, New Settlement F3 performed least favourably overall, particularly in relation to flooding, health, accessibility, education, pollution and the economy.

Table 5.11: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in the Preferred Options SA

| No. | New Settlement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-----|---|----------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| | | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| A1 | Land south of Tanworth-in-Arden | -- | + | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | - |
| A2 | Land east of Wood End | -- | + | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | - |
| B1 | Land south of Hatton Park | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| BW | Land at Bearley and Wilmcote | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| C1 | Land south of Kingswood | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | - |
| E1 | Extension to Long Marston Airfield | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| F1 | Land to the west of Ufton | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| F2 | Lands south of Deppers Bridge | -- | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| F3 | Land north east of Knightcote | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | - |
| G1 | Land west of Knightcote | -- | - | -- | - | - | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| X1 | Land south of Leamington/ north of Wellesbourne | -- | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| X2 | Land south of Leamington Spa and Whitnash | -- | - | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |

5.7.5 Since the Preferred Options stage, the Councils have reviewed the SA findings, consultation responses, evidence base and land availability. As a result, four options (B1, BW, C1 and E1) have been carried forward with amended boundaries, one new option (A3) has been identified, and the remaining options are no longer considered reasonable alternatives at this stage.

5.7.6 **Table 5.12** summarises the pre-mitigation assessment of the 19 reasonable alternative New Settlements.

Best Performing Options

5.7.7 Drawing on the relative performance of each new settlement option against the SA Objectives, the emerging best performing option is identified as C1 (Land South of Kingswood). This option performs strongly against SA Objective 1 (Accessibility to services and facilities) due to its proximity to existing services, facilities and rail connections, and also performs well against SA Objective 3 (Employment), with good access to existing employment areas and potential for on-site provision. The site is also identified as performing positively against SA Objective 9 (Pollution), reflecting its location away from major sources of air and noise pollution. Whilst some negative effects are identified in relation to SA Objective 8 (Flood Risk) and SA Objective 11 (Natural Resources), these are not considered to outweigh the overall positive performance of the site, and it has not been identified to be amongst the worst performing for any objective.

5.7.8 The BW (Bearley Wilmcote) option also performs relatively well overall. This option is identified as performing strongly against SA Objective 1 (Accessibility to services and facilities), benefitting from proximity to rail infrastructure and nearby settlements, and SA Objective 3 (Employment), due to access to employment opportunities and the potential for new provision. It is also identified as performing positively against SA Objective 9 (Pollution). Although there are some constraints identified in relation to SA Objective 8 (Flood Risk) and SA Objective 11 (Natural Resources), the site is not identified to be amongst the worst performing options for any objective.

5.7.9 Similarly, the E1 (Long Marston) option performs relatively well overall. This option is identified as performing well against SA Objective 1 (Accessibility to services and facilities), due to its relationship with nearby settlements and access to strategic transport routes, and SA Objective 3 (Employment), supported by existing employment uses and potential for expansion. The site also performs positively against SA Objective 9 (Pollution). Whilst some minor negative effects are identified for SA Objective 8 (Flood Risk) and SA Objective 11 (Natural Resources), these are broadly consistent with other options and do not significantly affect the overall performance of the site.

Worst Performing Options

5.7.10 Drawing on the relative performance of each new settlement option against the SA Objectives, the emerging worst performing option is identified as A3 (Land at Danzey). This option performs poorly against SA Objective 1 (Accessibility to services and facilities), reflecting its rural and relatively isolated location with limited access to services, facilities and public transport, resulting in a major negative effect. It also performs poorly against SA Objective 3 (Employment), due to limited access to existing employment opportunities and a lack of clear on-site provision. The site is not identified to be amongst the best performing for any objective.

5.7.11 Other options located in more rural or less accessible locations also perform less favourably overall. These sites are typically identified as performing poorly against SA Objective 1 (Accessibility to services and facilities) and SA Objective 3 (Employment), due to increased reliance on private car travel and reduced access to jobs and services. Whilst some of these options perform more positively against SA Objective 9 (Pollution), reflecting their distance from major transport corridors, this does not outweigh the significant negative effects identified in relation to accessibility and employment. Overall, these sites are likely to result in a greater number of negative effects in comparison to the higher performing options.

Table 5.12: Summary scoring matrix for new settlements assessed in Appendix G

| New Settlement | 1 Climate Change | 2 Flood Risk | 3 Biodiversity & Geodiversity | 4 Landscape | 5 Cultural Heritage | 6 Pollution | 7 Natural Resources | 8 Waste | 9 Housing | 10 Health | 11 Accessibility | 12 Education | 13 Economy |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| A3 - Land at Danzey | -- | 0 | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | - |
| B1 - Hatton | -- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | ++ |
| BW - Bearley Wilmcote | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| C1 - Land South of Kingswood | -- | - | -- | -- | -- | - | -- | -- | ++ | - | -- | - | ++ |

E1 - Long Marston



5.7.12 The South Warwickshire Councils' outline reasons for selection or rejection of each reasonable alternative new settlement are set out in **Appendix K**.

5.8 Non-strategic development sites

5.8.1 At the Preferred Options stage, the South Warwickshire Councils identified one smaller-scale Gypsy and Traveller (GT) site at Harbury Lane for 20 pitches, intended to meet part of the identified GT need across South Warwickshire during the Plan period.

5.8.2 The site was assessed in the Preferred Options SA (2024) and performed positively overall, particularly in relation to flood risk, housing and the economy, reflecting its previously developed nature, contribution to identified GT need and proximity to employment opportunities. Negligible effects were identified for landscape, cultural heritage, pollution and natural resources due to the site's limited scale. Minor negative effects were identified for health and education due to limited access to services, while accessibility effects were mixed. Effects relating to climate change, waste, biodiversity and landscape remained uncertain due to limited detail regarding layout, design and potential environmental impacts.

5.8.3 Since the Preferred Options consultation, the Councils have undertaken further site identification and assessment through the Call for Sites and HELAA processes, filtering out unsuitable, unavailable or constrained sites to identify 152 reasonable alternative non-strategic sites, including the Harbury Lane Gypsy and Traveller site. Full assessments are provided in **Appendix H**.

5.8.4 For the purposes of SA, all sites with extant planning permission are treated as commitments and form part of the baseline. They are not subject to further site-specific appraisal through the SA, as the plan is not making a decision regarding their allocation. This applies irrespective of whether development has commenced.

5.8.5 **Table 5.13** summarises the pre-mitigation assessment of the 19 reasonable alternative non-strategic sites.

5.8.6 The non-strategic sites are expected to generate a range of positive sustainability effects, primarily associated with their contribution to housing delivery, economic growth and, in some cases, accessibility to services. Residential-led sites will contribute to meeting identified housing needs, with larger sites (particularly those delivering 100 or more dwellings) expected to result in major positive effects under SA Objective 9: Housing. In addition, employment sites and mixed-use proposals are likely to support job creation and economic development (SA Objective 13: Economy), while some sites benefit from locations within or adjacent to existing settlements, supporting access to services and facilities (SA Objectives 11 and 12). Furthermore, a large proportion of sites are not constrained by key environmental designations such as SSSIs, Local Wildlife Sites or landscape designations, resulting in negligible effects across several environmental objectives and indicating good potential for development with limited conflict in these areas.

5.8.7 On the other hand, the non-strategic sites are also associated with a number of adverse sustainability effects, particularly when considered cumulatively. Development across the sites is expected to contribute to increased GHG emissions and resource consumption, resulting in minor negative effects under SA Objective 1: Climate Change. In addition, all residential sites are anticipated to significantly increase household waste arisings (SA Objective 8: Waste), while many sites are associated with biodiversity impacts, including loss or fragmentation of priority habitats, proximity to Local Wildlife Sites, and potential effects on SSSIs, with some sites identified as having minor to major negative impacts. Landscape and visual impacts are also evident, including effects on views from Public Rights of Way and risks of settlement coalescence in certain locations. Furthermore, a number of sites are affected by flood risk constraints or environmental sensitivities, reinforcing the potential for adverse effects across SA Objectives relating to flood risk, biodiversity, and landscape.

Table 5.13: Summary scoring matrix for non-strategic sites assessed in Appendix H

| Non-Strategic Sites | 1 Climate Change | 2 Flood Risk | 3 Biodiversity & Geodiversity | 4 Landscape | 5 Cultural Heritage | 6 Pollution | 7 Natural Resources | 8 Waste | 9 Housing | 10 Health | 11 Accessibility | 12 Education | 13 Economy |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 10 | 0 | + | - | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 14 | - | + | - | -- | 0 | - | - | - | ++ | ++ | - | + | + |
| 30 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 34 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 36 | - | - | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 38 | 0 | - | - | -- | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 40 | 0 | - | - | - | -- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 42 | 0 | + | - | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 53 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | - |
| 55 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 64 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 75 | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 82 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 88 | 0 | + | - | - | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | ++ | - | - |
| 95 | - | - | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 96 | 0 | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | - |
| 106 | - | + | +/- | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | +/- |
| 121 | - | + | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 129 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 140 | - | + | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 142 | - | - | - | -- | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 143 | - | + | - | 0 | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 149 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 150 | - | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 152 | - | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 156 | 0 | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 161 | 0 | + | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | ++ | - | + |
| 162 | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 165 | 0 | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 169 | - | - | -- | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 172 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 173 | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 183 | - | + | +/- | - | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | ++ | - | + |
| 185 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 186 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 191 | - | + | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 197 | - | - | - | - | +/- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |

| Non-Strategic Sites | 1 Climate Change | 2 Flood Risk | 3 Biodiversity & Geodiversity | 4 Landscape | 5 Cultural Heritage | 6 Pollution | 7 Natural Resources | 8 Waste | 9 Housing | 10 Health | 11 Accessibility | 12 Education | 13 Economy |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 199 | - | + | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 200 | - | + | +/- | 0 | -- | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 209 | - | + | - | -- | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 215 | - | + | - | - | +/- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 232 | - | - | - | - | +/- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 234 | 0 | + | -- | - | 0 | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 236 | 0 | + | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | ++ | + | + |
| 242 | - | - | -- | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 249 | 0 | + | +/- | 0 | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | - | +/- |
| 259 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 261 | - | - | - | - | +/- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 264 | - | + | +/- | - | +/- | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 265 | 0 | + | +/- | - | -- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 266 | 0 | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 270 | 0 | + | - | -- | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 271 | 0 | - | - | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 272 | 0 | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 293 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 303 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 304 | - | + | - | - | -- | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 308 | 0 | + | - | -- | -- | - | + | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 324 | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | + | - | - | + | + |
| 326 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 331 | - | + | -- | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 334 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 337 | 0 | + | - | -- | 0 | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 341 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 348 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 357 | 0 | + | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 360 | 0 | 0 | -- | - | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 371 | 0 | + | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | -- | - | + |
| 372 | 0 | - | +/- | - | +/- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 373 | 0 | + | - | -- | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 386 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 389 | - | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 391 | - | - | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 392 | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 398 | 0 | + | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 407 | 0 | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 411 | 0 | + | -- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 417 | - | + | +/- | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 427 | - | + | - | -- | 0 | - | - | - | ++ | ++ | - | - | + |
| 428 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 429 | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 433 | - | + | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 441 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 443 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 444 | - | + | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 445 | - | - | -- | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 446 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |
| 447 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 459 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 461 | - | - | -- | -- | 0 | - | - | - | + | - | - | - | + |
| 464 | 0 | - | - | - | -- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 465 | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 467 | - | + | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | -- | - | + |

| Non-Strategic Sites | 1 Climate Change | 2 Flood Risk | 3 Biodiversity & Geodiversity | 4 Landscape | 5 Cultural Heritage | 6 Pollution | 7 Natural Resources | 8 Waste | 9 Housing | 10 Health | 11 Accessibility | 12 Education | 13 Economy |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 470 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 473 | - | - | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 474 | - | + | -- | -- | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | + | + |
| 485 | 0 | + | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 491 | - | + | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 495 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 507 | - | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 508 | - | - | +/- | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 553 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | +/- |
| 559 | 0 | + | - | 0 | +/- | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | - |
| 573 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 601 | 0 | + | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 607 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | + | - | ++ | + | + |
| 656 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | -- | - | + |
| 662 | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 683 | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | +/- | + | -- |
| 684 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 685 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 686 | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 696 | - | + | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | + | - | - | - | +/- |
| 702 | 0 | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | +/- |
| 715 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 731 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 764 | 0 | + | - | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 804 | 0 | - | - | 0 | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | + |
| 806 | 0 | + | +/- | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | +/- |
| 807 | 0 | + | +/- | 0 | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | +/- |
| 812 | - | 0 | - | - | -- | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 813 | 0 | + | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 825 | - | + | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | + | + |
| 827 | - | - | - | - | -- | - | - | - | ++ | - | +/- | + | + |
| 832 | - | + | +/- | - | +/- | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 833 | - | + | - | - | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | - | - | + |
| 840 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 844 | 0 | - | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 847 | 0 | - | - | 0 | -- | - | - | 0 | + | - | +/- | + | -- |
| 860 | 0 | - | +/- | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 866 | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | +/- | + | +/- |
| 867 | - | + | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | ++ | - | ++ | - | + |
| 868 | - | + | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | + | - | - | + | + |
| 870 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | - | + | - | +/- | + | -- |
| 910 | 0 | - | +/- | - | - | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 943 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 949 | 0 | + | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | 0 | + | - | - | - | + |
| 978 | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | - | ++ | - | +/- | + | +/- |
| 54 | +/- | - | - | 0 | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | + |
| 180 | +/- | - | -- | - | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| 189 | +/- | - | - | - | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| 216 | +/- | - | - | -- | - | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | -- | 0 | + |
| 227 | +/- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | +/- | +/- |
| 710 | +/- | - | +/- | - | 0 | 0 | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| 847 | +/- | - | +/- | 0 | -- | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | +/- | 0 | +/- |
| 979 | +/- | + | -- | - | -- | - | -- | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| 981 | +/- | - | -- | -- | +/- | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |
| 982 | +/- | + | -- | -- | +/- | - | 0 | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | +/- |
| 985 | +/- | + | - | -- | 0 | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | - | 0 | ++ |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Non-Strategic Sites | Climate Change | Flood Risk | Biodiversity & Geodiversity | Landscape | Cultural Heritage | Pollution | Natural Resources | Waste | Housing | Health | Accessibility | Education | Economy |
| 986 | +/- | + | +/- | 0 | -- | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | +/- | 0 | +/- |
| 987 | +/- | - | - | - | 0 | - | - | +/- | 0 | ++ | - | 0 | +/- |
| 942 | +/- | + | - | - | +/- | 0 | - | +/- | + | - | - | - | +/- |
| 522 | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| RURAL.4 | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 |

5.8.8 The South Warwickshire Councils’ outline reasons for selection or rejection of each reasonable alternative non-strategic site are set out in **Appendix K**.

5.9 Policy options

5.9.1 The South Warwickshire Councils identified a range of policy options for consideration as part of the Issues and Options Consultation (2022), covering both strategic growth and development management issues. The Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA assessed 116 policy options linked to 63 identified issues.

5.9.2 Each option was assessed against the SA Framework, with the appraisal identifying preferred options or, where appropriate, combinations of options likely to deliver the greatest sustainability benefits. In general, options with stronger interventionist approaches tended to perform more favourably in sustainability terms.

5.9.3 The SA findings and consultation responses informed the refinement of policies for the next stage of plan-making.

5.9.4 At the Regulation 18 Preferred Options stage, the Councils identified 11 draft policies and 49 policy directions under five key themes:

- A climate resilient and Net Zero Carbon South Warwickshire
- A well-designed and beautiful South Warwickshire
- A healthy, safe and inclusive South Warwickshire
- A well-connected South Warwickshire
- A biodiverse and environmentally resilient South Warwickshire

5.9.5 These policies and directions were assessed in the Preferred Options SA (2024). Overall, most were expected to have negligible to positive effects, with growth-related policies showing the widest range of effects, including both significant benefits (housing, transport and economy) and potential environmental impacts (climate change, biodiversity, landscape, pollution, natural resources and waste) due to scale and uncertainty. Some effects, particularly for Policy Direction 4 ‘Accommodating housing needs arising from outside South Warwickshire’, were uncertain due to limited detail on location, scale and design.

5.9.6 The assessment findings and recommendations were fed back to the Councils to inform the preparation of the Regulation 19 policies.

6 The preferred approach

6.1 SWLP policies

6.1.1 The SWLP is composed primarily of 87 policies, which will be anticipated to help ensure that potential adverse impacts on sustainability identified as a result of the development proposed within the SWLP are avoided, mitigated or subject to compensatory measures wherever possible. The policies will also provide development proposals with relevant supporting information to ensure that the impacts of development can be appropriately factored into land use decision-making processes.

6.1.2 The SWLP policies are listed in **Table 6.1** and have been assessed in **Appendix I** alongside the Vision and Objectives.

Table 6.1: SWLP policies

| Policy Ref | SWLP Policies |
|------------|---|
| Chapter 2 | Development Strategy: South Warwickshire 2050 |
| DS.1 | Environmental Mitigation and Compensation |
| DS.2 | Spatial Development Strategy |
| DS.3 | Meeting our Development Needs to 2050 |
| DS.4 | Strategic Site Principles |
| DS.5 | Local Growth Locations - Employment |
| DS.6 | Local Growth Locations - Mixed use, Community & Town Centre |
| DS.7 | Local Growth Locations - Housing |
| DS.8 | Other Growth Locations |
| DS.9 | Core Opportunity Area (COA) |
| DS.10 | Major Investment Sites |
| DS.11 | Rural Economy |
| DS.12 | Rural Housing |
| DS.13 | Green Belt |
| DS.14 | Protecting the Cotswolds National Landscape |
| DS.15 | Special Landscape Areas |
| DS.16 | Protecting, Enhancing and Restoring Landscape Character |
| DS.17 | Maintaining Settlement Identity and Area of Restraint |
| DS.18 | Well Designed Places |
| DS.19 | Design Codes |
| DS.20 | Densification |
| DS.21 | Vale of Evesham Control Zone |
| Chapter 3 | Delivering the Necessary Infrastructure |
| ID.1 | Securing Infrastructure Provision |
| ID.2 | Infrastructure Delivery |
| ID.3 | Infrastructure Safeguarding |
| ID.4 | Stratford-upon-Avon Bypass |

| Policy Ref | SWLP Policies |
|------------------|---|
| ID.5 | Sustainable Transport Accessibility |
| ID.6 | Electric Vehicle Infrastructure |
| ID.7 | Park and Ride |
| ID.8 | Smart and Connected South Warwickshire |
| ID.9 | Reducing Flood risk |
| ID.10 | Water Efficiency |
| ID.11 | Water Supply and Wastewater Infrastructure |
| ID.12 | Multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems |
| ID.13 | Green and Blue Infrastructure |
| ID.14 | Open Space, Play, Recreation and Community Growing Spaces |
| ID.15 | Accessibility, Quality and Value of Open Space, Play, Recreation and Community Growing Spaces |
| ID.16 | Adoption, Ownership and Long-Term Stewardship and Delivery of Public Open Space |
| ID.17 | Sport, Recreation and Leisure Facilities |
| ID.18 | Community Facilities |
| ID.19 | Promoting Arts and Culture |
| ID.20 | Protecting large scale existing renewable infrastructure |
| ID.21 | New Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation and Storage |
| ID.22 | Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Requirements |
| Chapter 4 | Growing the South Warwickshire Economy |
| EC.1 | Low Carbon Economy |
| EC.2 | Existing Employment Sites |
| EC.3 | Tourism and Leisure Development |
| EC.4 | Affordable Employment Space |
| EC.5 | Promoting our Town Centres |
| EC.6 | Town Centre Residential Uses |
| EC.7 | Employment and Road Freight |
| Chapter 5 | Building Homes that meet the needs of our Communities |
| HO.1 | Housing Size Mix |
| HO.2 | Space Standards and Accessibility |
| HO.3 | Affordable Housing Requirement |
| HO.4 | Affordable Housing Tenure and Type |
| HO.5 | Rural Exceptions Site |
| HO.6 | Speacialised Housing |
| HO.7 | Build to Rent |
| HO.8 | Protecting Existing Accommodation for the Travelling Community |
| HO.9 | Assessing Planning Applications for new Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation |
| HO.10 | Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site design |
| HO.11 | Accommodation for Boat Dwellers |
| HO.12 | Self Build and Custom-Build Housing |

| Policy Ref | SWLP Policies |
|------------------|--|
| HO.13 | HMO and Student Accommodation |
| Chapter 6 | Achieving Climate Resilient and Net Zero |
| NZ.1 | Operational net zero in new residential buildings |
| NZ.2 | Operational Net Zero in new non-residential buildings |
| NZ.3 | Embodied Carbon |
| NZ.4 | Energy Performance Improvements in Existing Buildings |
| NZ.5 | Climate Resilient Design |
| NZ.6 | Carbon Sinks and Sequestration |
| NZ.7 | Decentralised Energy Systems - Major Development |
| NZ.8 | Decentralised Energy Systems - Minor Development |
| Chapter 7 | Enhancing the Built and Natural Environment of South Warwickshire |
| BN.1 | Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species |
| BN.2 | Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) |
| BN.3 | Biodiversity |
| BN.4 | Trees, Hedges and Woodlands |
| BN.5 | Landscape Management and Maintenance |
| BN.6 | Agricultural Land and Soils |
| BN.7 | Health Impact Assessment (HIA) |
| BN.8 | Pollution and Environmental Quality |
| BN.9 | Heritage Assets |
| BN.10 | Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings |
| BN.11 | Historic Landscapes ~ Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Village Greens |
| BN.12 | Waterways |
| BN.13 | Alterations to existing buildings |
| BN.14 | Advertisements |
| BN.15 | Parking |
| BN.16 | Road Safety |

6.1.3 [SUMMARY OF POLICY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS]

6.1.4 The impact matrix for the policy assessments is presented in **Table 6.2**. These impacts should be read in conjunction with the assessment text narratives in **Appendix I**.

Table 6.2: Summary of policy assessments (extracted from Appendix I)

6.2 Assessment of site allocations

6.2.1 The SA process has been used to evaluate reasonable alternative sites on a comparable basis against the SA Framework to identify likely sustainability impacts. It is the role of the South Warwickshire Councils to use the SA findings, alongside other evidence base material, to decide which sites to 'select' for allocation in the SWLP and which to 'reject' from further consideration (see **Appendix K** for more details).

6.2.2 The Councils have selected the following sites for allocation in the SWLP (see **Figure 6.1**):

- Two new settlements (B1 Hatton and E1 Long Marston)
- 19 strategic growth locations (SGLs):
 - SG01 (COV.1) South of Coventry
 - SG02 (STO.1, STO.2, STO.3) Stoneleigh Park Employment
 - SG03 (COV.2) Coventry Airport
 - SG04 (KEN.1) South of Kenilworth
 - SG05 (REF?) East of Lillington
 - SG06 (LEA.1, LEA.2) North of Leamington
 - SG08 (WAR.1) West of Warwick
 - SG09 (BIS.1) South of Europa Way
 - SG10 (BIS.2) Bishops Tachbrook
 - SG12 (SOU.1) Southam
 - SG13 (REF?) Gaydon Lighthorne Heath
 - SG15 (WEL.1) North of Wellesbourne
 - SG18(N) (STR.1) West of Stratford-upon-Avon (North of A422)
 - SG18(S) (STR.3) West of Stratford-upon-Avon (South of A422)
 - SG19 (STR.2) East of Stratford-Upon-Avon
 - SG23 (REF?) Henley-in-Arden
- 65 non-strategic sites.

6.2.3 As discussed in **Chapter 5**, all reasonable alternative sites were evaluated in the SA process pre-mitigation (see **Appendix F, G and H**) and the mitigating effects of the SWLP policies are considered in **Appendix J**. The SA findings were fed back to the Councils on an iterative basis to assist in decision-making regarding the selection or rejection of each site within the emerging SWLP.

6.2.4 In addition to Policies DS.5 (Local Growth Locations – Employment), DS.6 (Local Growth Locations - Mixed use, Community & Town Centre) and DS.7 (Local Growth Locations – Housing) as listed in **Table 6.1**, the SWLP contains 20 site allocation policies, setting out site-specific details and requirements for the new settlement and SGL allocations. These site-specific policies have been evaluated in **Appendix I**.

6.2.5 The SA findings for the sites chosen for allocation by the Councils are summarised in **Table 6.3**, illustrating a range of identified sustainability effects identified through the assessment process.

Figure 6.1: Map showing the location of development sites allocated in the SWLP

DRAFT

Table 6.3: Impact matrix of selected New Settlement and SGLs (extracted from Appendix I)

6.2.6 [SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT FINDINGS]

6.3 Whole plan appraisal

6.3.1 The following chapters present an assessment of the likely significant effects associated with the SWLP in relation to the following topics:

- Air (**Chapter 7**);
- Biodiversity, flora and fauna (**Chapter 8**);
- Climatic factors (**Chapter 9**);
- Cultural heritage (**Chapter 10**);
- Human health (**Chapter 11**);
- Landscape (**Chapter 12**);
- Population and material assets (**Chapter 13**);
- Soil (**Chapter 14**); and
- Water (**Chapter 15**).

6.3.2 Each of the topic sections are presented in terms of baseline, impacts, mitigation and residual effects, where appropriate. The topics have been appraised in terms of plan-wide impacts and draw on all aspects of the SA process, including the findings presented for the assessment of policies and site allocations (see **Volume 3: Appendices** for the full assessments). The assessments include consideration of the impacts arising as a consequence of the inter-relationship between the different topics and identify secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects where they arise. Cumulative effects are discussed throughout where relevant, and summarised in **Chapter 16**.

7 Air

7.1 Baseline

7.1.1 Poor air quality is among the largest environmental risks to public health in the UK. Several objectives have been established in relation to air quality at the European, UK and regional levels seeking to reduce emissions of specific pollutants to minimise adverse effects on health and the environment. Key legislation / PPPs include the Environment Act (2021)³⁸ which sets out air quality as a priority area, the Air Quality Plan for NO₂³⁹ and the Clean Air Strategy⁴⁰. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

7.1.2 There are four designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the SWLP area; 'Studley AQMA', 'Stratford upon Avon District Council (No 1) 2010 AQMA', 'Leamington Spa AQMA' and 'Warwick AQMA (Amended 2008)'. 'Coventry City-Wide AQMA' is also located adjacent to the SWLP area. All AQMAs within the SWLP area have been declared due to an exceedance on the nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) annual average air quality objective.

7.1.3 Air quality improvements have been seen in some areas. Warwick District Council's latest Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)⁴¹ suggests that air quality is be improving, with three of the district's AQMAs being revoked in 2024 and the final two being planned to be revoked imminently. Stratford-on-Avon District's ASR⁴² has indicated NO₂ levels below the threshold for requiring an AQMA to be designated in the town centre for over seven years.

7.1.4 Some general measures to tackle air pollution discussed within the Warwick Air Quality Action Plan⁴³ include:

- Actively promote low emission vehicles and supporting infrastructure
- Traffic management to reduce emissions in locations within AQMAs
- Promote smarter, active travel choices including cycling and walking
- Using the planning system to ensure that air quality is fully considered for new development
- Promotion of green planting in urban areas

³⁸ Environment Act 2021. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

³⁹ DEFRA and DfT (2018) Air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in UK. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017 [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴⁰ DEFRA (2019) Clean Air Strategy. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019/clean-air-strategy-2019-executive-summary [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴¹ Warwick District Council (2025) Air quality Annual Status Report 2025. Available at: https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/9088/air_quality_annual_status_report_2025 [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴² Stratford-on-Avon District Council (2025) Annual Status Report 2025. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/214003/name/Stratford%20on%20Avon%20ASR%202025.pdf> [Date accessed: 12/05/26]

⁴³ Warwick District Council (2015) Air Quality Action Plan: Warwick District Council. Available at: https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/517/air_quality_action_plan [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

- 7.1.5 Specific objectives for each AQMA have also been stated. These are specific to the area, such as improvements to specific junctions, introducing one-way traffic flows along certain road stretches and re-allocating road space to prioritise and facilitate movement of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and car share users. Air quality is also continuously monitored at various points throughout the county in line with national requirements and guidelines.
- 7.1.6 It is widely accepted that the effects of air pollution from road transport decreases with distance from the source of pollution. The Department for Transport (DfT) in their Transport Analysis Guidance consider that, “*beyond 200m from the link centre, the contribution of vehicle emissions to local pollution levels is not significant*”⁴⁴. This statement is supported by Highways England and Natural England based on evidence presented in a number of research papers^{45 46}. Exposure to road transport associated emissions may have long term health impacts.
- 7.1.7 Air pollution, particularly excessive nitrogen deposition, is known to be harmful to the health and functioning of natural habitats.

Box 7.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: air quality

- ⇒ New development may exacerbate air pollution issues in the SWLP area.
- ⇒ Approximately 5% of mortality across the two districts is attributable to particulate matter air pollution.
- ⇒ There is a need to ensure development in Warwick District avoids exacerbating air pollution issues in existing AQMAs and should contribute to air improvement measures. The AQMAs in Stratford-on-Avon District should continue to be monitored until, and if, they are revoked.
- ⇒ There is a need to ensure development proposals are designed in order to avoid any significant adverse impacts from pollution, including cumulative impacts, on human health and wellbeing, biodiversity nearby SSSIs and the effective operation of neighbouring land uses.

7.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on air


- 7.2.1 Air has been considered in the SA process under SA Objective 6: Pollution, which seeks to mitigate adverse impacts from existing air, water, soil and noise pollution and avoid generating further pollution.
- 7.2.2 **Table 7.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on air that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

⁴⁴ Department for Transport (2025) TAG unit A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/825064/tag-unit-a3-environmental-impact-appraisal.pdf [Date Accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴⁵ Bignal, K., Ashmore, M & Power, S. (2004) The ecological effects of diffuse air pollution from road transport. English Nature Research Report No. 580, Peterborough.

⁴⁶ Ricardo-AEA (2016) The ecological effects of air pollution from road transport: an updated review. Natural England Commissioned Report No. 199.

Table 7.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on air

| Identified effects on air | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Increased emission of, and exposure to, air pollution</p> <p>The construction and occupation of approximately 54,925 new homes and employment floorspace, and associated traffic, is likely to increase emissions of NO₂ and PM₁₀, contributing to a deterioration in local air quality.</p> <p>This may result in adverse effects on human health, particularly for vulnerable groups, and on ecological networks sensitive to eutrophication, acidification and toxicity.</p> <p>Effects are likely to be more pronounced at allocated sites located within 200m of AQMAs and major roads, where exposure to air pollution is higher.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.8 (Pollution and Environmental Quality) prevents unacceptable pollution and exposure, ensuring effects on health, amenity and the environment are avoided, mitigated or compensated. • Policies DS.18 (Well-Designed Places), ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and ID.5 (Sustainable Transport Accessibility) promote sustainable transport (including active travel and public transport), reducing reliance on private vehicles and associated emissions. • Policy ID.6 (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) supports the transition to electric vehicles, reducing emissions from petrol and diesel transport. • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) enhances green infrastructure, supporting air quality improvements and wider environmental benefits. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) include measures to support sustainable transport, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and require mitigation of environmental impacts such as air pollution, which may help to minimise effects on air quality and designated sites. | <p>Despite technological and infrastructure improvements, the scale of proposed housing and employment growth is expected to increase traffic volumes and energy demand, resulting in higher emissions of pollutants (notably NO₂ and PM₁₀) that are unlikely to be fully mitigated by SWLP policies alone.</p> <p>The transition to cleaner technologies, supported by the UK’s net zero commitment and the shift towards zero-emission vehicles (with 80% of new cars and 70% of vans expected to be zero emission by 2030, rising to 100% by 2035), is likely to improve air quality over the longer term.</p> <p>The long-term effect on emissions and air quality is likely to be positive, but short-term negative effects are expected.</p> |

8 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

8.1 Baseline

8.1.1 The conservation of biological and geological diversity and the protection and monitoring of endangered and vulnerable species and habitats is of great importance. National and European policies identify a hierarchy of designations which aim to promote the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Key PPPs include the 25 Year Environment Plan⁴⁷ and the Biodiversity Strategy for England⁴⁸ which seek to halt biodiversity loss, promote nature recovery, and expand multi-functional green infrastructure (GI) networks. At the local level, biodiversity action plans and green infrastructure strategies should align with these national objectives while addressing local priorities to protect and enhance ecosystems. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

European sites

8.1.2 European sites provide valuable ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered and/or vulnerable natural habitats and species of exceptional importance within Europe. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive⁴⁹ and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive⁵⁰. Additionally, the NPPF requires that sites listed under the Ramsar Convention are to be given the same protection as fully designated European sites.

8.1.3 There are no European sites within the SWLP area, with the nearest being 'Bredon Hill' SAC located approximately 19km south west of the Plan area, 'Ensor's Pool' SAC located approximately 24.1km north of the Plan area and 'Lyppard Grange Ponds' SAC located approximately 26.5km west of the Plan area.

8.1.4 The Regulation 19 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)⁵¹ identified likely significant effects (LSEs) in terms of water quality on functionally linked watercourses associated with the Humber Estuary SAC, Humber Estuary Ramsar, Severn Estuary SAC and Severn Estuary Ramsar.

National and local designations

8.1.5 There are 43 SSSIs located wholly or partially within the SWLP area including 'Ailstone Old Gravel Pit' SSSI, 'River Blythe' SSSI and 'Oak Tree Farm Meadows' SSSI (see **Figure 8.1**).

⁴⁷ HM Government (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴⁸ DEFRA (2011) Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁴⁹ European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043&from=EN> [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁵⁰ European Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147&from=EN> [Date accessed: 30/04/26]

⁵¹ Lepus Consulting (2026) Habitats Regulations Assessment of the South Warwickshire Local Plan: Regulation 19.

8.1.6 Natural England's Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are GIS-based tools used to assess potential risks from development to SSSIs. They identify zones around each site based on its specific sensitivities and highlight types of development that may cause harm⁵². Most of Stratford-on-Avon District and Warwick District fall within one or more IRZs, where development requires careful consideration of potential impacts.

8.1.7 A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation demonstrates a commitment by the local authority to manage land for biodiversity, protect it from inappropriate development and provide opportunities for local people to study and enjoy wildlife. There are 14 LNRs within the SWLP area (see **Figure 8.1**).

8.1.8 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are non-statutory designated biodiversity sites identified by local authorities in partnership with nature conservation charities, statutory agencies and ecologists. There are approximately 250 LWSs in and around the SWLP area (see **Figure 8.1**). These LWSs comprise a number of important habitats including flood meadow and ancient woodland.

Habitats and species

8.1.9 Ancient woodland is defined as an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD and includes 'ancient semi-natural woodland' and 'plantations on ancient woodland sites', both of which have equal protection under the NPPF. There are several stands of ancient woodland in the SWLP area, particularly along the northern parts of the plan area (see **Figure 8.1**).

8.1.10 Careful consideration should be given during the plan-making process to the potential impacts on Section 41 list of habitats and species of principle importance that flow from the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006⁵³.

8.1.11 Priority habitats are widespread across the SWLP area. This includes areas of floodplain grazing marsh along the River Avon and scattered deciduous woodland, in addition to good quality semi-improved grassland and lowland meadows. There is also a small proportion of traditional orchard, lowland calcareous grassland, lowland meadows, and lowland dry acid grassland.

Green Infrastructure

8.1.12 Green Infrastructure (GI) is an important aspect of biodiversity. It is a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural features and green spaces that supports ecosystem health and resilience, enhances biodiversity, and benefits people through ecosystem services.

⁵² Natural England (2020) Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 03 February 2020. Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/ssi-impact-risk-zones> [Date Accessed: 25/04/22]

⁵³ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents> [Date Accessed: 01/05/26]

8.1.13 Warwickshire County Council have produced a Sub Regional GI Strategy⁵⁴ which sets out the vision of "a diverse and well-managed Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull Green Infrastructure network that underpins the quality of life for communities. This will be the result of a well-connected, accessible and biodiversity resilient landscape, supporting economic growth, social health and climate change adaptation". GI within Warwickshire includes a network of natural and semi-natural features within and between settlements.

River ecology

8.1.14 The majority of the SWLP area lies within the Severn river basin, with a small proportion to the north of both districts falling within the Humber river basin and a small proportion to the south of Stratford-on-Avon District falling within the Thames river basin.

8.1.15 The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP)⁵⁵ for the Severn, the Humber and the Thames provide an update on the ecological status of the water environment and seek to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, including to prevent deterioration of the status of surface and groundwater bodies.

Geodiversity

8.1.16 Geodiversity describes the variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, soils, landscapes, and the natural processes that shape them. It underpins biodiversity by supporting diverse habitats and ecosystems, and also contributes to local character through building materials and landscape features.

8.1.17 There are 13 SSSIs within the SWLP area designated in whole or part for their geological importance including: 'Ailstone Old Gravel Pit'; 'Broom Railway Cutting'; 'Coten End Quarry'; 'River Itchen'; 'Stretton-on-Fosse Pit; and 'Waverley Wood Farm' SSSIs. A number of Local Geological Sites (LGS) also lie within the SWLP area (see **Figure 8.1**).

Box 8.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: biodiversity, flora and fauna

- ⇒ There is a need to protect and enhance South Warwickshire's multi-functional GI network to provide movement corridors for people and wildlife.
- ⇒ In line with the vision of the GI Strategy, there is a need to establish a coordinated and comprehensive GI network providing connectivity between biodiversity sites, green spaces, watercourses and other features across the SWLP area and throughout urban areas.
- ⇒ There is a need to deliver the objectives of the Strategic Vision presented by Warwickshire Local Nature Partnership in order to conserve biodiversity and geodiversity assets of local importance or interest.
- ⇒ LSEs have been identified in the HRA screening process in terms of hydrological impacts on the Severn Estuary SAC/Ramsar and Humber Estuary SAC/Ramsar. There is a need to enhance water quality in watercourses in part to help improve the ecological status of rivers.
- ⇒ Fragmentation of habitats and the ecological network should be avoided. Development plays an essential role in pursuing 'bigger, better and more joined up' habitats, as advocated by the Lawton Review.

[Map TBC]

⁵⁴ Warwick County Council (2024) Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy. Available at: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/greeninfrastructure> [Date Accessed: 01/05/26]

⁵⁵ Environment Agency (2022) River Basin Management Plans. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022> [Date accessed: 14/05/26]

Figure 8.1: Biodiversity designations in South Warwickshire

DRAFT

8.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on biodiversity, flora and fauna



8.2.1 Biodiversity, flora and fauna has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 3: Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which seeks to protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity.

8.2.2 **Table 8.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on biodiversity, flora and fauna that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

Table 8.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on biodiversity, flora and fauna

| Identified effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Threats or pressures to European sites</p> <p>Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) have been identified through HRA screening in relation to water quality impacts on functionally linked watercourses connected to the Humber Estuary SAC/Ramsar and Severn Estuary SAC/Ramsar.</p> <p>Without mitigation, development proposed in the SWLP could adversely affect the integrity of these European sites.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.1 (Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species) ensures protection of European sites by preventing development that would result in loss or deterioration, only permitting development where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity. • Policies BN.2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy), BN.3 (Biodiversity) and Policy BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) support ecological resilience through biodiversity net gain, habitat enhancement and long-term management, benefiting the wider network connected to European sites. • Policy BN.12 (Waterways) protects water quality and hydrological function, and supports enhancement of watercourses, helping to reduce downstream effects on European sites. | <p>The Regulation 19 HRA Appropriate Assessment⁵⁶, informed by water quality modelling from the Phase 2 Water Cycle Study and supported by policy safeguards, concludes that the SWLP will not adversely affect the integrity of the Humber Estuary or Severn Estuary European sites, either alone or in combination.</p> <p>Therefore, no significant adverse effect on European designated sites is expected.</p> |
| <p>2 </p> <p>Threats or pressures to nationally designated biodiversity sites</p> <p>Development proposed in the SWLP has potential to result in adverse effects on nationally designated sites (SSSIs), particularly where allocated sites are located adjacent to SSSIs, with risk of direct impacts on their special features.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.1 (Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species) protects SSSIs from loss or deterioration, requiring impacts to be avoided through the mitigation hierarchy and only permitting development in exceptional circumstances where effects can be fully mitigated or compensated. • Policies BN.2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy), BN.3 (Biodiversity) and BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) support habitat connectivity, quality and resilience through habitat | <p>SWLP policies are likely to mitigate adverse impacts on nationally designated sites (SSSIs), with protection in place to avoid harm to their special features. No allocated sites coincide with SSSIs, and potential indirect effects are expected to be addressed through policy safeguards.</p> <p>Overall, no significant adverse effect on nationally designated biodiversity sites is expected, subject to consultation with Natural</p> |

⁵⁶ Lepus Consulting (2026) Habitats Regulations Assessment of the South Warwickshire Local Plan

| Identified effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|--|
| <p>A number of sites also fall within Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), indicating potential pathways for indirect effects and the need for consultation to identify and address impacts.</p> | <p>restoration and enhancement, biodiversity net gain, and the protection and expansion of woodland and hedgerows, helping to buffer and support SSSIs.</p> | <p>England, particularly for larger-scale allocations or those within IRZ highlighting risks to nearby SSSIs.</p> |
| <p>3 </p> <p>Threats or pressures to locally designated / non-statutory biodiversity sites</p> <p>Development proposed in the SWLP has potential to result in adverse effects on locally designated sites (including LNRs and LWS), through direct habitat loss and indirect effects such as recreational disturbance and air or water pollution.</p> <p>A number of allocated sites are located within or in close proximity to LWS and LNRs, increasing the risk of adverse impacts.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.1 (Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species) protects locally designated sites (including LNRs, LWS and LGS) from loss or deterioration, requiring impacts to be avoided and minimised through the mitigation hierarchy, and supporting enhancement of sites and the wider ecological network. • Policies BN.2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy), BN.3 (Biodiversity) and BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) support habitat restoration, connectivity and ecological resilience through biodiversity net gain, habitat creation and enhancement, and the retention and expansion of woodland and hedgerows, benefiting locally designated sites. | <p>SWLP policies are likely to mitigate adverse impacts on locally designated and non-statutory biodiversity sites, particularly where development is in close proximity. However, effects at sites that coincide with or are directly adjacent to LWSs or LNRs may not be fully addressed, with potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>Overall, a short to medium-term adverse effect is identified, with potential for longer-term positive outcomes where masterplanning and BNG are successfully delivered and monitored.</p> |
| <p>4 </p> <p>Fragmentation of the ecological network</p> <p>The majority of allocated sites are located on previously undeveloped land, creating a risk of habitat loss and fragmentation within the ecological network.</p> <p>Some sites overlap with priority habitats (including deciduous woodland and traditional orchard), while a small number intersect with or are located adjacent to ancient woodland, increasing the potential for adverse effects on irreplaceable habitats.</p> <p>Potential impacts associated with loss of habitats includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct impacts: Permanent loss of priority habitats. • Secondary impacts: Reduced connectivity and increased fragmentation, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.1 (Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species) protects irreplaceable habitats (including ancient woodland and veteran trees) from loss or deterioration, and safeguards priority habitats through avoidance, mitigation and enhancement. • Policies BN.2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy) and Policy BN.3 (Biodiversity) support the protection, enhancement and expansion of priority habitats and ecological networks, including improving connectivity. • Policy BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) protects ancient woodland and trees, including through buffer zones, and supports retention and enhancement of woodland and hedgerow habitats with net gains in canopy cover. • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) supports the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure, helping to strengthen ecological | <p>The SWLP policies are likely to enhance habitat connectivity and strengthen the resilience of ecological and GI networks through habitat creation, expansion and improved management, aligned with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. However, some localised adverse effects from habitat loss and fragmentation may occur, particularly in the short to medium term.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term positive effect on ecological networks is anticipated, subject to the effective delivery of mitigation measures, including BNG and GI.</p> |

| Identified effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| <p>leading to greater habitat vulnerability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect effects: Reduced ecological coherence. | <p>networks and reduce fragmentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require site-specific ecological assessment and mitigation, including avoidance of sensitive habitats, retention and enhancement of existing features, BNG, and provision of GI networks. | |

DRAFT

9 Climatic factors

9.1 Baseline

9.1.1 Anthropogenic climate change is predominantly the result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHGs are emitted from a wide variety of sources, including transport, construction, agriculture and waste. New development is likely to lead to a net increase in GHG emissions, although efforts can be made to help limit these increases.

9.1.2 The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) report⁵⁷ recommended new emission targets: reducing GHG emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. The CCC's latest progress report⁵⁸ discusses the need for further measures to be implemented to ensure the UK meets the next target of reducing emissions in 2030 by 68% compared to 1990 levels. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

9.1.3 Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils declared Climate Emergencies in 2019 and are working towards Net Zero targets.

9.1.4 Adaptation measures proposed by the PPPs include avoiding development in high flood risk areas, resilient design, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), biodiversity enhancement, overheating mitigation, and improved maintenance, ensuring flood risk is addressed throughout the whole planning process.

Carbon emissions

9.1.5 Per capita carbon emissions in the SWLP area are highest in Stratford-on-Avon District – approximately 8% higher than in Warwick District (see **Table 9.1**). The majority of CO₂ emissions in South Warwickshire arise from transport and domestic sources. Smaller proportions of other GHGs are recorded (methane and nitrous oxide), the majority of which are attributable to agricultural sources given Stratford-upon-Avon's rural character, and therefore largely outside of the scope of the SWLP.

Table 9.1: Total and per capita carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in the SWLP area in 2023⁵⁹

| Area | Total emissions (ktCO ₂) | Mid-year population estimate | Per capita emissions (tCO ₂) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Stratford-on-Avon District | 792.2 | 141,929 | 5.6 |
| Warwick District | 735.6 | 153,153 | 4.8 |

⁵⁷ CCC (2019) Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming. Available at: www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/ [Date accessed: 01/05/26]

⁵⁸ CCC (2024) Progress in reducing emissions: 2025 Report to Parliament. Available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/progress-in-reducing-emissions-2025-report-to-parliament/> [Date accessed: 01/05/26]

⁵⁹ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023> [Date accessed: 11/03/26]

Renewable Energy

- 9.1.6 Renewable energy generation within Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick Districts remains relatively limited compared to overall energy demand. Existing provision is largely derived from solar photovoltaics, with smaller contributions from other sources such as wind, hydro and energy from waste, indicating scope for further growth in renewable energy generation.
- 9.1.7 The Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Resource Assessment and Feasibility Study⁶⁰ identified a number of suitable locations for wind energy generation in Stratford-on-Avon District, and highlights wider potential for renewable and low-carbon energy, including biomass, across both authorities.

Flooding

- 9.1.8 Climate change is anticipated to increase the risk of extreme weather events. Of particular concern in the UK is the increasing frequency and severity of fluvial, surface water and coastal flooding.
- 9.1.9 A network of waterways course through the SWLP area, associated with rivers such as the River Avon and River Dene. Along the river network, associated areas of land are situated in Flood Zone 2 (between 0.1%-1% annual probability of flooding) and Flood Zone 3 (1% or greater annual probability of flooding) (see **Figure 9.1**). Careful consideration should be given to the level of flood risk new residents are exposed to, as well as the impacts of development on risk. Development proposals will be required to undergo the Sequential and Exceptions Tests where necessary, in line with the NPPF.
- 9.1.10 Extents of low, medium and high surface water flood risk are present across the SWLP area. Surface water flooding typically occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms drainage systems and the capacity of the ground to absorb water. While such events are often localised and of shorter duration than fluvial flooding, they can still result in significant impacts, particularly in urban areas.
- 9.1.11 In addition to fluvial and surface water flooding, other sources of flood risk include groundwater flooding, sewer flooding, and flooding from artificial sources such as reservoirs and canals.

[Map TBC]

Figure 9.1: Flood risk within South Warwickshire

⁶⁰ Camco (2010) Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Resource Assessment and Feasibility Study. Available at: [https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2431/cc01 -
_renewable_and_low_carbon_energy_resource_assessment_and_feasibility_study_-_april_2010](https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2431/cc01_-_renewable_and_low_carbon_energy_resource_assessment_and_feasibility_study_-_april_2010) [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

Green Infrastructure

- 9.1.12 Natural England's GI Framework⁶¹ seeks to ensure that LPAs and developers can meet the requirements in the NPPF to consider GI in local plans and in new development in a way that will recognise and maximise the multi-functional benefits of GI. GI has many benefits including, human health and wildlife value⁶² and can play an important role in helping urban areas adapt to climate change, by filtering airborne pollutants, providing shade and local cooling and reducing surface water runoff⁶³.
- 9.1.13 Development through the SWLP such as site allocations on undeveloped land, or development that will result in a net loss of GI / vegetation, could potentially result in a reduced capability of the environment to provide ecosystem services including carbon storage and reducing surface run-off. Loss of previously undeveloped land has been considered within **Chapter 14 – Soil**.

Box 9.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: climatic factors

- ⇒ Climate change has the potential to increase all forms of flooding, including the risk of fluvial and surface water flooding, which would be a key issue in the SWLP area.
- ⇒ Warwickshire County Council and the two authorities have declared a Climate Emergency. In order to meet national targets and the vision of West Midlands Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2021-2026 (2021) to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, reductions in local GHG emissions are necessary.
- ⇒ There is a need to increase low-carbon and renewable energy generation and usage throughout the SWLP area.
- ⇒ There is a need to improve the distribution and quantity of electric vehicle charging points and public transport options across the SWLP area, particularly in more rural areas.
- ⇒ There is a need to increase the quality and quantity of GI within the SWLP area to provide multi-functional benefits including improved carbon storage, urban cooling, natural flood resilience/flood water storage, and provide a more attractive public realm to encourage active travel.

9.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on climatic factors



- 9.2.1 Climatic factors has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 1: Climate Change, which aims to reduce the authorities' contribution towards the causes of climate change and adapt to the anticipated effects of climate change, and SA Objective 2: Flood Risk, which seeks to reduce and plan for flood risk including anticipated levels as a result of climate change. Climate change is also an underpinning theme across various other SA Objectives.
- 9.2.2 **Table 9.2** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on climatic factors that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

⁶¹ Natural England (2023) Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/news/natural-england-unveils-new-green-infrastructure-framework [Date accessed: 14/05/26]



⁶² Forest Research (2010) Benefits of green infrastructure. Available at: www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/benefits-of-green-infrastructure/ [Date accessed: 14/05/26]

⁶³ Landscape Institute (no date) Green Infrastructure (GI). Available at: www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/green-infrastructure/ [Date accessed: 14/05/26]

Table 9.2: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on climatic factors

| Identified effects on climatic factors | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|---|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Risk of fluvial flooding (present and future)</p> <p>Development within Flood Zones 2 and 3 may increase exposure of people and property to fluvial flood risk and could contribute to increased flood risk elsewhere. While most allocated sites are located in Flood Zone 1, small areas of some sites intersect with Flood Zones 2 and 3, indicating potential for localised adverse effects.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.9 (Reducing Flood Risk) steers development away from flood risk areas through the sequential approach and site-specific flood risk assessments, ensuring development is safe for its lifetime and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. • Policy ID.12 (Multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) requires drainage design to manage flood risk from all sources, including exceedance events and overland flow, supporting overall flood resilience. • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) supports the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure, including floodplains and riparian habitats, and its integration with SuDS to improve flood management and ecosystem services. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require development to avoid areas at highest risk of fluvial flooding (e.g. Flood Zones 2 and 3) and to be informed by site-specific Flood Risk Assessments, reducing the risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses. | <p>Allocated sites at risk of fluvial flooding have been assessed through the Level 2 SFRA⁶⁴, which provides detailed guidance to support the application of the Exception Test and the sequential layout of development. The SFRA identifies site-specific mitigation measures and requirements to ensure development is safe and consistent with national policy.</p> <p>Subject to implementation of the SFRA recommendations, including site-specific FRAs and mitigation, development is expected to be safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere, with residual risk managed through design.</p> |
| <p>2 </p> <p>Surface water flood risk</p> <p>Development in areas of surface water flood risk may lead to safety implications for site end users, and further exacerbate flood risk in the surrounding area. While many allocated sites intersect with areas of surface water flood risk, this is often limited to parts of sites, indicating potential for localised adverse effects.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.9 (Reducing Flood Risk) requires development to manage surface water flood risk through the drainage hierarchy and site-specific strategies, ensuring no increase in on-site or downstream flood risk, including under climate change. • Policy ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) ensures development contributes to necessary flood risk management infrastructure. • Policy ID.12 (Multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) requires integration of SuDS to control runoff at source, limit discharge rates, and reduce surface water flood risk, including through nature-based solutions. • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) supports green and blue infrastructure and its integration with SuDS to enhance flood management and wider ecosystem services. | <p>Allocated sites at risk of surface water flooding have been assessed through the Level 2 SFRA, which identifies requirements to ensure development is safe and consistent with national policy.</p> <p>Subject to implementation of the SFRA recommendations, including site-specific Flood Risk Assessments and appropriate drainage strategies, development is expected to be safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere, with residual risk managed through design.</p> |

⁶⁴ JBA (2026) South Warwickshire Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Draft – May 2026.

| Identified effects on climatic factors | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3 </p> <p>Increased GHG emissions</p> <p>The proposed development of 54,925 new homes and employment floorspace in South Warwickshire is likely to increase GHG emissions through transport, embodied carbon and operational energy use. Spatial modelling⁶⁵ indicates that transport emissions are the largest source (c.856,509 tCO₂e), followed by embodied carbon (c.755,825 tCO₂e), with comparatively low operational emissions (c.8,984 tCO₂e). This is expected to contribute to cumulative effects on climate change, including increased risk of extreme weather events and sea level rise.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require the incorporation of SuDS, such as swales and attenuation basins, to manage surface water runoff and ensure no increase in downstream flood risk. • Policies NZ.1 (Operational Net Zero in New Residential Buildings) and NZ.2 (Operational Net Zero in New Non-Residential Buildings) require new development to achieve net zero operational energy through efficiency and renewable generation. • Policies NZ.3 (Embodied Carbon) and NZ.4 (Energy Performance Improvements in Existing Buildings) reduce lifecycle emissions by minimising embodied carbon and improving energy efficiency. • Policy NZ.5 (Climate Resilient Design) supports climate adaptation, including reducing overheating risk. • Policies ID.20 (Protecting Large Scale Existing Renewable Infrastructure), ID.22 (Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation and Storage) and NZ.7–NZ.8 (Decentralised Energy Systems) support renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure and decarbonisation of heat and power. • Policies NZ.6 (Carbon Sinks and Sequestration) and ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) enhance carbon storage and climate resilience. • Policies DS.18 (Well-Designed Places), ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and ID.5 (Sustainable Transport Accessibility) promote sustainable transport, reducing transport-related emissions. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions through net zero operational standards, reductions in embodied carbon, and support for renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure. However, given the scale of development proposed and the dominance of transport-related emissions, increases in GHG emissions are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the medium to long term, with the potential for effects to reduce over time as decarbonisation of energy and transport continues.</p> |
| <p>5 </p> <p>Loss of multi-functional green infrastructure</p> <p>While some development is proposed on previously developed land, the majority of allocations are on undeveloped or</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) protects, enhances and delivers multi-functional green and blue infrastructure. • Policies ID.14–ID.16 (Open Space) ensure the provision, quality and long-term management of open space as part of the GI network. • Policy ID.12 (Multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) promotes SuDS that | <p>Although development may result in the loss of some existing greenfield land and green infrastructure features at site level, policies within the Plan seek to protect, enhance and deliver multi-functional green and blue infrastructure, including sustainable drainage systems, biodiversity</p> |

⁶⁵ BioRegional (2026) Net-zero Spatial Planning Support Carbon implications of spatial scenario Golf. South Warwickshire Local Plan, April 2026

| Identified effects on climatic factors | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|--|
| <p>environmentally valuable land, resulting in the loss of multi-functional GI. This may reduce the capacity of the area to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including through carbon sequestration, urban cooling and flood regulation.</p> | <p>provide flood, biodiversity and amenity benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies BN.1–BN.3 (Habitats and Biodiversity) and BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) protect and enhance habitats, ecological networks and green features within GI. • Policy DS.18 (Well-Designed Places) supports the integration of green infrastructure through design. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require delivery of integrated green and blue infrastructure, including open space, habitat enhancement and green corridors, supporting multi-functional GI. | <p>networks and open space. These measures will help to manage flood risk, regulate temperature and support ecological resilience.</p> <p>Overall, a positive effect on green and blue infrastructure and climate change adaptation is anticipated.</p> |

DRAFT

10 Cultural heritage

10.1 Baseline

10.1.1 Historic environment priorities from international to local levels seek to address a range of issues, particularly in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets that are irreplaceable and play an important role in placemaking and the quality of life.

10.1.2 National and local policy and guidance seeks to protect the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.

10.1.3 Various PPPs seek to ensure that cultural aspects of landscapes are recognised and protected against inappropriate development, encourage recognition of the potential and actual value of unknown and undesignated assets, as well as the conservation and enhancement of sites and landscapes of archaeological and heritage interest so that they may be enjoyed by both present and future generations. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

Designated features

10.1.4 South Warwickshire contains a wide range of designated statutory and non-statutory heritage assets, including Listed Buildings (LB), Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs), Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and Conservation Areas (see **Figure 10.1**).

10.1.5 Listed Buildings are designated for their special architectural or historic interest. Across the SWLP area there are 4,826 listed buildings, comprising 97 Grade I (exceptional interest), 249 Grade II* (particularly important) and 4,480 Grade II (special interest).

10.1.6 The Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, first published in 1988, identifies historic landscapes of significance. Within the SWLP area there are two Grade I RPGs (Farnborough Hall and Warwick Castle; of international importance) along with ten Grade II* (exceptional significance) and eleven Grade II (national importance) RPGs.

10.1.7 According to Historic England's listing data⁶⁶ there are 123 SMs across the SWLP area. These SMs include various historic camps, earthworks and settlement remains, including 'Alcester Abbey' SM in Stratford-on-Avon District and 'Castle Bridge' SM in Warwick District.

10.1.8 Conservation Areas (CAs) are designated by local authorities to protect areas of special architectural or historic interest, with additional planning controls over demolition and alterations that would otherwise be permitted development. 23 CAs have been identified within Warwick District and 76 CAs within Stratford-on-Avon.

10.1.9 There is also one Historic Battlefield within the SWLP boundary, which is the site of the 'Battle of Edgehill 1642' in Stratford-on-Avon District where a battle of the Civil Wars of the mid seventeenth century took place⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ Historic England (2026) Download Listing Data. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

⁶⁷ Historic England (2021) Battle of Edgehill 1642. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000009> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

- 10.1.10 Since 1998, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights Listed Buildings, SMs, Conservation Areas, wreck sites and Registered Parks and Gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. In the SWLP area, this includes two Conservation Areas, two RPGs, 15 Listed Buildings and 18 SMs⁶⁸.

[Map TBC]

Figure 10.1: Heritage assets within South Warwickshire

Non-designated assets

- 10.1.11 Not all of Warwickshire's heritage assets are statutorily designated; non-designated assets form a significant and often everyday part of the historic environment. The NPPF recognises their importance, including archaeological remains above and below ground.
- 10.1.12 The SWLP area contains many non-designated features of historic interest, including roads, waterways, canals, regency architecture, archaeology, and historic towns and villages. Not all nationally important archaeological remains are scheduled, and some assets remain undiscovered.
- 10.1.13 Warwickshire's Historic Environment Record (HER)⁶⁹ provides a key data source on local heritage assets, including archaeological sites, findspots and events, supporting ongoing monitoring.

Box 10.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: cultural heritage

- ⇒ Archaeological remains, both seen and unseen, are present within the SWLP area.
- ⇒ There is a need to protect and enhance important historic buildings, monuments, sites of archaeological significance and the integrity of local planning designations – most urgently those listed on the Heritage at Risk Register.
- ⇒ There is a need to enhance the quality of the historic environment, and to celebrate the SWLP area's heritage and engage with the local population.
- ⇒ There is a high abundance of historic assets in the SWLP area. Conservation Areas appraisals could be updated in Stratford-on-Avon District and parts of Warwick District in order to further protect and enhance areas which hold special architectural or historic importance.


10.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on cultural heritage


- 10.2.1 Cultural heritage has been considered in the SA process under SA Objective 5: Cultural Heritage, which seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment in an appropriate manner to the significance of heritage assets and their settings.
- 10.2.2 **Table 10.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on cultural heritage that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

⁶⁸ Historic England (2025) Heritage at Risk Register. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

⁶⁹ Heritage Gateway Partners (2025) Warwickshire Historic Environment Record. Available at: <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/herdetail.aspx?crit=&ctid=93&id=4747> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

Table 10.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on cultural heritage

| Identified effects on cultural heritage | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|---|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Alter the character and/or setting of designated heritage assets</p> <p>New development has the potential to adversely affect the character and setting of designated heritage assets, depending on the nature and location of development and the factors contributing to their significance. Several allocated sites coincide with, or lie in close proximity to, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, and conservation areas.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.9 (Heritage Assets) seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings through sensitive design and protection of their significance. • Policy BN.10 (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) protects conservation areas, locally listed assets and archaeology by requiring sensitive design and managing harm to heritage significance. • Policies BN.11 (Historic Landscapes - Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Village Greens) and BN.12 (Waterways) protect designated historic landscapes and waterways by requiring conservation of their character, setting and significance. • Policies ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) and DS.4 (Strategic Site Principles) support the protection of heritage assets and their settings through landscape-led design, GI, and sensitive masterplanning. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require development to conserve the significance and setting of heritage assets through design and mitigation measures. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings through sensitive design, protection of significance, and landscape-led masterplanning. However, Heritage Impact Assessments prepared for a number of sites highlight the need for mitigation measures such as buffer zones to reduce harm to the setting of assets. This indicates that further site-specific design and assessment will be required to fully understand and mitigate impacts.</p> <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the long term, with potential for cumulative and localised significant effects where development affects the setting or significance of designated heritage assets.</p> |

| Identified effects on cultural heritage | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|---|---|
| <p>2 </p> <p>Alteration of character or setting of non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes</p> <p>New development has the potential to adversely affect the character and setting of non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes. Evidence from the Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment⁷⁰ indicates that several allocated sites lie within areas identified as having ‘red’ or ‘amber’ sensitivity, where development is likely to result in harm.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.9 (Heritage Assets) requires development to consider the significance of non-designated heritage assets and archaeological remains, and mitigate harm where appropriate. • Policies BN.11 (Historic Landscapes – Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Village Greens) and BN.12 (Waterways) support the conservation and enhancement of historic landscapes and features, including canal corridors and associated elements. • Policies ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), DS.4 (Strategic Site Principles) and DS.16 (Protecting, Enhancing and Restoring Landscape Character) promote landscape-led design and green infrastructure to protect historic landscape character, features and settings. | <p>The policies provide a framework for protecting non-designated heritage assets and historic landscape character through design-led and landscape-based approaches. However, several sites lie within areas of ‘red’ or ‘amber’ sensitivity, indicating potential for harm. In addition, the presence and significance of below-ground archaeological remains remain uncertain in the absence of detailed site investigations.</p> <p>Overall, a long term residual adverse effect is likely, with potential for cumulative impacts and uncertainty regarding effects on archaeological resources.</p> |

⁷⁰ Place Services (2022) Heritage & Settlement Sensitivity Assessment for Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/doc/211480/name/SouthWarwick%20HSA%20final%20access%20compressed.pdf> [Date accessed: 07/05/26]

11 Human health

11.1 Baseline

11.1.1 National and local health strategies and policies seek to promote the development of healthy communities, such as through delivering age-friendly environments for the elderly, encouraging healthier food choices and facilitating active travel. In line with the NPPF, LPAs should seek to promote social interaction, create communities which are safe and accessible, and ensure there is good accessibility to a range of GI, sports facilities, local shops, cultural buildings and outdoor space.

11.1.2 Key PPPs include Public Health England's Strategy for 2020–2025⁷¹ which sets out priorities within the health system including a focus on addressing health inequalities. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

Air quality

11.1.3 As discussed in detail within **Chapter 7**, air pollution is a significant concern internationally, nationally and locally, with an average of 5.2% of mortality in Warwick and 4.8% in Stratford-on-Avon being attributed to particulate air pollution⁷².

11.1.4 Development proposals located in close proximity to AQMAs or main roads would be likely to expose site end users to higher levels of transport associated noise and air pollution, with adverse impacts on health and wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing

11.1.5 Health and wellbeing across South Warwickshire, including Warwick District and Stratford-on-Avon District, is generally strong, with both areas performing above the England average on key indicators. Life expectancy is higher than the national average, particularly in Stratford-on-Avon, and healthy life expectancy is also relatively good. Lower levels of deprivation contribute to positive outcomes across many measures. However, there remain clear inequalities within both districts, with variations in health outcomes between more and less deprived communities. An ageing population is also expected to increase demand for health and care services over time.

GP surgeries and NHS hospitals

11.1.6 Access to GP surgeries and NHS hospitals is essential for residents' wellbeing. Ideally, GP surgeries should be within a 10-minute walk (c.800m) and hospitals within 5km. Where this is not achievable, sustainable transport options, such as frequent and affordable bus services, should be available.

⁷¹ Public Health England (2019) PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/phe-strategy-2020-to-2025 [Date accessed: 05/05/26]

⁷² Department of Health & Social Care (2023) Public Health Profiles: Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (new method). Available at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/air%20pollution#page/4/gid/1/pat/15/ati/401/are/E07000221/iid/93861/age/230/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/1/cid/4/tbm/1> [Date accessed: 14/05/26]

11.1.7 There is one hospital with an Accident and Emergency (A&E) department in the SWLP area: Warwick Hospital. However, there are additional hospitals located near the SWLP boundary which are expected to be used by South Warwickshire residents. These include: Alexandra Hospital in Redditch, which is located approximately 0.4km west of the SWLP area, Horton General Hospital which is located in Banbury, approximately 5.6km east of the SWLP area and the University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire which is located in Coventry, approximately 4.5km north of the SWLP area.

11.1.8 There are approximately 40 GP surgeries located across the Plan area (see **Figure 11.1**). The majority of these are located in Warwick and Royal Leamington Spa.

Green spaces and natural habitats

11.1.9 Access to a diverse range of natural habitats benefits physical and mental health, helping to reduce stress, anxiety and depression⁷³. It is also linked to positive health outcomes, including healthy foetal growth, higher birth weights and lower rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes, with particularly significant benefits for lower socio-economic groups.

11.1.10 Improving access to natural habitats can help reduce health inequalities. In the SWLP area, the extensive Public Right of Way (PRoW) network throughout Warwickshire and proximity to the Cotswolds National Landscape offers good access to the countryside, providing an open and rural landscape for natural habitats. Given the rural character of much of Stratford-on-Avon District, residents are likely to have good access to the surrounding countryside and a range of natural habitats.

11.1.11 The SWLP area supports a network of biodiversity sites, providing local residents with opportunities to visit natural outdoor spaces and view wildlife (see **Chapter 8**).

11.1.12 In addition to this, there are a wide variety of public green spaces across the SWLP area (see **Figure 11.1**), including parks, playing fields, golf courses, allotments and sports facilities.

Box 11.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: human health

- ⇒ The population is likely to increase across the SWLP area and as such may result in capacity issues at healthcare facilities as well as increased traffic on roads resulting in air quality reductions.
- ⇒ The ageing population across the SWLP area is likely to result in increased pressure on health and transport facilities and result in a reduced working age population over time.
- ⇒ There is a need to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by:
 - Providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations;
 - Creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect a community's needs and support its health and social and cultural well-being;
 - Creating a strong sense of place by strengthening the distinctive and cultural qualities of towns and villages; and
 - Creating safe and accessible environments where crime, disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

[Map TBC]


⁷³ Houlden. V., Weich. S. and Jarvis. S. (2017) A cross-sectional analysis of green space prevalence and mental wellbeing in England

Figure 11.1: Healthcare facilities and green spaces across South Warwickshire


11.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on human health

- 11.2.1 Human health has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 10: Health, which seeks to safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing. There is also some overlap with SA Objective 6: Pollution, which considers the implications of air, water, soil and noise pollution including for human health (see also **Chapter 7: Air**).
- 11.2.2 **Table 11.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on human health that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

Table 11.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on human health

| Identified effects on human health | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|---|---|
| <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Sustainable access to healthcare / leisure facilities</p> <p>Many allocated sites are located beyond sustainable distances to healthcare and leisure facilities, including NHS hospitals, GP surgeries and leisure centres, which may limit access and increase reliance on private vehicles.</p> </div> </div> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and DS.4 (Strategic Site Principles) ensure development contributes to and supports the timely delivery of healthcare infrastructure. • Policy BN.7 (Health Impact Assessment) requires assessment of health impacts to support improved health outcomes and reduce inequalities. • Policies ID.5 (Sustainable Transport Accessibility) and DS.18 (Well-Designed Places) promote sustainable transport and accessible layouts, helping to improve access to healthcare and leisure facilities. • Policy ID.17 (Sport, Recreation and Leisure Facilities) safeguards existing provision and supports new and enhanced leisure facilities. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require provision of new healthcare, leisure and community facilities to meet the needs of new populations. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to improve access to healthcare and leisure facilities through new provision, developer contributions and enhanced sustainable transport. However, many sites are located beyond sustainable distances to existing facilities, and these accessibility constraints are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the short to long term, with some improvement over time as infrastructure is delivered.</p> |

| Identified effects on human health | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|---|---|
| <p>2 </p> <p>Limited access to public greenspace</p> <p>Some allocated sites are located beyond sustainable distances to publicly accessible greenspace, which may limit opportunities for outdoor recreation and physical activity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) ensure development provides and integrates accessible green space within new development. • Policy ID.14 (Open Space, Play, Recreation and Community Growing Spaces) supports the protection and provision of a range of public open spaces to promote health and wellbeing. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require provision of public open space and green space, including parks and strategic green infrastructure, to support recreation, health and environmental functions. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to deliver new and enhanced green space provision within development, alongside the protection of existing assets, and allocation of new Local Green Spaces, improving access to outdoor recreation and supporting health and wellbeing. While some sites are currently located beyond existing greenspace, new provision is likely to address these gaps.</p> <p>Overall, a positive effect is identified in the medium to long term.</p> |
| <p>3 </p> <p>Limited access to PRow or cycle network</p> <p>The majority of allocated sites have good access to the Public Rights of Way (PRow) and cycle network, supporting opportunities for active travel and recreation. However, a small number of sites have more limited access, which may increase reliance on less sustainable modes of transport.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) support the delivery of active travel infrastructure, including public rights of way and recreational links. • Policies BN.16 (Road Safety) and DS.4 (Strategic Site Principles) require safe, connected pedestrian and cycle routes within sites and linking to surrounding areas and key destinations. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require provision of pedestrian and cycle routes, including integrated active travel networks linking homes to services, facilities and the wider area. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the provision of new and improved routes within and between sites, supporting active travel and recreation. While some sites currently have more limited access to existing networks, improved connections are likely to reduce these constraints.</p> <p>Overall, a minor positive effect is identified in the medium to long term.</p> |

| Identified effects on human health | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|---|
| <p></p> <p>Exposure to air / noise pollution (from AQMAs and main roads)</p> <p>The long-term health of residents, in particular vulnerable groups including children and the elderly, could be adversely affected by air pollution. Development within, or within 200m of an AQMA or the main road network could potentially expose site end users to increased levels of traffic related air pollution or noise, with adverse implications for health (see also Chapter 7: Air).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.8 (Pollution and Environmental Quality) prevents unacceptable pollution and exposure, ensuring effects on health, amenity and the environment are avoided, mitigated or compensated. • Policies DS.18 (Well-Designed Places), ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) and ID.5 (Sustainable Transport Accessibility) promote sustainable transport (including active travel and public transport), reducing reliance on private vehicles and associated emissions. • Policy ID.6 (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) supports the transition to electric vehicles, reducing emissions from petrol and diesel transport. • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) enhances green infrastructure, supporting air quality improvements and wider environmental benefits. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to reduce exposure to air and noise pollution through design, sustainable transport measures, and green infrastructure. However, given the scale of development and the potential for increased traffic flows, particularly in and around AQMAs and along the main road network, adverse effects are unlikely to be fully mitigated in all locations.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the long term, with localised moderate effects possible in areas of higher exposure, although this may reduce over time with improvements in vehicle emissions and technology.</p> |

DRAFT

12 Landscape

12.1 Baseline

12.1.1 Landscape can be described as comprising natural, cultural, social, aesthetic and perceptual elements, this includes flora, fauna, soils, land use, settlement, sight, smells and sound⁷⁴. The link between landscapes and a range of other aspects can be provided with a close focus on GI provision, with multi-functional benefits. In this respect, policies advocate the provision of open space, green networks and woodland as opportunities for sport and recreation, creating healthier communities as well as supporting and enhancing biodiversity. National Design Guidance⁷⁵ advocates well-designed places that are functional, attractive and provide a sense of safety, inclusion and community cohesion. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

Cotswolds National Landscape

12.1.2 Parts of the SWLP area in the south west and south east fall within the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), also known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (see **Figure 12.1**). Land within the SWLP area is visible from higher ground in the Cotswolds, and future development may increase recreational pressure on these designated landscapes.

12.1.3 National Landscapes are statutory landscape designations confirmed under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000⁷⁶, which places a responsibility upon public bodies to “*have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area*”. The CNL was designated in 1966 and was extended in area in 1990⁷⁷. Special qualities of the CNL include rolling chalk and limestone hills providing expansive views over various major settlements and scattered hamlets.

National Character Areas

12.1.4 Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct natural areas called National Character Areas (NCAs)⁷⁸. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape.

12.1.5 The SWLP area coincides with five NCAs: Cotswolds NCA to the south of the SWLP area, Northamptonshire Uplands NCA to the east, Dunsmore and Feldon NCA within the central Plan area, Severn and Avon Vales NCA to the south west and Arden NCA to the north west of the Plan area.

⁷⁴ Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types [Date accessed: 06/05/26]

⁷⁵ MHCLG (2021) National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide [Date accessed: 06/05/26]

⁷⁶ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

⁷⁷ Cotswolds National Landscape (2025) Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030. Available at: <https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-work/cotswolds-national-landscape-management-plan/> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

⁷⁸ Natural England (2026) National Character Area Profiles. Available at: <https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

Landscape character and sensitivity

- 12.1.6 South Warwickshire is characterised by a predominantly rural landscape of rolling farmland, historic market towns and river valleys, with a strong sense of character and heritage, and varying sensitivity to change, particularly in areas of high scenic, historic or environmental value.
- 12.1.7 The Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines 1993⁷⁹ were prepared to map and describe the special characteristics of each of the county's seven landscape character areas, to inform strategies for managing and enhancing these landscapes.
- 12.1.8 Stratford-on-Avon District Council published Landscape Sensitivity Assessments of Main Settlements and Local Service Villages 2011 – 2012^{80 81}.
- 12.1.9 As part of the SWLP evidence base, the South Warwickshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment has been prepared to aid the evaluation of new settlements and SGLs⁸² and non-strategic employment sites⁸³, providing an up-to-date indication of the susceptibility of these landscapes to change and their capacity to accommodate development.
- 12.1.10 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) in Stratford-on-Avon District are locally designated landscapes identified in the 2016 Core Strategy for their high scenic, historic and environmental value⁸⁴. Four SLAs are defined, Arden, Cotswold Fringe, Feldon Parkland and Ironstone Hills Fringe, with the aim of protecting and enhancing their distinctive character and visual quality, particularly outside nationally designated areas (see **Figure 12.1**). While SLAs are specific to Stratford-on-Avon, a candidate SLA has also been identified in Warwick District at the River Leam and its surrounding area.

Tranquility

- 12.1.11 New employment, residential and retail growth can have significant effects on landscape quality, including through impacts of noise pollution, light pollution and broader effects on people's perceptions of tranquillity.

Green Belt

- 12.1.12 The West Midlands Green Belt extends into the northern parts of South Warwickshire, around settlements such as Kenilworth and Warwick, where it serves to prevent urban sprawl from the West Midlands conurbation and maintain separation between towns and villages, while much of Stratford-on-Avon District lies outside the Green Belt (see **Figure 12.1**).

⁷⁹ Warwickshire County Council (1993) Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines. Available at: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/landscapeguidelines> [Date accessed: 11/03/26]

⁸⁰ White Consultants (2012) Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Local Service Villages. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-building/landscape-and-green-infrastructure.cfm> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

⁸¹ White Consultants (2011) Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Main Settlements including Areas of Restraint Assessment. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-building/landscape-and-green-infrastructure.cfm> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

⁸² LUC (2026) South Warwickshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment: Strategic Growth Locations and New Settlements. April 2026.

⁸³ LUC (2026) South Warwickshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Addendum: Non-strategic employment sites. April 2026.

⁸⁴ White consultants (2012). Special Landscape Areas Study for Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Final Report. Available at: www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/205823/name/ED4112%20Special%20Landscape%20Areas%20Study%20June%202012.pdf [Date accessed: 12/03/26]

12.1.13 Although Green Belt itself is not necessarily of high landscape value, it often serves to protect the character and setting of historic towns and has the potential to indirectly influence landscape character by virtue of low quantities of buildings and higher quantities of semi-natural features including woods, arable fields and grasslands.

12.1.14 The Green Belt is intended to⁸⁵:

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

12.1.15 The Stage 1 Green Belt Review (2024)⁸⁶ identified which areas of land are likely to be best suited to retaining their Green Belt designation, and which areas of land may have the potential for release without compromising the performance of the West Midlands Green Belt as a whole. Stage 2 of the Green Belt Review (2026)⁸⁷ has assessed the contribution to Green Belt purposes made by potential development sites being considered for allocation.

Box 12.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: landscape

- ⇒ There is a need to protect the special qualities of nationally designated landscapes.
- ⇒ There is a risk that new development could increase the risk of encroachment into the open countryside or alter the character and sense of place in these settlements.
- ⇒ Growth within the countryside may degrade landscape quality and result in increased air, noise and light pollution, as well as affecting the perception of tranquillity in these areas.
- ⇒ Large proportions of the north of the SWLP area consists of Green Belt.
- ⇒ There is a need for new development to be in accordance with the scale and character of the local area and seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the surrounding landscape or townscape.

[Map TBC]

Figure 12.1: Landscape designations across South Warwickshire

12.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on landscape

12.2.1 Landscape has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 4: Landscape, which aims to conserve, enhance and manage the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes.



⁸⁵ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. December 2024. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65829e99f07f3000d8d4529/NPPF_December_2023.pdf [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

⁸⁶ Arup (2024) South Warwickshire Local Plan Green Belt Review Stage 1. Available at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/doc/213163/name/South%20Warwickshire%20Green%20Belt%20Review%20Stage%201%20Report%20Final%20Report%20and%20Appendix%201%206%20low%20res.pdf> [Date accessed: 12/03/26]



⁸⁷ Arup (2026) South Warwickshire Local Plan Green Belt Review Stage 2: Green Belt Site Assessments. Draft, February 2026.

12.2.2 **Table 12.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on landscape that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.


Table 12.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on landscape

| Identified effects on landscape | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Threats or pressures to the Cotswolds National Landscape</p> <p>While no allocations are located within the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), several lie in close proximity including New Settlement E1, where development may adversely affect its setting, views to and from the designation, and its special qualities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DS.14 (Protecting the Cotswolds National Landscape) conserves and enhances the CNL and its setting by restricting development, requiring sensitive design, and applying a 3km buffer to manage impacts. • Policy DS.15 (Special Landscape Areas) protects the Cotswold Fringe SLA, which contributes to the setting of the CNL. • Policy DS.16 (Protecting, Enhancing and Restoring Landscape Character) requires landscape-led development and assessment of visual impacts to avoid harm to the CNL and its setting. • Site allocation policy LMA (Long Marston Airfield New Community) requires development to conserve the setting of the CNL, including avoiding visually intrusive development and using landscaping to minimise impacts. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to provide strong protection for the CNL and its setting through restrictions on development, landscape-led design, and assessment of visual impacts. However, given the proximity of some allocations to the designation, there remains potential for adverse effects on its setting, including impacts on views to and from the CNL and increased traffic affecting tranquillity. Further assessment would be required to fully understand potential effects on scenic beauty, dark skies and heritage features such as Meon Hill.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the long term, with localised effects on the setting and special qualities of the CNL.</p> |
| <p>2 </p> <p>Loss or alteration of landscape character and sensitive or locally designated landscapes</p> <p>Many site allocations have the potential to adversely affect the distinctive characteristics of South Warwickshire’s landscapes, as identified in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines⁸⁸.</p> <p>Evidence from the South Warwickshire Landscape</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) supports the protection and enhancement of landscape character through green infrastructure and high-quality placemaking. • Policies DS.14 (Protecting the Cotswolds National Landscape) and DS.15 (Special Landscape Areas) protect nationally and locally designated landscapes by resisting harmful development, requiring sensitive design, and addressing cumulative effects. • Policy DS.16 (Protecting, Enhancing and Restoring Landscape Character) requires landscape-led development that respects local | <p>SWLP policies are expected to protect and enhance landscape character through landscape-led design, the safeguarding of designated landscapes, and the integration of green infrastructure. However, given the scale of development proposed, particularly on previously undeveloped land, and the presence of allocations within areas of moderate sensitivity and SLAs, impacts on landscape character are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> |

⁸⁸ Warwickshire County Council (1993) Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines. Available at: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/landscapeguidelines> [Date accessed: 11/03/26]

| Identified effects on landscape | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Sensitivity Assessment⁸⁹ indicates that several allocations, including New Settlements B1 and E1, are located within areas of moderate landscape sensitivity. In addition, some sites lie within designated Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), including SG23 within the Arden SLA, where landscape character is more susceptible to change.</p> | <p>character and sensitivity, and mitigates visual and cumulative impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require development to respond to landscape character, including retaining key features, respecting views and ensuring appropriate layout, scale and design. | <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the long term, with localised significant effects possible in more sensitive landscapes.</p> |
| <p>3 </p> <p>Changes in views experienced by users of the PRoW network</p> <p>Development proposed in the SWLP may adversely affect informal high-quality views experienced from the PRoW network. Several allocated sites coincide with or lie in close proximity to PRoWs, where development has the potential to alter the quality of these views.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DS.17 (Maintaining Settlement Identity and Areas of Restraint) protects openness and key views, including from PRoWs, by maintaining visual separation and preventing cumulative erosion. • Policy DS.18 (Well-Designed Places) requires context-responsive design that protects and enhances important views through layout, scale, massing and landscaping. • Policies BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) and ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) support planting and green infrastructure to help screen development and integrate it into the landscape. | <p>SWLP policies are expected to provide protection of visual amenity and views through design, landscape integration and the retention of green infrastructure. However, given the scale of development proposed, particularly on previously undeveloped land, and the proximity of some allocations to PRoWs, changes to views are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a cumulative minor adverse effect is identified in the long term, reflecting permanent changes to views from the PRoW network.</p> |
| <p>4 </p> <p>Increase coalescence between settlements</p> <p>Development at some allocated sites, particularly larger-scale strategic allocations, may reduce the separation between settlements, increasing the risk of coalescence and loss of settlement identity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DS.13 (Green Belt) directs development to planned release areas while maintaining Green Belt protection elsewhere, helping to prevent urban sprawl and settlement merging. • Policies DS.16 (Protecting, Enhancing and Restoring Landscape Character) and DS.17 (Maintaining Settlement Identity and Areas of Restraint) seek to prevent coalescence by protecting settlement gaps, maintaining openness, and requiring development to respect landscape character and settlement pattern. • Policy DS.18 (Well-Designed Places) promotes high-quality, context-responsive design that reinforces local character and | <p>SWLP policies are expected to help maintain settlement identity and separation through protection of settlement gaps, landscape-led design, and the delivery of well-designed development. However, some allocations, particularly larger-scale sites, may reduce the separation between settlements, and these effects are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the long term, with localised impacts on settlement separation and identity.</p> |

⁸⁹ LUC (2026) South Warwickshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment: Strategic Growth Locations and New Settlements. April 2026.

| Identified effects on landscape | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|--|---|
| <p>5 </p> <p>Impacts on the Green Belt</p> <p>The majority of allocated sites lie outside the Green Belt or within areas identified as making a 'weak' contribution to its purposes according to the Green Belt Review (2026)⁹⁰. However, parts of some allocations (including SG04, SG05, SG06, SG18-N and SG23) fall within areas of 'moderate' contribution, and part of SG01 lies within an area of 'strong' contribution, indicating potential for localised adverse effects on Green Belt function.</p> | <p>maintains distinct settlement identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DS.13 (Green Belt) protects the Green Belt by restricting inappropriate development and maintaining its openness and strategic function. • Policy DS.2 (Spatial Development Strategy) directs growth to appropriate locations, helping to avoid unnecessary development within the Green Belt. • Policy DS.3 (Meeting our Development Needs to 2050) sets development requirements in a way that takes account of constraints, including the need to protect the Green Belt. • Policy DS.17 (Maintaining Settlement Identity and Area of Restraint) supports the role of open land in preventing settlement coalescence, complementing Green Belt objectives. | <p>Whilst relevant policies provide a framework for protection and seek to direct development away from sensitive areas, some allocations affect land identified as making a 'moderate' or 'strong' contribution to Green Belt purposes. This indicates the potential for localised harm to Green Belt function which cannot be fully mitigated.</p> <p>A localised, permanent negative effect on the Green Belt is therefore anticipated.</p> |

DRAFT

⁹⁰ Arup (2026) South Warwickshire Local Plan Green Belt Review Stage 2: Green Belt Site Assessments. Draft, February 2026.

13 Population and material assets

13.1 Baseline

13.1.1 'Population' is a broad topic with relevance to several areas including housing, health and wellbeing, transport and accessibility, education and the economy. These objectives seek to create places where residents live a high quality of life for longer, are well educated and have the necessary skills to gain employment. Indicators include the proximity of development proposals to schools, accessibility to employment land and proximity to services and amenities.

13.1.2 'Material assets' covers a variety of built and natural assets which are accounted for in a range of SA Objectives. It is a requirement of Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations to consider material assets, although they are not defined. The SA process has considered material assets as the health centres, schools and other essential infrastructure resources required to meet the demands of the local population and development aspirations of the Local Plan. This includes consideration of mineral resources and waste management. Other aspects of natural assets, such as agricultural land, have been considered under other SEA topics (see **Chapter 14 – Soil**).

Population Size

13.1.3 Stratford-on-Avon District Council has a population of approximately 146,258 people and Warwick District Council has a population of approximately 154,889 people, therefore the Plan area has a combined population of approximately 301,147 people according to the latest mid-year Office for National Statistics (ONS) population estimates⁹¹.

13.1.4 Warwick District has the highest proportion of residents aged between 16 and 64, at 64%, with Stratford-on-Avon District significantly lower at 57.9%⁹². Warwick District has a higher proportion of people of working age than across the West Midlands (61.7%) and Great Britain (62.4%).

13.1.5 Population projections for the Plan area indicate that the proportion of people over 70 in both authorities is likely to increase. Additionally, the proportion of people under the age of 30 in the Districts of Stratford-on-Avon District and Warwick District is likely to increase.

Poverty

13.1.6 Warwick District (264th) and Stratford-on-Avon District (246th) are both ranked among the least deprived local authorities in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025⁹³ (rank of average rank), indicating generally low levels of deprivation across South Warwickshire. No Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of the SWLP area are in the most deprived top ten percent nationally.

⁹¹ Office for National Statistics (2024) Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales – Mid-2024. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2024> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

⁹² Nomis (2020) Labour Market Profile – Stratford-on-Avon. Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157184/report.aspx#tabrespop> [Date Accessed: 05/05/26]

⁹³ MHCLG (2025) English Indices of Deprivation 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025> [Date accessed: 15/05/26]

13.1.7 Although the SWLP area is generally considered to be affluent, there are pockets of deprivation and low-income households across both authorities.

Employment

13.1.8 A greater proportion of the population of Warwick District is of working age (16 – 64) than across Great Britain as a whole, whereas lower proportions are seen in Stratford-on-Avon compared to the national percentage (**Table 13.1**). The percentage of self-employed people is higher in both Stratford-on-Avon District compared to the average for Great Britain, whereas Warwick District is slightly lower than the average.

13.1.9 The SWLP area has a higher proportion of residents employed in professional occupations than the Great Britain average, particularly in Warwick District (32.5%). Stratford-on-Avon District also has a higher proportion of residents in managerial and senior roles, while Warwick District has a slightly lower proportion than the national average.

13.1.10 In Warwick District, the largest employment sector is wholesale and retail trade, including motor vehicle repair, although this is slightly below the Great Britain average. In Stratford-on-Avon District, manufacturing is the largest sector, with employment levels around 10% higher than the national average.

13.1.11 In 2021, a total of 15,930 business enterprises were operating within the SWLP area: 8,290 in Stratford-on-Avon District and 7,640 in Warwick District.

Table 13.1: Percentage of the working population (16-64) who are employed, self-employed or unemployed⁹⁴

| Area | Stratford-on-Avon District (%) | Warwick District (%) | Great Britain (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| All people aged 16 - 64 | 57.9 | 64.0 | 62.4 |
| Economically active | 79.8 | 82.7 | 78.4 |
| Employees | 64.4 | 70.4 | 65.3 |
| Self Employed | 12.4 | 9.0 | 9.3 |
| Unemployed | 3.5 | 3.6 | 4.4 |

Employment land

13.1.12 The SWLP area provides approximately 156,000 jobs in total, with 67,000 in Stratford-on-Avon District and 89,000 in Warwick District.

13.1.13 Notable major employers include National Grid, various technology and web development companies, and a range of car manufacturers including Aston Martin Lagonda, BMW and Jaguar Land Rover. The SWLP will identify potential locations for new development which could deliver employment growth, informed by the Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessments (HEDNA) and Employment Land Supply information.

Education

13.1.14 There are 88 primary and 16 secondary schools within the two districts. The secondary schools are primarily located within and around Royal Leamington Spa, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Alcester.

⁹⁴ nomis (2021) Labour market profile. Employment and Unemployment (Jan 2021-Dec 2021). Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157185/report.aspx#tabempunemp> [Date Accessed:06/05/26]

13.1.15 **Table 13.2** shows that the percentage of residents with National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in the SWLP area are higher than the national percentages.

Table 13.2: Percentage of population aged 16-64 at each NVQ level⁹⁵

| Qualification | Stratford-on-Avon District (%) | Warwick District (%) | Great Britain (%) |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| NVQ4 and above | 48.7 | 49.5 | 43.2 |
| NVQ3 and above | 70.9 | 66.2 | 61.5 |
| NVQ2 and above | 88.2 | 83.7 | 78.2 |
| NVQ1 and above | 92.8 | 91.7 | 87.6 |
| Other qualifications | N/A | 4.6 | 5.9 |
| No qualifications | 4.2 | 3.7 | 6.6 |

Digital connectivity

13.1.16 Digital connectivity, including fast broadband and mobile coverage, is important for residents' quality of life and for supporting business competitiveness and economic growth.

13.1.17 Improving broadband access is a key priority of the SWLP. Enhanced high-speed connectivity can support investment, employment opportunities and access to services. Warwickshire County Council's Digital Infrastructure Strategy⁹⁶ states that 98% of premises have access to superfast broadband, with ambitions to expand full fibre coverage.

Housing

13.1.18 National and sub-regional housing objectives include improving affordability, quality, choice and market stability, while ensuring housing locations support accessibility and economic growth. Housing density should be carefully considered, as high densities can place pressure on services and open space and may affect safety, social interaction and community cohesion⁹⁷.

13.1.19 Sustainable development should consider the type, design and quality of housing needed in different areas, alongside access to services and the needs of diverse groups, including older people, people with disabilities, students, young people, and Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

13.1.20 Affordable housing is defined as “*social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market*”⁹⁸. The South Warwickshire HEDNA provides further information regarding the need for, and deliverability of, affordable housing across the plan area.

⁹⁵ nomis (2021) Labour market profile. Qualifications (Jan 2021-Dec 2021). Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157185/report.aspx?town=warwick> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

⁹⁶ Warwickshire County Council (no date) Digital Infrastructure Strategy. Available at: <https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/s9533/Digital%20Strategy%20for%205G%20and%20Digital%20Connectivity.pdf> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

⁹⁷ Dempsey. N., Brown. C. and Bramley. G. (2012) The key to sustainable urban development in UK cities? The influence of density on social sustainability. Progress in Planning 77:89-141

⁹⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2025) Affordable housing supply. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-housing-supply> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

Accessibility and transport

- 13.1.21 Key transport challenges include modernising infrastructure and promoting sustainable travel. European and UK policies aim to reduce congestion and pollution through better public transport, walking and cycling networks, and measures such as walkable neighbourhoods, car-free areas, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, while supporting economic growth.
- 13.1.22 Transport is closely linked to sustainability. Improving sustainable transport can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support climate change mitigation, improve health, reduce congestion, boost the economy, and improve air quality for people and sensitive habitats.
- 13.1.23 Warwickshire’s Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011–2026⁹⁹ sets out the county’s transport strategy in response to climate change, population growth and technological change, aiming to support economic growth, reduce emissions, promote equality and improve safety. The LTP is currently being updated, with key priorities including improving connectivity and network resilience, reducing transport emissions and road casualties, improving affordability and public realm quality, and supporting housing and economic growth.

Road network

- 13.1.24 The SWLP area is served by several major transport corridors, including the M40, which runs through Stratford-on-Avon from south east to north west and through the east of Warwick District from south to north, providing links to London, the South East and Birmingham. The A46 also passes through both districts, connecting to Coventry and the M1 via the M69. Key non-motorway routes include the A422, A3400 and A4189, which link major settlements and the wider area (see Figure 13.1).
- 13.1.25 Warwickshire is centrally located and experiences generally high traffic flows, with good overall road and rail connectivity. However, some retail, business and industrial developments built outside town centres in the 1980s are difficult to access without a car¹⁰⁰, which can reduce accessibility for local communities.

Electric vehicles

- 13.1.26 Electric and hybrid vehicle use is increasing rapidly in the UK, with registrations rising significantly from 2014 onwards. In 2025, electric vehicles accounted for 23.4% of new car registrations, up from 19.6% in 2024. As of April 2026, there are over 2,000,000 fully electric cars and 3,093,034 plug-in hybrids on UK roads¹⁰¹. The planned phase-out of diesel car sales is expected to reduce road transport emissions over time.
- 13.1.27 Electric vehicle charging infrastructure exists within the SWLP area but is mainly concentrated in the main towns, with more limited provision in rural areas.

⁹⁹ Warwickshire County Council (2023) Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. Available at: <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-1980322935-2491> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰⁰ Warwickshire County Council (2023) Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. Available at: <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-1980322935-2491> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰¹ Zapmap (2026) EV market stats 2026. Available at: <https://www.zapmap.com/ev-stats/ev-market> [Date accessed: 07/05/26]

Rail network

13.1.28 The SWLP area contains several mainline railway stations providing links to destinations including Coventry, Birmingham, London Marylebone, Plymouth, Cardiff, Nottingham and Glasgow. While some parts of Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick Districts are within sustainable access of rail services, large rural areas, particularly in southern Stratford-on-Avon District, remain less accessible to railway stations (see Figure 13.1).

13.1.29 Inclusive transport is a priority of Warwickshire's LTP, with a focus on improving accessibility at stations including Stratford-upon-Avon, Leamington Spa, Warwick and Henley-in-Arden. The LTP also seeks better integration between rail, bus and community transport services, alongside proposals for new stations and parkway facilities to improve connectivity¹⁰². Existing park and ride facilities include Stratford Park and Ride¹⁰³ and Warwick Parkway¹⁰⁴.

Public Rights of Way and cycling

13.1.30 Warwickshire has an extensive Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network covering over 1,800 miles¹⁰⁵ (see Figure 13.1), consisting mainly of footpaths, alongside bridleways, byways and unclassified routes. There are no National Trails within South Warwickshire.

13.1.31 The Warwickshire LTP¹⁰⁶ promotes the development of safe and convenient cycling networks linking town centres, employment areas, schools and transport hubs, while also supporting recreational cycling and improvements to the PRoW network¹⁰⁷. Existing cycle infrastructure is concentrated around Royal Leamington Spa, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick, with a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan currently being developed to identify future priorities.

Bus services

13.1.32 There are approximately 2037 bus stops within the SWLP area (see Figure 13.1), primarily serviced. Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, and Royal Leamington Spa towns have a number of bus stops providing multiple services a day to destinations such as Coventry; however, rural areas, such as Bascote, have more limited access to bus services, and therefore, likely to have a higher reliance on personal car use.

[Map TBC]

Figure 13.1: Transport links in South Warwickshire

¹⁰² Warwickshire County Council (2023) Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. Available at: <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-1980322935-2491> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰³ Warwickshire County Council (2026) Stratford Park and Ride. Available at: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/stratfordparkandride> [Date Accessed: 23/05/22]

¹⁰⁴ West Midlands Railway (2026) Warwick Parkway Train Station. Available at: <https://www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/stations/warwick-parkway> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰⁵ Warwickshire County Council (2011) Rights of Way and Recreational Highway Strategy 2011-2026. Available at: <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-914-289> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰⁶ Warwickshire County Council (2023) Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. Available at: <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-1980322935-2491> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

¹⁰⁷ Warwickshire County Council (2021) Cycling and Walking Infrastructure. Available at: <https://warwickshirelcwip.commonplace.is/> [Date Accessed: 07/05/26]

Waste generation and recycling

13.1.33 The average waste production per person per year in England was 376kg in 2024, a decrease from 409kg in 2021. The estimated total household waste produced in Stratford-on-Avon in 2024/2025 was 52,984 tonnes, and in Warwick 50,129 tonnes, according to the UK local authority household waste data¹⁰⁸.

13.1.34 Household waste generation and recycling rates for the SWLP area are presented in **Table 13.3**. The figures show a slight decrease in household waste generation between 2023-24 and 2024-25 in both districts, and a slight increase in the proportion of waste that is recycled. This data also shows that household waste comprises the significant majority of total waste collected for each authority.

Table 13.3: Household waste and recycling percentages for the SWLP area during 2023-24 and 2024-25¹⁰⁹

| Local Authority | Financial Year | Total Local Authority collected waste (tonnes) | Household total waste (tonnes) | Household waste sent for recycling/ composting/ reuse (tonnes) | Percentage of household waste being recycled |
|----------------------------|----------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Stratford-on-Avon District | 2023-24 | 54,582 | 54,499 | 33,236 | 61% |
| | 2024-25 | 53,050 | 52,984 | 33,850 | 63.9% |
| Warwick District | 2023-24 | 50,542 | 50,390 | 28,808 | 57.2% |
| | 2024-25 | 50,346 | 50,129 | 28,748 | 57.4% |

¹⁰⁸ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2026) Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics for 2024/2025. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results [Date accessed: 01/05/26]

¹⁰⁹ DEFRA (2022) Local Authority Collected Waste: Annual Results Table. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables> [Date Accessed: 21/04/22]

Box 13.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: population and material assets


- ⇒ There are some localised pockets of deprivation in the SWLP area, particularly in Lillington in Northern Royal Leamington Spa in Warwick District and in northern Alcester in Stratford-on-Avon District.
- ⇒ The SWLP area has an ageing population which is being exacerbated by outflow of young people.
- ⇒ Warwick District has a slightly higher rate of unemployment than Stratford-on-Avon District, however, unemployment across the SWLP may have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ⇒ Rural communities across the SWLP area have more limited access to schools and local services and are reliant upon private car use to access social infrastructure.
- ⇒ A small proportion of the SWLP area does not have access to superfast broadband.
- ⇒ There is a need to support economic and social growth and innovation as well as by promoting accessibility to everyday facilities for all, especially those without a car.
- ⇒ House prices are increasing over time; residents have difficulty finding suitable and affordable homes within the SWLP area.
- ⇒ The ageing population as well as disabled residents in the SWLP area is likely to result in increased need for specialist and supported housing, now and in the future.
- ⇒ The SWLP area could be affected by the unmet housing needs of surrounding area, such as the housing need of Birmingham, Coventry and Black Country.
- ⇒ New development is likely to add pressure to current transport services.
- ⇒ There is a need to maintain and improve public transport links particularly in rural areas, for example to improve access between the larger rural settlements and main urban areas.



13.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on population and material assets



13.2.1 Population and material assets have been considered in the SA process under several SA Objectives, including 7: Natural Resources, 8: Waste, 9: Housing, 10: Health, 11: Accessibility, 12: Education, and 13: Economy. These objectives aim to support the creation of places where residents can enjoy a high quality of life, are well educated, and have the skills needed to access employment. Relevant indicators include the proximity of development proposals to schools, access to employment land, and proximity to services and amenities. The assessment also considers implications for mineral resources and waste management.

13.2.2 **Table 13.4** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on population and material assets that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

Table 13.4: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on population and material assets

| Identified effects on population and material assets | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|--|
|  <p>1 Provision of new homes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DS.3 (Meeting our Development Needs to 2050) sets the overall housing requirement to ensure sufficient provision. • Policy HO.1 (Housing Size Mix) requires a mix of dwelling sizes to | <p>In order to meet identified housing needs, the SWLP proposes to deliver sufficient dwellings, including provision for traveller accommodation. Policies within the Plan set</p> |

| Identified effects on population and material assets | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|---|--|
| <p>The SWLP proposes the development of 54,925 new homes to meet the locally identified housing need according to the latest Standard Method calculation. The SWLP additionally makes provision for 129 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, 20 Travelling Showpeople plots and 35 Boat Dweller moorings to meet the identified needs for these communities.</p> | <p>meet the needs of different households.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies HO.2 (Space Standards and Accessibility) and HO.6 (Specialist Housing) require accessible homes and support specialist accommodation for older people and those with disabilities. • Policies HO.3 (Affordable Housing), HO.4 (Affordable Housing Tenure and Type) and HO.5 (Rural Exception Sites) set out requirements for affordable housing provision, including tenure mix and rural delivery. • Policies HO.8 (Gypsy and Traveller Sites), HO.9 (Protection of Existing Sites) and HO.10 (Travelling Showpeople) provide for the needs of travelling communities. • Policy HO.12 (Self-Build and Custom Build) supports delivery of self/custom build housing. | <p>out requirements for an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, seeking to address the needs of different groups within the community, including older people and those requiring specialist or accessible housing.</p> <p>A long-term positive effect on housing provision is therefore anticipated.</p> |
| <p>2 </p> <p>Provision of employment opportunities</p> <p>The SWLP proposes the development of sufficient employment land to meet the identified need of 225ha strategic and 321ha non-strategic employment land according to the Employment Land Study Update 2026.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies DS.3 (Meeting our Development Needs to 2050) and DS.5 (Local Growth Locations - Employment) set the overall requirement and identify locations for employment land provision. • Policies DS.6 (Local Growth Locations - Mixed Use, Community & Town Centre), DS.10 (Major Investment Sites) and DS.11 (Rural Economy) support employment development across a range of site types and locations, including mixed-use and rural areas. • Policies EC.2 (Existing Employment Sites) and EC.4 (Affordable Employment Space) protect existing employment land and support provision of a range of workspace to meet different business needs. | <p>The Local Plan provides for a sufficient supply of employment land through strategic requirements, allocated sites and the protection of existing employment areas. A range of locations and site types are supported to meet the needs of different sectors.</p> <p>A long-term positive effect on employment provision is anticipated.</p> |
| <p>3 </p> <p>Sustainable access to, and pressure on, local services and facilities</p> <p>Some allocated sites are located beyond sustainable distances to key services and infrastructure, including</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision), ID.2 (Infrastructure Delivery), ID.18 (Community Facilities), DS.4 (Strategic Site Principles) and DS.10 (Major Investment Sites) ensure development is supported by timely provision of community and education infrastructure, including schools and local services. • Policies ID.5 (Sustainable Transport Accessibility), ID.3 | <p>SWLP policies are expected to improve access to services and facilities through enhanced sustainable transport provision and the delivery of new infrastructure alongside development. However, some sites are located beyond sustainable distances to key services, schools and public transport,</p> |

| Identified effects on population and material assets | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|---|
| <p>public transport, schools and local shops, which may limit accessibility and increase reliance on private vehicles.</p> <p>Sustainable access to healthcare services is considered under Chapter 11: Human Health.</p> | <p>(Infrastructure Safeguarding), ID.7 (Park and Ride), DS.2 (Spatial Development Strategy) and DS.8 (Well-Designed Places) promote sustainable transport by improving public transport, active travel and connectivity, reducing reliance on private vehicles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy EC.5 (Promoting our Town Centres) supports access to retail and services within accessible centres. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require provision of local services and facilities, including centres with retail, community and other amenities, to support new communities. | <p>and these accessibility constraints are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect on accessibility is identified in the short to long term, with some improvement over time as infrastructure is delivered.</p> |
| <p>4 </p> <p>Waste generation</p> <p>The proposed development of 54,925 homes and a significant amount of new employment floorspace will be expected to increase waste generation and have a potential adverse effect on the capacity of waste management facilities in the Plan area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.1 (Securing Infrastructure Provision) ensures development contributes to appropriate waste management infrastructure. • Policy ID.22 (Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Requirements) supports energy recovery from waste, including anaerobic digestion and biomass, and promotes circular economy principles. • Policies CS1 (Waste Management Capacity), CS2 (The Spatial Waste Planning Strategy for Warwickshire) and CS8 (Safeguarding of Waste Management Sites) in the Warwickshire Waste Core Strategy (2013-2028) ensure sufficient waste management capacity, promote recycling and recovery, and safeguard existing waste infrastructure. | <p>SWLP policies, alongside the Warwickshire Waste Core Strategy, are expected to support the provision of waste management infrastructure and promote recycling and recovery. However, the scale of growth will increase waste generation, and policies are unlikely to fully offset this, particularly at larger strategic allocations. The effects of employment development on waste generation also remain uncertain.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the short to medium term, with some uncertainty regarding the extent of effects over the longer term.</p> |
| <p>5 </p> <p>Sterilisation of mineral resources</p> <p>Where non-minerals development coincides with an identified MSA, there is potential for sterilisation of the mineral resource, meaning the minerals will be inaccessible for potential extraction in the future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies DM9 (Prior Extraction) and DM10 (Mineral Safeguarding) in the Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan (2018-2032) safeguard mineral resources by preventing unnecessary sterilisation, promoting prior extraction where practicable, and ensuring development does not prejudice existing or planned mineral operations. | <p>Policies within the Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan are expected to reduce the risk of sterilisation through safeguarding and prior extraction where practicable. However, as implementation is dependent on feasibility and determined at the planning application stage, the extent to which mineral resources will be safeguarded remains uncertain.</p> |

| Identified effects on population and material assets | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| | | Overall, a minor adverse effect on mineral resources is identified in the long term, with a degree of uncertainty. |

DRAFT

14 Soil

14.1 Baseline

- 14.1.1 The protection of soil is crucial for future sustainability, since it plays a vital role in food and timber production, in the maintenance of our biodiversity, as a reservoir for water and as a buffer and filter for pollutants. In recent decades agricultural intensification, deforestation and increased pollution from industrial sources has resulted in loss of soil function and structure in localised areas. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.
- 14.1.2 Soil is an essential, non-renewable resource that provides important ecosystem services, including filtering air, storing water and nutrients, supporting plant growth, and acting as a major natural carbon sink. Protecting soil is therefore important, as development can damage soil through loss, contamination, erosion, structural breakdown, and nutrient depletion. Soil quality in the UK has declined rapidly, mainly due to intensive agriculture and industrial pollution. The UK’s soil continues to face three main threats¹¹⁰: compaction, organic matter decline, and erosion from wind and rain.
- 14.1.3 Construction on land has the potential to exacerbate compaction of soils and the decline in organic matter, whilst all three are expected to be exacerbated by climate change.
- 14.1.4 Soils in Warwickshire are varied (see **Table 14.1**). Most of the areas support arable and grassland habitats, with some also supporting woodland. With the exception of the floodplain soils, the carbon storage of the common soils in the area is low, whilst the permeability (which impacts surface water run-off) is primarily impeded.

Table 14.1: Most prominent/common soils in Warwickshire¹¹¹

| Soil | Texture | Permeability | Fertility | Carbon storage | Landcover |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils | Loamy and clayey | Impeded drainage | Moderate | Low | Grassland and arable some woodland |
| Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acidic but base-rich loamy and clayey soils | Loamy and clayey | Impeded drainage | Moderate | Low | Grassland and arable, some woodland |
| Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage | Loamy, some clayey | Slightly impeded drainage | Moderate to high | Low | Arable and Grassland |
| Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater | Loamy and clayey | Naturally wet | Moderate | Medium | Grassland, some arable |

¹¹⁰ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2009) Safeguarding our soils – A strategy for England. Defra, September 2009.

¹¹¹ Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute (2026) Soilscales. Available at: <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

14.1.5 In accordance with paragraph 187 of the NPPF, it is important that planning policies recognise the potential for development to have an irreversible adverse (cumulative) impact on the finite stock of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land and natural capital. Avoiding the loss of BMV land is a priority as mitigation is rarely possible. The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system classifies land into five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. The top three grades, Grades 1, 2 and 3a, are referred to as BMV land¹¹². The grades are as follows:

- Grade 1 – excellent quality agricultural land
- Grade 2 – very good quality agricultural land
- Grade 3 – good to moderate quality agricultural land
 - Subgrade 3a – good quality agricultural land
 - Subgrade 3b – moderate quality agricultural land
- Grade 4 – poor quality agricultural land
- Grade 5 – very poor-quality agricultural land

14.1.6 The majority of land in the SWLP area is ALC Grade 3 (see **Figure 14.1**). This could potentially be Grade 3a, which are versatile and productive soils, or Grade 3b, which are less versatile and productive. The majority of Stratford-upon-Avon and the town of Warwick are situated on 'urban' or ALC Grade 4 land, with pockets of Grade 2 ALC land.

Box 14.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: soil

- ⇒ New development on greenfield land would be likely to result in irreversible loss of soil including potential BMV agricultural land. The effective use and re-use of accessible, available and environmentally acceptable brownfield land should be prioritised.
- ⇒ Agricultural intensification, deforestation and increased pollution from industrial sources in recent decades has contributed to loss of soil function and structure in localised areas.

[Map TBC]

Figure 14.1: Agricultural Land Classification in South Warwickshire


14.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on soil

14.2.1 Soil has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 7: Natural Resources, which seeks to protect and conserve natural resources including soil.

14.2.2 **Table 14.2** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on soil that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

¹¹² MAFF (2025) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6257050620264448?category=5954148537204736> [Date accessed: 06/05/26]

Table 14.2: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on soil

| Identified effects on soil | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Loss of soil resources</p> <p>Development on previously undeveloped land will result in a permanent loss of soil resources, with limited potential for mitigation. Many allocated sites are currently in agricultural use.</p> <p>Based on provisional ALC data, a large proportion of allocations fall within Grades 2 and 3, indicating potential loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, although the extent of Sub-grade 3a would need to be confirmed through detailed soil surveys.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.6 (Agricultural Land and Soils) protects agricultural land, including seeking to avoid the loss of BMV land where possible. • Policy DS.2 (Spatial Development Strategy) prioritises the use of previously developed land, reducing pressure on greenfield and agricultural soils. • Policies ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), DS.1 (Environmental Mitigation and Compensation) and BN.4 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) support environmental net gain through green infrastructure, contributing to soil protection and reduced erosion. • Policy ID.14 (Open Space, Play, Recreation and Community Growing Spaces) supports the provision of green spaces and land for local food production. | <p>The proposed allocations would result in the cumulative loss of a significant area of previously undeveloped land and soil resources. This may increase the risk of surface water runoff and flooding, reduce biodiversity, and contribute to soil erosion with potential implications for air quality and agricultural productivity.</p> <p>Overall, a residual adverse effect is expected, with the loss of previously undeveloped land, including potential BMV agricultural land, representing a long-term and permanent significant adverse effect.</p> |

DRAFT

15 Water

15.1 Baseline

15.1.1 National water policies are primarily driven by the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), as translated into national law by the Water Framework Regulations 2003. Key objectives include improving the quality of rivers and other waterbodies to ‘good’ ecological status by 2027; considering flood risk at all stages of the plan and development process in order to reduce future damage to property and loss of life; and incorporating water efficiency measures into new developments.

15.1.2 National strategies have a focus on maintaining and protecting the availability of water. Water supply and use is guided by EA’s Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS). The RBMPs¹¹³ for the Severn, the Humber and the Thames set out how water quality can be improved. See **Appendix B** for more details of relevant PPPs.

15.1.3 The NPPF seeks to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Flood risk is discussed in **Chapter 9**.

Water Resources

15.1.4 The main water provider in Warwickshire is Severn Trent Water¹¹⁴, which supplies over 8 million people. Severn Trent’s Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) forecasts a growing gap between water supply and demand unless action is taken. The WRMP includes measures to reduce abstraction, protect the environment, improve supply resilience, and restore and manage catchments sustainably.

15.1.5 The volume of wastewater is likely to increase following development in the SWLP area. Wastewater treatment plants will need to ensure there is the capability to withstand the additional capacity and be expanded if necessary, prior to development taking place.

15.1.6 CAMS are six-year strategies developed by the EA for managing water resources at the local level, produced for every river catchment area in England and Wales.

¹¹³ Environment Agency (2022) River Basin Management Plans. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022> [Date accessed: 14/05/26]

¹¹⁴ Severn Trent Water (2024) Waste Resources Management Plan 2024. Available at: <https://www.severntrent.com/about-us/our-plans/water-resources-management-plan/wrmp24-final-documents/> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

15.1.7 The SWLP area is affected by the Warwickshire Avon¹¹⁵, Tame, Anker and Mease¹¹⁶, Cherwell Thyme and Wye¹¹⁷ and Cotswolds¹¹⁸ abstraction licensing strategies. The strategies set out how water resources are used in the area, indicating areas where water is available for further abstraction. All of the Cotswolds catchment Assessment Points indicate there is restricted water available for licensing, whereas the majority of points in the Warwickshire Avon, Tame, Anker and Mease and Cherwell, Thame and Wye catchments indicate that water is available for licensing.

Water Quality

15.1.8 A Water Cycle Study (WCS) has been prepared to inform the SWLP by assessing wastewater infrastructure, water resources and efficiency requirements to support sustainable growth¹¹⁹.

15.1.9 Groundwater vulnerability depends on the properties of soil and rock, which influence how pollutants may reach water sources. The Environment Agency identifies risks through Source Protection Zones (SPZs)¹²⁰, which highlight areas where groundwater supplies may be affected by contamination.

15.1.10 There are three categories of SPZ as follows:

- Zone 1 – Inner Protection Zone: the 50-day travel time from any point below the water table to the source, with a minimum radius of 50m.
- Zone 2 – Outer Protection Zone: the 400-day travel time from a point below the water table to the source, with a minimum radius of 250-500m.
- Zone 3 – Source Catchment Protection Zone: area around a source within which all groundwater recharge is discharged at the source.

15.1.11 Designed to protect individual groundwater sources, these zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. In this context they are used to inform pollution prevention measures in areas which are at a higher risk, and to monitor the activities of potential polluting activities nearby. SPZs are present in the central and north SWLP area, which is predominantly SPZ 3, with smaller areas of SPZ 1 and 2.

¹¹⁵ Environment Agency (2023) Warwickshire Avon Abstraction Licensing Strategy. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291400/LIT_2604_7a244e.pdf [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

¹¹⁶ Environment Agency (2022) Tame, Anker and Mease Abstraction Licensing Strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cams-tame-anker-and-mease-abstraction-licensing-strategy> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

¹¹⁷ Environment Agency (2019) Cherwell, Thame and Wye Abstraction Licensing Strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cherwell-thame-and-wye-catchment-abstraction-licensing-strategy> [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

¹¹⁸ Environment Agency (2019) Cotswolds Abstraction Licensing Strategy. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/796112/Cotswolds-Abstraction-Licensing-Strategy.pdf [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

¹¹⁹ JBA (2026) South Warwickshire Water Cycle Study Stage 2. Draft – May 2026.

¹²⁰ Environment Agency (2018) The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection, February 2018, Version 1.2. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692989/Environment-Agency-approach-to-groundwater-protection.pdf [Date Accessed: 06/05/26]

Box 15.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: water


- ⇒ New development and an increased population would be likely to place pressure on water resources and may result in a deficit between supply and demand if not carefully planned and managed alongside Severn Trent.
- ⇒ There is a need to give close consideration to the impacts of development proposals on wastewater treatment in the local area, and the capacity of treatment works, as well as the consequences of new wastewater generation for local water quality and the ecological status of ground and surface water bodies.
- ⇒ A proportion of the SWLP area lies within a groundwater SPZ. There is a need to consider the potential impacts of development on water quality in these areas.
- ⇒ Development has the potential to reduce the amount of rainfall that is intercepted by vegetation and soils and can have detrimental implications for surface water run-off.

15.2 Evaluating the effect of the SWLP on water


15.2.1 Water has been primarily considered in the SA process under SA Objective 6: Pollution, which seeks to reduce pollution and mitigate adverse effects from existing pollution, including water. Flood risk is covered under SA Objective 2 and **Chapter 9: Climatic Factors**.

15.2.2 **Table 15.1** presents a plan-wide summary of the identified effects of the SWLP on water that have been identified through the SA process, considers how the SWLP policies will help to reduce or mitigate these effects, and explores the nature of residual effects.

Table 15.1: Summary of identified effects of the SWLP on water

| Identified effects on water | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|---|---|---|
| <p>1 </p> <p>Reduction in water quality</p> <p>The construction and occupation of new development may increase the risk of water pollution through surface runoff and the cumulative effects of sewage discharges during storm events. This could reduce water quality and compromise ecosystem functions, with implications for human health and biodiversity.</p> <p>A small number of allocated sites are also located within groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs), where there is increased risk of groundwater contamination.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BN.8 (Pollution and Environmental Quality) prevents unacceptable pollution, including impacts on water quality, protecting human health and the natural environment. • Policy BN.12 (Waterways) protects and enhances watercourses by requiring development to avoid adverse effects on water quality, biodiversity and ecological function. • Policy ID.11 (Water Supply and Wastewater Infrastructure) ensures adequate water and wastewater infrastructure while preventing deterioration of water quality in surface and groundwater. • Policies ID.12 (Multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) and ID.13 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) support the | <p>SWLP policies, alongside regulatory controls and water company investment, are expected to mitigate many potential impacts on water quality, including through wastewater treatment upgrades and SuDS. Evidence from the Water Cycle Study¹²¹ indicates that, while some effects (e.g. phosphate) can be addressed through upgrades, there remains potential for localised increases in ammonia at certain WwTWs operating near their technically achievable limits. Although WFD classifications are expected to be maintained, increased effluent discharges associated with growth may result in measurable deterioration.</p> <p>Overall, a potential long-term minor adverse effect on water quality is identified.</p> |

¹²¹ JBA (2026) South Warwickshire Water Cycle Study Stage 2. Draft – May 2026.

| Identified effects on water | Mitigating SWLP policies | Summary of residual effect |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>use of SuDS and green and blue infrastructure to improve water quality and natural water management.</p> | |
| <p>2 </p> <p>Increased demand for water and wastewater management</p> <p>The proposed development of 54,925 new homes and new employment floorspace through the SWLP will increase the demand for water resources and place increased pressure on wastewater management infrastructure.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy ID.10 (Water Efficiency) aims to reduce overall water demand in new development by requiring efficient water use, reuse systems, and sustainable management measures. • Policy ID.11 (Water Supply and Wastewater Infrastructure) seeks to ensure new development is supported by adequate water supply and wastewater infrastructure that protects capacity, public health, and the water environment. • Site allocation policies (e.g. Proposal HAT and Proposal LMA) require coordination with water supply infrastructure and providers to ensure sufficient capacity, helping to manage increased water demand. | <p>National and local policy, together with the wider water management framework (including WRMPs, DWMPs and environmental permitting), are expected to support the provision of water supply and wastewater infrastructure to accommodate growth.</p> <p>However, the Water Cycle Study indicates that several WwTWs are already operating close to capacity, with further pressure expected over the Plan period. While upgrades are anticipated, there is uncertainty over their timely delivery relative to development.</p> <p>Overall, a potential long-term adverse effect is identified, subject to the timely provision of infrastructure.</p> |

DRAFT

16 Cumulative effects assessment

16.1 About this chapter

16.1.1 Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) is the process of identifying and evaluating the effects that arise when the total significant effects of a local plan are assessed alongside known existing underlying trends and other plans and programmes.

16.1.2 Cumulative effects are different from effects that occur alone. Alone, the SWLP may not result in significant adverse effects for a particular topic, for example the effects of urban sprawl on landscape character, but when considered cumulatively, may result in significant effects that require mitigation or monitoring.

16.1.3 **Table 16.1** summarises the residual effects identified for each of the SEA topics (as set out in **Chapters 7-15**) and presents the likely cumulative effects of the SWLP when considering these alongside other plans and programmes as well as national trends.

Table 16.1: Cumulative effects assessment of the SWLP

| Summary of identified effects | Details of the cumulative effect | Cumulative effect |
|--|---|-------------------|
| Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased emission of, and exposure to, air pollution | <p>National and local policy is expected to improve air quality over time, including the transition to zero emission vehicles and the promotion of sustainable transport through planning policy and infrastructure investment. These measures will help to reduce reliance on private vehicles and limit emissions in the longer term.</p> <p>However, the scale of housing and employment growth proposed through the SWLP, alongside development in neighbouring authorities, is likely to increase traffic flows and associated emissions of NO₂ and PM₁₀, particularly in areas close to AQMAs and the strategic road network. This is likely to result in increased exposure to air pollution for some residents and may have secondary effects on human health and ecological networks.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a short to medium-term cumulative adverse effect on air quality, with potential for this to reduce over the longer term as cleaner technologies and transport decarbonisation are implemented.</p> | - |

| Summary of identified effects | Details of the cumulative effect | Cumulative effect |
|--|--|-------------------|
| <p>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats or pressures to European sites • Threats or pressures to nationally designated biodiversity sites • Threats or pressures to locally designated and non-statutory biodiversity sites • Fragmentation of the ecological network | <p>Biodiversity across South Warwickshire will continue to benefit from strong legislative protection at international, national and local levels. The SWLP includes a comprehensive policy framework to protect designated sites, avoid harm through the mitigation hierarchy, and enhance ecological networks through biodiversity net gain, habitat creation and green infrastructure. These measures are expected to contribute to improvements in habitat connectivity and support nature recovery over the longer term.</p> <p>However, the scale and distribution of development proposed, particularly on previously undeveloped land, has the potential to result in habitat loss, fragmentation and increased recreational, air quality and water quality pressures. These effects may be more pronounced where development is located in close proximity to locally designated and non-statutory sites, and when considered in combination with growth in neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>The HRA Appropriate Assessment concludes that adverse effects on the integrity of European sites can be avoided with mitigation.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a mixed cumulative effect on biodiversity, with long-term positive effects associated with ecological network enhancement, alongside localised and potentially significant adverse effects on certain habitats and non-designated sites.</p> | +/- |
| <p>Climatic factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of fluvial and surface water flooding (present and future) • Increased GHG emissions • Loss of multi-functional green infrastructure | <p>National policy and technological advances are expected to support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including the transition to net zero, improved building standards and investment in renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure. The SWLP includes a strong policy framework to reduce emissions, manage flood risk and enhance green and blue infrastructure, which will contribute to improved climate resilience over the longer term.</p> <p>However, the scale of development proposed, alongside growth in neighbouring authorities, is likely to increase GHG emissions, particularly from transport and construction, and result in the loss of some existing greenfield land and associated carbon storage and climate regulation functions. In combination with wider trends of climate change, including increased frequency of extreme weather events, this may place additional pressure on flood risk management systems and the resilience of communities and infrastructure.</p> <p>While fluvial and surface water flood risk is expected to be effectively managed through the application of the Sequential and Exception Tests and the recommendations of the Level 2 SFRA, and GI provision is likely to increase overall, these measures are unlikely to fully offset the cumulative effects of increased emissions and climate pressures.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a long-term cumulative adverse effect on climatic factors, with some benefits from adaptation and resilience measures, and potential for effects to reduce over time as decarbonisation progresses.</p> | - |

| Summary of identified effects | Details of the cumulative effect | Cumulative effect |
|---|---|-------------------|
| <p>Cultural heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alter the character and/or setting of designated heritage assets Alteration of character or setting of non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes | <p>South Warwickshire contains a rich and diverse historic environment, including a wide range of designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes. The SWLP includes a strong policy framework to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings through sensitive design, protection of significance and landscape-led masterplanning. These measures, alongside site-specific mitigation such as buffer zones and design responses, are expected to reduce adverse effects in many cases.</p> <p>However, the scale and distribution of development proposed, particularly in areas identified as having 'red' or 'amber' sensitivity, has the potential to adversely affect the setting, character and significance of heritage assets. This is likely to be more pronounced where development occurs in close proximity to designated assets or within sensitive historic landscapes. In addition, the presence and significance of below-ground archaeological remains remain uncertain in the absence of detailed site investigations, meaning that some impacts cannot be fully understood at this stage.</p> <p>When considered in combination with development in neighbouring authorities, there is potential for cumulative effects on the historic environment, including incremental changes to setting, landscape context and historic character.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a long-term cumulative minor to moderate adverse effect on cultural heritage, with potential for localised significant effects and uncertainty regarding impacts on archaeological resources.</p> | - |
| <p>Human health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable access to healthcare / leisure facilities Limited access to public greenspace Limited access to PRow or cycle network Exposure to air / noise pollution (from AQMAs and main roads) | <p>The SWLP includes a range of policies to support health and wellbeing, including the provision of new healthcare, leisure and green space infrastructure, and the promotion of active travel through improved walking, cycling and public transport networks. These measures are expected to enhance access to services and recreational opportunities over time, particularly as new infrastructure is delivered alongside development.</p> <p>However, the scale and distribution of development, including sites located beyond sustainable distances to existing healthcare and leisure facilities, may place increased pressure on existing infrastructure, particularly when considered alongside growth in neighbouring authorities. In addition, some residents may be exposed to higher levels of air and noise pollution, particularly in areas close to AQMAs and the strategic road network, which could have adverse implications for health.</p> <p>While new provision of green space and improvements to active travel networks are expected to support healthier lifestyles and partially offset these effects, accessibility constraints and environmental exposures are unlikely to be fully mitigated in all locations.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a mixed cumulative effect on human health, with medium to long-term positive effects associated with improved access to green space and active travel, alongside localised and longer-term adverse effects relating to accessibility and environmental quality.</p> | +/- |

| Summary of identified effects | Details of the cumulative effect | Cumulative effect |
|---|---|-------------------|
| <p>Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats or pressures to the Cotswolds National Landscape • Loss or alteration of landscape character and sensitive / locally designated landscapes • Changes in views experienced by users of the PRoW network • Increased coalescence between settlements | <p>Nationally and regionally, designated landscapes such as the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) benefit from strong policy and legislative protection, and local plan policies seek to conserve landscape character, protect settlement identity, and promote high-quality, landscape-led design. The SWLP includes a robust framework for the protection of designated and locally valued landscapes, including Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), as well as measures to safeguard key views, maintain separation between settlements, and integrate green infrastructure.</p> <p>However, the scale and distribution of development proposed in the SWLP, much of which is located on previously undeveloped land, will introduce urbanising influences into rural areas. A number of allocations are located within or adjacent to areas of moderate landscape sensitivity and SLAs, and in proximity to the CNL, increasing the potential for adverse effects on landscape character, visual amenity, tranquillity and the setting of designated landscapes.</p> <p>When considered alongside planned growth in neighbouring authorities, there is potential for cumulative effects including incremental loss of open countryside, erosion of landscape character, changes to views from the PRoW network, and reduced separation between settlements. While policies will help to mitigate and manage these effects, they are unlikely to fully offset the combined influence of multiple developments over time.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a long-term, permanent cumulative minor to moderate adverse effect on landscape, with localised significant effects in more sensitive areas, including designated landscapes and areas where settlement separation is reduced.</p> | - |
| <p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new homes • Provision of employment opportunities • Sustainable access to services and facilities | <p>National planning policy places strong emphasis on significantly boosting the supply of housing and supporting economic growth. The SWLP contributes to these objectives through the delivery of a substantial number of new homes, including affordable and specialist housing, alongside provision of employment land to meet identified needs across a range of sectors.</p> <p>The Plan also promotes the development of sustainable communities, supported by new and enhanced infrastructure, services and facilities, and improved public transport and active travel connectivity. This is expected to improve access to employment, services and community infrastructure over time.</p> <p>However, when considered alongside growth in neighbouring authorities, there is potential for increased pressure on existing infrastructure and services, particularly in the short to medium term before new provision is fully delivered. Some allocations are also located in less accessible areas, which may limit sustainable access in the early phases of development.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a long-term significant positive cumulative effect in relation to population, driven by housing delivery, economic growth and improved access to services, albeit with some short-term localised constraints.</p> | + |

| Summary of identified effects | Details of the cumulative effect | Cumulative effect |
|--|---|-------------------|
| <p>Material assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste generation Sterilisation of mineral resources | <p>The scale of development proposed in the SWLP will result in increased consumption of materials and a corresponding rise in waste generation. Whilst waste management capacity is planned for at the county level, and policies support recycling, recovery and the circular economy, the cumulative effect of growth across South Warwickshire and neighbouring authorities may place pressure on existing waste infrastructure, particularly in the short to medium term.</p> <p>In addition, there is potential for the sterilisation of mineral resources where development coincides with Mineral Safeguarding Areas. Although the Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan includes policies to manage this through prior extraction and safeguarding, implementation will depend on site-specific feasibility and viability, resulting in some uncertainty.</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP is likely to result in a minor adverse cumulative effect on material assets, with some uncertainty regarding the long-term effectiveness of mitigation measures.</p> | +/- |
| <p>Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of soil resources | <p>The proposed allocations would result in the cumulative loss of a substantial area of previously undeveloped land and soil resources, much of which is currently in agricultural use. Provisional data indicates that a significant proportion of this land may comprise Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, although this is subject to confirmation through detailed surveys.</p> <p>While policies seek to protect soils, prioritise previously developed land, and enhance green infrastructure, opportunities for mitigation are limited given the permanent nature of soil loss.</p> <p>When considered alongside wider development pressures, this may contribute to increased surface runoff, reduced soil function, loss of agricultural productivity, and secondary effects on biodiversity and climate regulation.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term, permanent and significant cumulative adverse effect is identified.</p> | -- |
| <p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in water quality Increased demand for water and wastewater management | <p>Water quality and resources will continue to be managed through national regulatory frameworks (e.g. WFD, WRMPs and DWMPs), alongside SWLP policies which promote water efficiency, sustainable drainage and coordination of development with infrastructure provision.</p> <p>However, when considered alongside growth within South Warwickshire and neighbouring authorities, there is potential for cumulative pressure on wastewater infrastructure and water quality. Evidence from the Water Cycle Study indicates that some wastewater treatment works are already operating close to capacity, with uncertainty regarding the timing of required upgrades relative to development.</p> <p>While mitigation and investment are expected to address some impacts, there remains potential for localised deterioration in water quality (e.g. ammonia concentrations), particularly if infrastructure delivery does not keep pace with growth.</p> <p>Overall, a potential long-term cumulative adverse effect is identified, dependent on the timely delivery of infrastructure and mitigation measures.</p> | - |

17 Monitoring

17.1 Context

17.1.1 Regulation 17 of the SEA Regulations states “*The responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action*”.

17.1.2 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the environmental effects of the Plan as well as its success against its objectives. However, monitoring can place a heavy burden on financial and human resources, and it may therefore be practical to focus on monitoring residual adverse effects and to build on existing monitoring systems.

- 17.1.3 Monitoring the impacts of the Local Plan should seek to answer:
- Was the likelihood of sustainability impacts identified in the SA process accurate?
 - Is the Local Plan successful in achieving its desired sustainability objectives?
 - Are mitigation measures performing as expected?
 - Are there any unforeseen adverse impacts of the Local Plan, and if so, are these within acceptable limits or is remedial action required?

17.2 Monitoring proposals

17.2.1 Monitoring suggestions are set out in **Table 17.1** for the South Warwickshire Councils to consider in the implementation of the SWLP.

Table 17.1: Proposals for monitoring adverse sustainability impacts of the SWLP

| Theme/ SEA Regulations | Indicator | Scale and frequency | Target |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------|
| Air | Concentration of NO ₂ and PM ₁₀ | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Air | Traffic flows on main roads | Biannually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Air | Rates of public transport uptake | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | Percentage of SSSIs in favourable condition | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | Number of planning approvals granted contrary to the advice of Natural England or Warwickshire Wildlife Trust | Annually, Plan area wide | Zero |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | Percentage loss of the ecological network | Annually, Plan area wide | Zero |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | Quality and extent of priority habitats | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | Uplift in biodiversity net gain units within South Warwickshire | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Climatic factors | CO ₂ emissions per capita | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |

| Theme/ SEA Regulations | Indicator | Scale and frequency | Target |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----------|
| Climatic factors | Percentage of energy generated from renewable sources | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Climatic factors | Number of properties at risk of flooding | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Climatic factors | Extent of surface water flood risk | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Climatic factors | Fluvial flood risk along the River Avon and its tributaries | Annually, Plan wide area | Decrease |
| Cultural heritage | Number of conservation area appraisals | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Cultural heritage | Number of heritage assets identified as 'heritage at risk' on both national and local registers | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Human health | Percentage of physically active adults | Bi-annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Human health | Number of GP surgeries | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Human health | Hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Landscape | Quantity of development in sensitive landscapes | Annually, Plan area wide | Zero |
| Landscape | Quality and extent of green infrastructure | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Population and material assets | Percentage of economically active residents | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Population and material assets | Quantity of household waste sent to landfill | Annually, Plan area wide | Decrease |
| Population and material assets | Percentage of waste managed which is recycled | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Soil | Number of dwellings built on previously developed or brownfield land | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Soil | Area of contaminated land remediated | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Water | Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice | Annually, Plan area wide | Zero |
| Water | Number of waterbodies classified as 'good' ecological status | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Water | Number of overflow events of untreated sewage discharges into rivers | Annually, Plan area wide | Zero |
| Water | Water efficiency in new homes | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |
| Water | Water availability for extraction | Annually, Plan area wide | Increase |

18 How the SA has influenced the Plan

18.1 The role of the SA

18.1.1 The SA has been an influential tool throughout the plan making process to date. It works on an iterative basis. The plan makers identify various options at different stages of the plan making process which are subsequently appraised through the SA process using the methodology in **Chapter 4**.

18.1.2 The SA findings have been used to help refine policy choices and site options through to the final proposals set out in the SWLP.

18.1.3 The process of appraisal is sequential in nature: an assessment of impacts is made, the mitigation hierarchy is applied, and the assessment of effects is revisited, leading to the identification of residual effects. The mitigation hierarchy is an important element of the assessment process. It considers firstly if the identified adverse effect can be avoided and if not, if it can be adequately mitigated to reduce the effect.

18.1.4 SA is necessarily a high-level assessment process, often using secondary data at a scale which is plan-based to make assessments about smaller-scale sites. This can introduce uncertainty to the process (see assumptions and limitations **Chapter 4** and **Appendix E**). The application of the precautionary principle means that when doubt prevails, a worst-case scenario is identified.

18.1.5 The likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan (see **Table 3.1**) shows that there are already a number of important trends, some of which are negative in nature. These include matters such as air quality, GHG emissions and flood risk; events associated with a changing climate and that are likely to continue without the SWLP.

18.2 Recommendations

18.2.1 Recommendations made throughout the SA process have been fed back to the Council to assist their decision making as the SWLP has been developed, including at the Preferred Options stage.

18.2.2 Recommendations were made for the Councils to consider in terms of the SGL and new settlement reasonable alternatives evaluated at that stage. **Table 18.1** details these recommendations, and how they have been acted upon in the Regulation 19 version of the SWLP.

18.2.3 Recommendations were made additionally made in relation to the draft policies and policy directions assessed at that stage (see **Table 18.2**). Many of these recommendations have been incorporated into the full suite of policies that have been prepared at the Regulation 19 stage (see **Appendix I**).

Table 18.1: Recommendations for the SGLs and New Settlements from the Preferred Options SA Report (2024) and actions taken *[pending further comment / review from Councils]*

| SA Objective | Recommendations made in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage | Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council response |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 1 (Climate Change), 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design and layout of SGLs and new settlements will need to be carefully | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan details that new residential developments will make |

| SA Objective | Recommendations made in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage | Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council response |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| (Flood Risk), 6 (Pollution) | <p>planned to ensure development is energy efficient and resilient to increasing temperatures. Local and national design policy and guidance should be considered for approaches to best mitigate climate change¹²². The incorporation of GI will also provide opportunities to secure multifunctional benefits, such as for air and water pollution in the SWLP area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptive climate design should be incorporated through nature-based solutions to reduce the risks of and impacts associated with flooding. Following guidance from the Environment Agency¹²³ this could include tree and hedgerow planting to increase water absorption and slow surface water run-off. The SWLP should promote approaches to the decarbonisation of heat and the incorporation of non-gas boilers into new residential development, including the consideration of district heating network connections and/ or heat pumps. The promotion of Passivhaus buildings¹²⁴ should also be considered. Developments should be designed to be as adaptable to the effects of the regional climate change projections¹²⁵ as possible where their effects are likely to be felt across a wide range of themes including flooding, biodiversity, air quality, landscape and natural resources. It is strongly advised that as part of additional supporting evidence for the SWLP, the Councils should consider commissioning further climate change evidence for the Plan area including calculating and reporting on GHG emissions in greater detail, such as through using the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool¹²⁶. Producing more detailed carbon data would enable the SA process to evaluate changes to carbon emissions as consequence of the SWLP and inform the Councils' selection/rejection of different options. | <p>contributions towards mitigating climate change, maximising energy efficiency, and avoiding fossil fuel use unless essential. Developers will offset net zero electricity provision where necessary. Temperature resilience will be ensured through both building design to minimize heat entering, as well as completing overheating assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments will use Green and Blue Infrastructure and nature-based solutions where necessary to create space for water and reduce flooding risks and impacts. This may involve floodplain restoration, as well as the retention of an undeveloped buffer along watercourses of at least 8 meters for maintenance, flood conveyance, and ecological enhancement. The Plan supports facilitating decarbonisation to reduce emissions as much as possible by 2040. New residential developments will not be connected to the gas grid, and fossil fuels will only be used where essential. Major developments must be heat-network ready where one is nearby or likely to be implemented. Large scale heat pumps will also be supported. Passivhaus is also identified as an accepted method of energy performance prediction. Additionally, new developments are required to be adaptable and climate resilient. The Plan requires all development proposals to reduce embodied carbon where possible, using submissions of calculated embodied carbon for large scale new-build developments using the |

¹²² 3 TCPA and RTPi (2023). The Climate Crisis. A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change. Available at: <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-climate-crisis-a-guide-for-local-authorities-on-planning-for-climate-change/> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹²³ Environment Agency (2021). Use nature-based solutions to reduce flooding in your area. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-nature-based-solutions-to-reduce-flooding-in-your-area> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹²⁴ Passivhaus Trust. Available at: <https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹²⁵ Met Office UK Climate Projections (UKCP). Available at: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹²⁶ Local Partnerships (2024) Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and Waste Emissions Calculator. Available at: <https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

| SA Objective | Recommendations made in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage | Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council response |
|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SWLP should also make efficient use of existing buildings and materials where possible, including potentially to retro-fit with renewable and low-carbon energy technologies. | <p>RICS Whole Life Carbon Methodology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan encourages the reuse of existing buildings as far as feasible, instead of defaulting to demolition and replacement. Low or zero-carbon heating systems will be explored prior to replacement of existing gas or other fossil fuel heating systems. |
| <p>3: Biodiversity and Geodiversity</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that Building with Nature Standards¹²⁷ are considered which can help to effectively incorporate wildlife into placemaking. The emerging outputs of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will need to be taken into account to ensure that strategic growth contributes to, and does not detract from, ecological networks and biodiversity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development proposals must demonstrate how they have had regard to the Warwickshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy by maintaining, restoring or creating habitats identified in the LNRS; strengthening ecological networks and improving habitat connectivity; and supporting the recovery of species prioritised in the LNRS. |
| <p>4: Landscape</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Warwickshire Design Guide¹²⁸, and any other emerging design codes for the local area, should be used in considering how best to integrate the SGLs and new settlements with the surrounding local character and landscape. Landscape Sensitivity Assessments and LVIAs/LVAs should be prepared to inform the developments, which consider the resilience of the surrounding landscape to change, and identify any important views that should be retained and enhanced, to ensure development will not adversely impact (and where possible contribute to) South Warwickshire’s distinctive character. Densities of development should be carefully considered to ensure the most efficient use of space made whilst not harming the setting and character of exiting settlements and surrounding countryside. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan takes the guidance from the Warwickshire Design Guide into account when considering planning applications. It is outlined that LVIAs will be required for all major developments. Development that would result in harm to the existing landscape will only be supported if it can be demonstrate that the harm is unavoidable and outweighed by wider public benefits, with harm to such features being justified and appropriately mitigated. The Plan states that density will be maximized to use land effectively. Guidance on appropriate densities will be used where set out in relevant Design Codes. Higher densities will be particularly encourages within existing Built-Up Areas. |
| <p>5: Cultural Heritage</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that for both the SGLs and the new settlements archaeological surveys and heritage impact assessments are carried out to identify and describe the significance of any sensitive heritage or archaeological features, to inform the developments and ensure any adverse impacts are avoided, and seek to conserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals must be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment where it is deemed there may be impacts on a heritage asset to ensure proposals safeguard key assets of the landscape. |

¹²⁷ Building with Nature Standards. Building with Nature. Standards Framework (BwN 2.0) Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c45e569c3c16a9eac56d244/t/6351513d1afee236d4cf6ce8/1666273600232/Building_wit_h_Nature_Standards_Framework_2.0_Oct22_Download_Version.pdf [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹²⁸ Warwickshire County Council (2024) Warwickshire Design Guide. Available at: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/warwickshiredesignguide> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

| SA Objective | Recommendations made in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage | Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council response |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>and enhance heritage assets, and preserve seen and unseen archaeological remains in South Warwickshire.</p> | |
| <p>7: Natural Resources</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practice guidance should be followed regarding soil handling, to ensure that opportunities for on-site and off-site re-use of soils are explored that best maintain soil functions, for example DEFRA's 'Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites' (2009)¹²⁹. It is also recommended that more detailed soil surveys are carried out to determine the presence of 3a and 3b ALC land. Soil surveys help to determine the impact of development on soil health, ecosystem services and natural capital¹³⁰. Furthermore, soil surveys will help to inform site layouts and the retention of higher-grade soils for community use such as allotments that will help to maintain soil productivity. • It is recommended that where possible development associated with the SWLP makes the best and most efficient use of land, prioritising development on brownfield and previously developed sites. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan aims to conserve soil function through retention, protection and reuse of topsoil during construction; avoidance of soil compaction, erosion, contamination or degradation; and restoration of soils to productive condition. • Development on BMW agricultural land is heavily discouraged unless there is no suitable alternative on lower-grade land and the benefits of construction outweigh the value of the land for food production, climate resilience, and ecosystem services. Brownfield and previously developed sites are encouraged as first choices for developments wherever possible. |
| <p>8: Waste</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regard to the production of household waste it is recommended that development at the SGLs and new settlements incorporates waste facilities which will allow for the more effective recycling and sustainable disposal of waste. Having accessible and easy to use waste facilities will also likely encourage more positive patterns of behaviour among residents and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan sets out arrangements for waste management under a Landscape and Environmental Management Plan. |
| <p>6 (Pollution), 10 (Health), 11 (Accessibility), 12 (Education) and 13 (Economy)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the 20-minute neighbourhood concept¹³¹ for the SGLs and the new settlements is recommended as it will help to facilitate walkable neighbourhoods which are highly accessible to those members of the community through sustainable and active modes of transport such as walking and cycling routes, whilst reducing private car use and subsequent congestion. This will likely lead to improved mental and physical wellbeing, ensuring residents have access to green | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan integrates active travel and the 20-minute neighbourhood concept into development design and requirements to ensure accessibility. • Principles from The National Design guide are referenced throughout the Plan. • The Plan encourages the supply of public transport infrastructure for |

¹²⁹ DEFRA (2009). Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b2264ff40f0b634cfb50650/pb13298-code-of-practice-090910.pdf> [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹³⁰ IEMA (2022). A New Perspective on Land and Soil in Environmental Impact Assessment.

¹³¹ TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

| SA Objective | Recommendations made in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Stage | Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council response |
|--------------|---|--|
| | <p>space as well as access to local services such as healthcare facilities. The National Design Guide¹³² should also be considered for means of creating a well-designed neighbourhood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 20-minute neighbourhood concept¹³³ is further recommended for safe and sustainable access to education and employment facilities. Walking and cycling routes will allow residents to sustainably travel to and from school and work without the need to use a car, which will reduce congestion and associated poor air quality. • It is also recommended that there are accessible bus routes and inter-connected public transport schemes for students and employees where walking and/or cycling is not feasible. | <p>developments to enhance connectivity and sustainability.</p> |

Table 18.2: Recommendations for the draft SWLP policies and policy directions from the Preferred Options SA Report (2024)

| Draft SWLP policy or policy direction | SA recommendations |
|---|--|
| SWLP Vision | It is recommended that the SWLP vision contains stronger wording regarding conserving and enhancing heritage assets in order to support the identification of more positive scores. |
| SWLP Vision | The SWLP vision could be strengthened through reference to sustainable transport networks to further support a reduced need for private vehicles in South Warwickshire. |
| Strategic Objective 1 | Further stronger wording in relation to the appropriate scale of development is recommended to outline how development can protect the local landscape. |
| Strategic Objective 8 | It is recommended that the objective recognises the significance of the setting of these heritage assets in relation to the benefits on the local landscape. |
| Strategic Objective 9 | It is recommended that this strategic objective incorporates wording which will ensure heritage assets and their setting and surroundings will not be adversely affected by heritage-related tourism, where the significance of the historic environment is maintained. |
| Policy Direction 2- 'Potential New Settlements' | It is recommended that Policy Direction 2, or other policies in the SWLP when fully formed, ensures clear reference to sustainable construction and design principles such as these. |
| Policy Direction 7 - 'Green Belt' | It is recommended that the policy direction is updated as the plan making process progresses and more evidence becomes available, to clearly set out the types and scales of development that will be considered appropriate within the Green Belt. The policy should also outline any compensatory provision that will be required following any Green Belt release, to ensure that the retained Green Belt provides enhanced recreational and biodiversity value, for example. |
| Policy Direction 7 - 'Green Belt' | The policy direction should also take into account any emerging changes to national policy, for example in relation to identification of 'Grey Belt' areas, drawing |

¹³² MHCLG (2021). National Design Guide. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

¹³³ TCPA (2021). 20-minute Neighbourhoods. Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities an Introduction for Council Planners in England. Available at: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/final_20mnnguide-compressed.pdf [Date accessed: 19/11/24]

| Draft SWLP policy or policy direction | SA recommendations |
|--|--|
| | on the government’s proposed planning reforms ¹³⁴ . There is not yet a clear methodology established in terms of how Grey Belt should be identified; it is recommended that the Councils carefully consider any further details provided following publication of the revised NPPF following the consultation held earlier in 2024. |
| Policy Direction 8 - ‘Density’ | It is recommended that the includes wording to ensure that appropriate densities will be sought in accordance with the surrounding landscape character and that measures will be in place to ensure that high-density development will not result in adverse impacts on surrounding historic environment, allowing net density on a site to go below the minimum density where necessary to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on the surrounding landscape, heritage assets or their setting. |
| Policy Direction 8 - ‘Density’ | Any potential development of tall buildings should be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) or Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). |
| Policy Direction 9 - ‘Using Brownfield Land for Development’ | It is recommended the policy provides further explanation on what other “ <i>environmental, leisure or agricultural</i> ” uses could consist of, including measures to identify and conserve any existing value on brownfield sites. |
| Policy B - ‘Providing Custom and Self-Building Housing Plots’ | It is recommended that the policy includes specific wording to ensure the historic environment is considered throughout the SWLP. |
| Policy Direction 12 - ‘Locations for Employment Growth’ | It is recommended that the policy includes wording to outline how employment development will incorporate energy efficient buildings, low-carbon and renewable technologies and integrate GI to reduce adverse effects, as well as ensuring the new employment sites provide active travel and public transport links for employees. |
| Policy Direction 17 - ‘A Low Carbon Economy’ | It is recommended that the policy could include stronger wording to encourage rather than simply support the incorporation of low-carbon and renewable technologies, and/or include requirements for certain development types/scales to incorporate such technologies. |
| Policy Direction 20 - ‘Supporting our Changing Town Centres’ | It is recommended that the policy could be enhanced through encouraging town and local centres to promote high quality design, active frontages, and a walkable public realm to maintain and improve the vitality and vibrancy of centres, or cross-reference to provisions of other SWLP policies that seek to achieve these goals. |
| Policy Direction 21 – ‘Arts and Culture’ | It is recommended that the policy includes stronger wording to ensure that heritage assets and their settings are conserved and enhanced alongside any proposed development proposals, in line with their significance, and that opportunities are sought to increase public access or understanding of heritage assets. |
| Policy D – ‘Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation and Battery Storage’ | It is recommended the policy includes stronger wording in relation to landscape and cultural heritage and ensures that proposals of solar and wind energy use factor in the local landscape and setting of heritage assets, specifically in relation to the height of the development proposed. |
| Policy H – ‘Water Efficiency’ | The policy also states that “ <i>all proposals should consider landscape and the natural environment in their design</i> ”. It is recommended that stronger wording is given in relation to the landscape and the natural environment, making reference to the benefits water resources and natural river habitats and other waterbodies can provide to the natural environment. The policy could incorporate wording on green/blue infrastructure and soft landscaping to clearly define how water resource management measures can be effectively incorporated within the design of development. |
| Policy J – ‘Reducing Flood Risk’ | Mitigation measures for development located in areas at risk of flooding will be required, however it is recommended the policy clearly sets out a strategy for mitigation within development design. |

¹³⁴ MHCLG (2024) Closed consultation: Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system> [Date accessed: 17/10/24]

| Draft SWLP policy or policy direction | SA recommendations |
|---|--|
| Policy Direction 31 – ‘Sustainable Transport Accessibility’ | It is recommended that the policy includes wording to ensure infrastructure provision does not result in adverse impacts on the landscape character, local biodiversity or the surrounding historic environment. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, appropriate mitigation should be incorporated accordingly to minimise the extent of the impact. |
| Policy Direction 32 – ‘Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Strategy’ | It is recommended that the policy provides wording to ensure that electric vehicle charging infrastructure is designed and located in areas which will not result in an adverse impact on landscape character, local biodiversity or the surrounding historic environment. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, appropriate mitigation should be implemented accordingly. |
| Policy Direction 34 – ‘Vale of Evesham Control Zone’ | It is recommended that a policy relating to the Vale of Evesham Control Zone is retained and included in the SWLP given the key transport links provided by the A46 in this area. These links support flows of HGVs between the M5 to central and eastern transport corridors, such as the M6 and the M1, and is therefore in need of protection particularly where this will be further affected by development associated with the SWLP. |
| Policy Direction 35 – ‘Smart cities’ | It is recommended the policy provides further wording to ensure that “ <i>enabling infrastructure</i> ” is located in sustainable locations that do not impact landscape character, local biodiversity or nearby heritage assets and any unavoidable impacts are mitigated accordingly. |
| Policy Direction 37 – ‘Local Nature Recovery Strategy’ | It is recommended that this policy direction makes more specific reference to wording relating to the means through which developments could contribute to the LNRS, such as through reference to BNG and a Greening Factor, as referred to in Policy Direction 40, and their multifunctional benefits. |
| Policy Direction 39 – ‘Environmental Net Gain’ | It is recommended that the SWLP does include a policy which will ensure development makes a positive contribution to the natural environment through conserving and enhancing ecosystem services. |
| Policy Direction 40 – ‘Green and Blue Infrastructure’ | It is recommended that the policy ensures that new development follows the principles and standards as set out in Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Framework ¹³⁵ to ensure effective GBI can be delivered and maintained. |
| Policy Direction 41 – ‘Carbon Sinks and Sequestration’ | It is recommended that the SWLP does include a policy relating to carbon sequestration net gain, unless this can be delivered through a comprehensive environmental net gain policy (as suggested under Policy Direction 39). |
| Policy Direction 43a – ‘Local Green Space’ | When the wording for this policy direction becomes finalised, it is recommended that it makes specific reference to the recognition of the multifunctional benefits of GI and open space where they can provide wider benefits for health, recreation, integration into the wider landscape and for biodiversity. |
| Policy Direction 43b – ‘Registered Parks and Gardens’ | It is recommended that this policy makes reference to the potential for any enhancements or extensions to RPGs to contribute to local biodiversity, considering the multifunctional nature of green space in and around South Warwickshire. |
| Policy Direction 43c – ‘Open Spaces’ | It is recommended that this policy direction makes specific reference to the recognition of the multifunctional benefits of GI and open space where they can provide wider benefits for health, recreation, integration into the wider landscape and for biodiversity. |
| Policy Direction 43d – ‘Urban Parks and Play Areas’ | It is recommended that this policy direction makes specific reference to the recognition of the multifunctional benefits of GI and open space where they can provide wider benefits for health, recreation, integration into the wider landscape and for biodiversity, including where urban parks can help to improve people’s connection with nature. |
| Policy Direction 43e – ‘Allotments, Orchards’ | It is recommended that this policy includes specific reference to the wider LNRS or ecological network where this would provide new and alternative areas for habitat provision, particularly in the built-up areas of South Warwickshire. |

¹³⁵ Natural England (2024) Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/greeninfrastructure/home.aspx> [Date accessed: 11/11/24]

| Draft SWLP policy or policy direction | SA recommendations |
|--|--|
| and Community Garden” | |
| Policy Direction 46 – ‘Protecting the Cotswold National Landscape’ | This policy direction could be strengthened through specific reference to the setting and design of development to ensure it is in-keeping and appropriate to the distinctive character and time-depth of the Cotswolds National Landscape. This could result in the identification of positive impacts related to cultural heritage (SA Objective 5). |
| Policy Direction 48 – ‘Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character’ | It is recommended that the policy direction makes reference to specific wording regarding the use of previously developed land for development and regeneration of existing built-up areas which would be less likely to have an impact on South Warwickshire’s distinctive landscape and result in a reduced need for greenfield and previously undeveloped land. Within these, “ <i>high quality landscaping schemes that positively contribute towards enhancing the character and amenity of the landscape</i> ” should be incorporated into these developments. |
| Policy Direction 49 – ‘Agricultural Land’ | This policy direction could be strengthened through reference to improving the quality and health of soils in the Plan area, which could provide further benefits for the natural resources, as well as benefits for biodiversity through supporting soil communities, including invertebrates and fungi. |

DRAFT

19 Conclusions

19.1 Residual effects following mitigation

- 19.1.1 The SA has assessed the site allocations and policies proposed in the SWLP using the methodology in **Chapter 4** and assumptions as set out in **Appendix E**. A range of sustainability effects have been identified, which are highlighted throughout the policy and site assessments in **Appendices F, G, H, I and J** with residual positive, negligible and negative effects summarised and discussed in **Chapters 7 to 15**.
- 19.1.2 Proposals in the SWLP vary in terms of their sustainability performance with likely positive effects expected on some SA Objectives and adverse effects on others. The SA has identified likely sustainability effects of SWLP proposals alone and in-combination.
- 19.1.3 The SWLP is anticipated to result in a range of positive effects on sustainability, which are summarised in **Table 19.1**.

Table 19.1: Likely residual positive sustainability effects of the SWLP

| Summary of residual positive effects | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | <p>Protection and enhancement of the ecological network</p> <p>Overall, the SWLP policies are likely to enhance habitat connectivity and strengthen the resilience of ecological and green infrastructure networks through biodiversity net gain, habitat creation and improved management. The Plan supports the expansion of green and blue infrastructure and aligns with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, providing opportunities to improve connections between biodiversity features and support nature recovery. Overall, a long-term positive effect on ecological networks is anticipated.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Addressing flood risk</p> <p>Allocated sites have been assessed through the Sequential Test, with the Level 2 SFRA providing the evidence base to inform the application of the Exception Test where required. The SFRA sets out site-specific recommendations to ensure development is safe and consistent with national policy. Subject to the implementation of these recommendations, including site-specific Flood Risk Assessments and appropriate mitigation, no significant adverse effects from fluvial or surface water flooding are anticipated, and development is not expected to increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Protection and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure</p> <p>While development will result in some loss of greenfield land at site level, SWLP policies seek to protect, enhance and deliver multi-functional green and blue infrastructure across the Plan area. This includes the integration of SuDS, habitat creation and green networks, supporting climate regulation, flood management and ecological resilience. Overall, a positive effect on climate change adaptation is anticipated.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Provision of public greenspace and active travel opportunities</p> <p>SWLP policies will support the provision and integration of accessible green space within new development, alongside the protection of existing assets, helping to improve opportunities for outdoor recreation and health and wellbeing. In addition, policies promote the delivery of connected pedestrian and cycle networks, enhancing accessibility and supporting active travel.</p> <p>While some sites currently have more limited access to existing greenspace and active travel networks, new provision and improved connectivity are expected to address these gaps over time. Overall, a positive effect is identified in the medium to long term.</p> |

| Summary of residual positive effects | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 5 | <p>Provision of new homes</p> <p>The SWLP proposes the delivery of 54,925 new homes, alongside provision for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, Travelling Showpeople plots and Boat Dweller moorings, to meet identified housing needs. Policies within the Plan set out requirements for an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable and specialist housing, to support a range of community needs.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term positive effect on housing provision is anticipated.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Provision of employment opportunities</p> <p>The SWLP proposes the delivery of sufficient employment land to meet identified needs, including 225ha of strategic and 321ha of non-strategic provision. Policies within the Plan support a range of employment locations and site types, including mixed-use and rural areas, and protect existing employment land to meet the needs of different sectors.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term positive effect on employment provision is anticipated.</p> |

- 19.1.4 The mitigation proposals presented in the SWLP provide positive planning mechanisms for delivering sustainable development where the Plan is able to reasonably address the issue. It is recognised that the Plan cannot fully address the sustainability effects of national and international trends, such as increased frequency of storm events associated with climate change.
- 19.1.5 In addition, it should be noted that several of the identified effects are subject to varying degrees of uncertainty, and their ultimate significance may depend on the effectiveness of implementation, monitoring, and adaptive mitigation over time. In some cases, there is potential for residual adverse effects to be reduced or for longer-term positive outcomes to emerge through iterative plan implementation.
- 19.1.6 As outlined in **Table 19.2**, there are a range of residual adverse effects that are identified as a result of the SWLP. These effects should be interpreted in the context of uncertainty associated with their prediction and the potential for mitigation and monitoring measures to influence outcomes over the longer term.

Table 19.2: Likely residual adverse sustainability effects of the SWLP

| Summary of residual adverse effects | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | <p>Increased generation of, and exposure to, air pollution</p> <p>Despite technological and infrastructure advancements, the scale of proposed housing and employment development within the Plan area is expected to increase traffic volumes and energy demand. As such, increased emissions of pollutants, particularly NO₂ and PM₁₀, are likely and cannot be fully mitigated by SWLP policies alone. The transition to cleaner technologies is expected to improve air quality over time; however, a short-term cumulative adverse effect is identified.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Threats or pressures to biodiversity designations</p> <p>The SWLP policies provide a strong framework to protect designated sites and manage impacts through the mitigation hierarchy, with the HRA Appropriate Assessment concluding that adverse effects on the integrity of European sites can be avoided with mitigation. However, given the scale and distribution of development, adverse effects are unlikely to be fully mitigated in all cases. In particular, there remains potential for habitat loss or degradation where allocations coincide with or are adjacent to locally designated sites (LWSs and LNRs), with associated risks to their ecological value.</p> <p>Overall, a residual cumulative adverse effect on biodiversity designations is identified, particularly in the short to medium term, with localised significant effects possible.</p> |

| Summary of residual adverse effects | |
|--|---|
| 3 | <p>Increased GHG emissions</p> <p>Although SWLP policies will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency, low carbon technologies and support for sustainable transport, these measures are unlikely to fully offset emissions associated with the scale of proposed growth, particularly from transport and embodied carbon. An overall increase in GHG emissions is therefore expected, resulting in a minor to moderate adverse effect in the medium to long term, with potential for effects to reduce over time as decarbonisation progresses.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Alteration of character or setting of heritage assets and historic landscapes</p> <p>SWLP policies provide a strong framework to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings through design-led approaches, masterplanning and mitigation. However, given the proximity of a number of allocations to designated and non-designated heritage assets, and the presence of areas of higher sensitivity, adverse effects are possible and unlikely to be fully mitigated in all cases. In addition, there is uncertainty regarding the presence and significance of below-ground archaeological remains in the absence of detailed investigation.</p> <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the long term, with a degree of uncertainty and potential for localised significant effects.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Sustainable access to healthcare and leisure facilities</p> <p>SWLP policies will support improved access to healthcare and leisure facilities through new provision, developer contributions and enhanced sustainable transport. However, many allocated sites are located beyond sustainable distances to existing facilities, and these accessibility constraints are unlikely to be fully mitigated, particularly in the short term.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the short to long term, with some improvement over time as infrastructure is delivered.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Alteration of landscape character and sensitive / locally distinctive landscapes</p> <p>SWLP policies provide a strong framework to protect landscape character, designated landscapes and key views through landscape-led design, green infrastructure and the retention of settlement identity. However, given the scale and distribution of development, particularly on previously undeveloped land and within areas of moderate sensitivity, these measures are unlikely to fully mitigate all impacts. There remains potential for adverse effects on the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape, local landscape character, views from PRowS, and increased risk of settlement coalescence.</p> <p>Overall, a minor to moderate adverse effect is identified in the long term, with potential for cumulative and localised significant effects in more sensitive areas.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Sustainable access to services and facilities</p> <p>SWLP policies will support the delivery of new and enhanced community infrastructure, including schools, healthcare and local services, alongside improvements in sustainable transport and connectivity. However, some allocated sites are located beyond sustainable distances to key services and public transport, and these accessibility constraints are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the short to long term, with some improvement over time as infrastructure is delivered.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Waste generation</p> <p>The proposed development of 54,925 homes and associated employment floorspace will increase waste generation, placing additional pressure on waste management infrastructure. While SWLP policies and the Warwickshire Waste Core Strategy support recycling, recovery and the provision of waste infrastructure, these measures are unlikely to fully offset the effects of increased waste generation, particularly at larger strategic sites.</p> <p>Overall, a minor adverse effect is identified in the short to medium term, with some uncertainty over longer-term effects.</p> |

| Summary of residual adverse effects | |
|--|--|
| 9 | <p>Loss of soil resources</p> <p>The proposed allocations will result in the cumulative loss of previously undeveloped land and soil resources, much of which is currently in agricultural use and may include Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. This has the potential to increase surface water runoff, reduce biodiversity, and contribute to soil erosion, with implications for air quality and agricultural productivity. While policies seek to protect soils and prioritise previously developed land, these effects are unlikely to be fully mitigated.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term and permanent significant adverse effect is identified.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Reduction in water quality and increased demand on water resources</p> <p>The proposed development will increase demand for water resources and place additional pressure on wastewater infrastructure, as well as increasing the risk of water quality deterioration from surface runoff and sewage discharges. While SWLP policies, regulatory controls and water company investment are expected to mitigate many impacts, evidence indicates that some wastewater treatment works are already operating close to capacity, with uncertainty regarding the timely delivery of required upgrades. There also remains potential for localised deterioration in water quality (e.g. ammonia concentrations), despite compliance with WFD standards.</p> <p>Overall, a long-term adverse effect is identified, subject to the timely provision of infrastructure and mitigation measures.</p> |

19.2 Consultation and next steps

- 19.2.1 This report represents the latest stage of the SA process. As per Regulation 13 of 'The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'¹³⁶, this Regulation 19 SA Report will be published alongside the Publication Version of the Plan. Consultation findings will be used to inform subsequent stages of the SA process.
- 19.2.2 A six-week period of consultation under the Town and Country Planning Act will be undertaken by the South Warwickshire Councils to offer individuals, businesses and other organisations an opportunity to submit representations regarding the emerging SWLP.
- 19.2.3 Following this round of consultation, all comments will be analysed by the plan makers as part of the ongoing plan making process. Further stages of SA will be prepared if and when necessary.

¹³⁶ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Regulation 13: Consultation procedures. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/regulation/13/made> [Date accessed: 29/04/25]

This page is deliberately blank.

DRAFT

Habitats Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys



LEPUS CONSULTING

LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

Eagle Tower

Montpellier Drive

Cheltenham

GL50 1TA

T: 01242 525222

E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

CHELtenham