

East Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2)

**Sustainability Appraisal:
Interim SA Report**

Strategic options for Oundle

December, 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned by East Northamptonshire Council to undertake a sustainability appraisal (SA) in support of the Part 2 Local Plan (the 'Plan').
- 1.1.2 The new Local Plan (Part 2) will set out the residual amount of housing and employment land that needs to be planned for, where and where not it will be acceptable in principle, and additional policies for assessing planning applications. The Adopted Joint Core Strategy already sets the strategic framework for East Northamptonshire.
- 1.1.3 A draft Plan has been prepared by the Council, which sets out a proposed approach based upon the best available evidence to date. It is important to note that the Plan could be amended further in light of further evidence, and the findings of key studies such as the SA and Habitats Regulations Assessment,
- 1.1.4 This interim SA Report reports on the findings of the sustainability appraisal process at this point in time. It specifically focuses upon:
- Consideration of alternative approaches to the allocation of housing in Oundle
 - Appraisal of the reasonable alternatives.
- 1.1.5 It should be noted that this interim SA Report does not constitute an 'SA Report' as defined by the SEA Regulations (*i.e. the SA Report that should be prepared and consulted upon alongside the draft Local Plan at Regulation 19 stage of the Planning Regulations*). Rather, this interim SA report documents the current stages of SA that have been undertaken to help influence the plan-making process. It is not a legal obligation to consult upon interim SA findings, but it is helpful to aid in decision making, as well as achieving effective and transparent consultation.

2 HOUSING STRATEGY FOR OUNDLE

1.2 Introduction

- 1.2.1 The Joint Core Strategy identifies a target of 645 dwellings for Oundle, with the presumption that this would be met through the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (and / or a Neighbourhood Plan).
- 1.2.2 Taking existing completions, commitments and an allowance for windfall development into account, there is a residual need of 172 dwellings for Oundle¹.
- 1.2.3 To ensure that these needs are met in an appropriate way, the Local Plan seeks to allocate land for housing development. Given that there is a range of site options, it is possible that the housing target could be achieved in a number of ways.

1.3 Identifying reasonable alternatives

- 1.3.1 The draft Local Plan identifies three sites that are considered suitable for housing development in Oundle to meet identified needs. These sites have been identified through a review of available sites and an assessment of their sustainability. The allocation of these three sites is therefore one strategic approach to development in Oundle. The details are below:
- 1.3.2 For **Option 1** a total of 300 homes are proposed at three sites:
- i) Stoke Doyle Road – around 70 dwellings;
 - ii) Cotterstock Road – around 130 dwellings;
 - iii) St Christopher's Drive – around 100 dwellings.
- 1.3.3 The Council did consider alternative site options to help aid the decision making process. However no other 'strategies' for development were identified as reasonable.
- 1.3.4 Alongside the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2, a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Oundle Town Council. A draft Plan has been prepared, which sets out a number of site allocations intended to meet identified housing needs. This combination of sites is different to those proposed in the draft Local Plan. There is a greater number of smaller scale sites, with lower density development proposed. Additionally a large site is proposed to the west of the town, which is not included in the draft Local Plan.
- 1.3.5 Given that this approach has been identified by the 'community' as its' preferred approach to development, it is clearly a reasonable alternative that should be tested. No SEA has been undertaken alongside the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore it is considered necessary to undertake such an appraisal as part of the

¹ Housing target of 645 minus completions 2011-2018 (384) and commitments (79) = 172 dwellings

Local Plan SA process. This allows for an objective and consistent assessment of each alternative to be tested.

1.3.6 For **Option 2** a total of 312 homes are proposed at seven sites:

Site 19 -Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher’s Drive (45 dwellings)

Site 20 -Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road (45 dwellings)

Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road (12 dwellings)

Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road (50 dwellings)

Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close (10 dwellings)

Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road (120 dwellings)

Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road (30 dwellings)

1.3.7 No further alternatives have been identified as reasonable.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 The options are appraised against the objectives identified in the SA Framework. In some instances, where there are similarities these objectives have been combined, to allow for a more proportionate assessment that does not lead to duplication.

1.4.2 The findings have been determined using professional opinion to determine what effects are likely to occur with regards to the baseline position. Factors such as the magnitude, permanence and likelihood of effects occurring have been taken into consideration, alongside the likelihood of effects occurring. These factors have been used to determine whether the effects are likely to be significant or not (i.e. result in a notable departure from the trends that would likely continue in the absence of the plan).

1.4.3 The findings are summarised for each topic using the following symbols and colours.

+++	Significant positive effect
++	Moderate positive effect
+	Minor positive effects
0	Neutral effects
×	Minor negative effects
× ×	Moderate negative effects
× × ×	Significant negative effects
?	Uncertainty

3 APPRAISAL FINDINGS

3.1.1 The following sections set out an appraisal of each option against the 16 SA Topics listed below (which cover all 21 SA Objectives):

1. Accessibility
2. Housing
3. Health and liveability (Two SA Objectives considered together)
4. Crime
5. Community Value
6. Biodiversity
7. Landscape
8. Cultural Heritage
9. Climate change
10. Air quality
11. Water and natural hazard (Two SA Objectives considered together)
12. Soil and land
13. Minerals
14. Energy use and waste (Two SA Objectives considered together)
15. Employment, skills and wealth creation (Three SA Objectives considered together)
16. Town centres

3.1.2 The full SA Framework is set out at Appendix A

3.2 Accessibility

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	*	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	**
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Option 1

- 3.2.1 *Stoke Doyle Road* - In terms of accessibility, there is a relatively frequent bus service that is located approximately 700m from the development site. However, access would be from a single track lane, which might not support effective access for cars, though provision for walking and cycling could be accommodated. The scale of the site could potentially allow for contributions towards highways improvements.
- 3.2.2 *Cotterstock Road* - This site is located to the north of the town, relatively further away from the town centre. This is likely to increase the number of trips made by car. In terms of accessibility to local services, there are schools nearby, which improve its performance somewhat. Though the site is 1.4km to the nearest bus stop; a frequent service runs to Peterborough, Corby and Northampton. The scale of the development could also potentially support public transport improvements.
- 3.2.3 *St Christopher's drive* - This site is located to the west of the town, relatively close (800m) to the town centre. Therefore, the number of trips generated could be predicted to be lower for local trips. In order to access the A605 and Corby to the east traffic is likely to pass through the town centre, leading to a slight increase in congestion within the town. In terms of accessibility to local services, there are schools nearby, which improve its performance somewhat. Access for this site is likely to run link through the current St Christopher Drive housing estate. This will lead to an increased number of trips, especially during peak hours, as the Prince William primary school is located nearby but accessed through the estate, then along Ashton, East, South and Herne Road. Though it is recognised that a secondary access is required, this would have the potential to reduce congestion. The scale of the development could potentially lead to small contributions to support public transport.

Cumulative effects

- 3.2.4 All of the sites are on the edge of the built up area of Oundle, therefore the means of transport will be more heavily weighted towards the use of the private car. However, the sites are located within walking distance of some local services, and are not too distant from the town centre. This reduces the need to travel outside of Oundle. At St Christopher's Drive and Cotterstock Road, there would be the potential to improve pedestrian links to recreational facilities also.
- 3.2.5 On balance, it is predicted that, with mitigation, **minor negative effects** will occur with regards to the amount of traffic in the area. Whilst there is a range of local services, it would still be necessary for residents to travel outside of Oundle for certain goods and services.

Option 2

- 3.2.6 *Site 19 -Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* - The effects are predicted to be similar to those predicted for the same site under Option 1. However, the lower level of development involved would reduce the impact,
- 3.2.7 *Site 20 -Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - This site is likely to have access issues due to the current access to the site via a single track lane (Herne Road). This may struggle to accommodate additional trips from new residential accommodation in this location. Additionally, the A605 runs along the east of the site, however it would be considered dangerous to create an access road off this fast moving A road. With regards to services, the site is well located with regards to schools and recreation, but less so in terms of walking to the town centre.
- 3.2.8 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - Current access is off the A427 (Benefield Road) via a narrow single track, therefore this would need to be widened in order to accommodate development of this scale in this location. However, in terms of walkability, this site is well connected to the town centre via a footpath on both sides of the road, one wide enough to accommodate pushchair access.
- 3.2.9 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - In terms of accessibility, there is a relatively frequent bus service that is located approximately 700m from the development site. However, access would be from a single track lane, which might not support the most effective access for cars, walking and cycling. The scale of the site could potentially allow for contributions towards highways improvements though.
- 3.2.10 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* – Currently this site is landlocked and there is no access route, unless the neighbouring landowner sells off some land to generate an access road. With regards to accessibility, the site is also fairly distant from the town centre.
- 3.2.11 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* – This site is significantly disconnected from the current town centre along A427 (Benefield Road). There would be a need to create a new access road along this fast moving A road and would increase the number of trips into the town centre from a peripheral site. With regards to accessibility, the site is also fairly distant from the town centre.
- 3.2.12 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* - The effects are similar to those identified for this site as discussed under Option 1. However, the scale of development is much lower. This would reduce impacts with regards to car trips, but would also mean that improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure were less likely to be significant or indeed provided.

Cumulative effects

- 3.2.13 In combination, the effects on congestion throughout Oundle are unlikely to be significant, as the overall scale of growth is relatively low. That said the approach to allocation does leave open the potential for development to be of a higher level than the Neighbourhood Plan proposes due to uncertainty around achieving lower site densities and site allocations that do not necessarily respect natural physical site boundaries.
- 3.2.14 Furthermore, development is dispersed, and some trips will be made locally, possibly by walking and cycling.

3.2.15 Access to services varies in terms of walking and cycling, and public transport links are broadly accessible. However, as with Option 1, the sites are located mostly at the urban fringes, and would be likely to generate more car trips. In this case, two of the sites are more disconnected from the built up area (North of Benefield Road and South of Herne Road), and some sites have access difficulties. Therefore, **moderate negative effects** are predicted (though these still ought not to be significant).

3.3 Housing

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	+++	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	+ ?
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Option 1

- 3.3.1 For Option 1, each of the sites involved are discussed in turn below, followed by a summary of the combined effects.
- 3.3.2 *Stoke Doyle Road* - The emerging Local plan site assessment states that the site provides a good opportunity to meet the strategic housing shortfall identified in the Joint Core Strategy. Whilst the site will require some mitigation measures, there are no significant constraints to development and it is an actively promoted site that is deliverable within the plan period. The longer term development potential is already recognised in the current Local Plan (RNOTP paragraph 8.18); such that the allocation of the site in the replacement Local Plan Part 2 would represent a logical continuation to the adopted policy. This would lead to a fairly significant housing number (70 dwellings) of which 40% should be affordable, in line with policy 15 – sustainable housing provision, leading to a greater housing mix in Oundle.
- 3.3.3 *Cotterstock Road* - This site has the capacity to house 130 dwelling which would reach the threshold to meet affordable housing Policy 15 (sustainable housing provision) of the Joint Core strategy; generating 40% affordable housing provision. Due to the scale of the site a greater mix of housing types and tenures could also be developed on the site, which is likely to contribute to meeting the demands of a wider proportion of the community within Oundle.
- 3.3.4 *St Christopher's Drive* - The emerging Local plan site assessment states that this site provides a good opportunity to meet the strategic housing shortfall identified in the Joint Core Strategy. Whilst the site will require some mitigation measures, there are no significant constraints to development. This site would also have the potential to generate a fairly large number of affordable dwellings on site within a fairly close proximity (less than 800m) to Oundle town centre; which makes this location more desirable for a large proportion of the community as there is much less dependence on the private car or reducing in-accessibility.

Cumulative effects

- 3.3.5 Development at these three sites creates an opportunity to deliver a greater mix of housing types and tenures to meeting the community needs. Each site would reach the affordable housing threshold, therefore resulting in each site (if viable) resulting in a 40% provision of affordable housing. The sites are all considered to be deliverable, and are of a scale that would support new infrastructure provision. As a consequence, **significant positive effects** are predicted for Option 1.

Option 2

- 3.3.6 For Option 2, each of the sites involved are discussed in turn below, followed by a summary of the combined effects.
- 3.3.7 *Site 19 -Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* – The effects of this site will be similar to those discussed for St Christopher's Drive under Option 1.

- 3.3.8 However, the neighbourhood plan site is proposed to be split into two parcels with the first being developed within the plan period and the second phase to be developed post the local plan period (post 2031). Nevertheless, the scale of development would still support affordable housing provision.
- 3.3.9 *Site 20-Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road (45 dwellings)* - This site is proposed to deliver 45 dwellings, predominantly for retirement and self-contained houses. Having an allocated site to deliver housing for the elderly will help to diversify the housing mix in Oundle and meet the needs of the ageing population. The site has not been promoted for development in its current form though, and so it is uncertain whether it would be developed as proposed.
- 3.3.10 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road (12 dwellings)* - This site is also allocated mainly for smaller housing units to suit the needs of the ageing population, which is likely to help meet the needs of the local community. However, due to the smaller nature of the site, there is a reduced chance of the site delivering a proportion of affordable dwellings.
- 3.3.11 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road (50 dwellings)* - The site has similar effects to the Local Plan site proposal for Stoke Doyle Road, but it involves 50 residential units, as opposed to 70 dwellings. This would result in a lower provision of affordable housing and less scope to deliver a greater mix of housing type and tenures.
- 3.3.12 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close (10 dwellings)* - This site is proposed for executive homes, which would cover a larger footprint, resulting in lower density and less affordable homes to those in need within the town. However this site will still deliver homes to add to the propped target for the area (albeit a very small number).
- 3.3.13 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road (120 dwellings)* - Proposals for this site set to deliver 120 larger homes (executive homes) which in conformity with policy S15 will deliver 40% affordable housing. This type of housing could draw professionals into the area that could in turn support a strong economy within the town and surrounding area. However, the mix of housing is likely to be lower, and less beneficial to those with affordability problems.
- 3.3.14 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* - Proposes 30 dwellings, which is likely to provide a small number of affordable dwellings alongside the market dwelling provision. The site has not been promoted for development in its current form though, and so it is uncertain whether it would be developed as proposed.

Cumulative effects

- 3.3.15 Overall **minor positive effects** are predicted for housing through growth Option 2, (although potentially negative impacts are highlighted below). The reasons that the effects have not been identified as significant are as follows:
- 3.3.16 A proportion of development is proposed on sites that are not being promoted in their current form. This could lead to these sites not coming forward, and therefore the housing target may not be met in full.
- 3.3.17 A number of the sites are smaller in scale and do not present the opportunities to deliver affordable housing, or a greater mix of housing.

3.3.18 Some proposals do not appear to make for the most efficient use of land as required by the NPPF, which could prevent positive effects being achieved.

3.4 Health & Liveability

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	+	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	++
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Overview

3.4.1 Oundle has been identified as an area within Northamptonshire that currently has poor or no access to significant (>20Ha) accessible natural greenspace (June 2014). A loss of land that is used for recreational purposes would therefore be negative, whilst creation of new or enhanced facilities would be positive.

3.4.2 From a health care perspective, there is one healthcare centre, which houses several GP practices. This is relatively accessible to residents in Oundle, though from certain areas, access by car is more likely. Development would be expected to contribute towards health care provision as necessary, but at the overall scale involved, it is unlikely that entirely new facilities would be supported.

3.4.3 Each site is discussed in turn below under the two Options.

Option 1

3.4.4 *Stoke Doyle Road* - This site is fairly well connected to the town centre and has a footpath connecting the site directly to the town. Due to the size of the site, it is unlikely that new sport/health facilities could be provided on site, but there would be no loss of existing recreational land. However, there may be opportunities to enhance the current footpath, encouraging healthy means of travel. Enhancements to the nearby POW are expected to be made which will link the site to the nearby footpath network, increasing walkability to both the town and the nearby bus stop. With regards to amenity, there may be some concerns from neighbouring residential areas about the loss of open space in this area, but this is a minor issue.

3.4.5 *Cotterstock Road* – Development will lead to the loss of agricultural land, rather than an area that is used for formal recreation. The site is in close proximity to health facilities, and could encourage walking and cycling through improved connections to the Nene Valley and nearby villages (e.g. Cotterstock, Glapthorn and Tansor). Additionally, the site is close to the bus stop and shops in the town centre, which could encourage active travel. This site is also like to incorporate new structural landscaping to the north of the site to mitigate the impacts of smell and other pollution (created by the sewage works) in turn creating a more attractive environment to those who live there.

3.4.6 *St Christopher's Drive* - This site is located on the eastern edge of the town, bordered by the A605 to the east and Prince William School to the south west. It is unlikely that this site is large enough to create new sports/open space; however this site is within close proximity to current sports and leisure facilities within the town, and is well connected via a walkable footpath linking directly to the town centre, and could potentially link to strategic green infrastructure corridors such as along the Nene Valley.

- 3.4.7 Due to the site being located next to the A605, there could be potential amenity concerns for residents, but it is expected these would be mitigated to secure attractive development.

Cumulative Effects

- 3.4.8 Development of these sites is unlikely to create new provision for health and leisure facilities. However, given the larger nature of the sites, there is potential to incorporate new open space provision or play facilities on sites if necessary. There should also be good potential to improve public footpaths and links to the surrounding countryside, which could help to improve wellbeing. The sites are all within a reasonable distance to the current GP site, and so access to services ought to be good.
- 3.4.9 There could be some minor negative effects associated with development, such as a loss of greenspace, visual amenity, and disturbance during construction.
- 3.4.10 On balance, **minor positive effects** are predicted. The negative effects are unlikely to be widespread or long lasting, and are offset by positive effects. The positive effects are unlikely to be significant though, and not substantially greater than would be the case in the absence of allocated sites.

Option 2

- 3.4.11 *Site 19 - Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* -The effects are predicted to be similar to those identified for this site under Option 1. However, as the scale of development is slightly lower, the effects would be less prominent. In particular, effects associated with the A605 would be lower in the plan period, as the eastern part of the site would not be developed.
- 3.4.12 *Site 20-Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - This site is proposed to provide approximately 4ha of land for recreational or sports uses which could also be facilities used by Prince William School. This would enhance the current community facilities, having benefits for new and existing residents. In addition, this site should lead to the upgrade of footpath UF7 along the development site boundary and create a new footpath which links to footpath UF6 as part of the Oundle Circular Route. There are also good opportunities to link to strategic green infrastructure networks such as along the River Nene. From a negative perspective, access to the site could lead to amenity concerns for residents along Herne Road, and it could also affect road safety near the school.
- 3.4.13 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - The policy proposes that half of the site (approximately 0.55Ha) is pre-provided for allotments and informal, public recreational space, with the overall vision to ensure that views into the open countryside from Benefield Rd are preserved, in turn adding the amenity of the site and health and wellbeing of residents by provision open space. The informal recreational space shall be provided as a landscaped area along the brook and a cycle and pedestrian route shall be provided between the informal recreational space and Benefield Road, linking to the town centre (500m distance).
- 3.4.14 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - This site is predicted to have broadly the same effects as those predicted for the same site under Option 1.

- 3.4.15 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* - Due to this site being allocated for executive houses with large garden spaces this is likely to lead to improvements to the liveability for those residents, but this would not provide wider benefits to the community of Oundle. Additionally, access is to be provided to the west of Wakerley Close, along with the upgrade to footpath UF3 creating a usable pedestrian route between Stoke Doyle Road and Benefield Road. The number of residents that would benefit would be really small.
- 3.4.16 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* - This site is not directly connected to the current built up environment of Oundle. However, the site is seeking to provide a festival field (approximately 5.5ha) with separate access. Whereby a natural screening and buffer will be provided between the proposed residential area and festival field. Overall, if secured, this is likely to build upon the previous success of festivals being held in the town bringing a secure location for these types of community events to be held for the immediate and surround communities.
- 3.4.17 This site is also within close proximity to a number of sports and leisure facilities. In addition, there are proposals to upgrade footpath UF10 and create a new footpath traversing north east at the boundary of the site to facilitate a link to footpath UF11 as part of the Oundle Circular Route.
- 3.4.18 The site well located to link to strategic Green Infrastructure links, and these proposals would help to achieve this. With regards to wider accessibility, the site is less favourable, as it is at some distance from local facilities and the health centre, and so walking may be less likely to be the favoured mode of transport.
- 3.4.19 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* - The effects are similar to those identified for the same broad site under Option 1. However, the scale of development is much lower, and therefore the effects would be much less pronounced. In particular, there would be fewer impacts on visual amenity. The lower density of development should promote attractive homes that support good health and wellbeing. However, the ability to secure affordable housing and open space improvements would be lower at this scale of development.

Cumulative effects

- 3.4.20 Due to the smaller scale of most the sites selected for development within the neighbourhood plan there will be decreased opportunities for improvements to the current footpaths and health and open space provision within the town. However, there are opportunities for improvement to recreation, particularly at the Benefield Road site.
- 3.4.21 On balance **moderate positive effects** are predicted. Whilst the opportunity for improvements may be lower for most of the sites, there are specific policy requirements proposed that could help to promote benefits for health and wellbeing. This approach has also been prepared through the neighbourhood planning process, and so is likely to better reflect the desires of the local residents. The effects are slightly more positive compared to the local plan approach in terms of wellbeing. However, there are no significant effects identified for either.

3.5 Crime

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	0
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- 3.5.1 None of the proposed sites are likely to lead to effects on crime; therefore **neutral effects** are predicted for both options.

3.6 Community Value

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	+
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- 3.6.1 None of the sites proposed for either option contain community buildings or facilities. In this respect, the effects are likely to be neutral.
- 3.6.2 Though some of the sites may hold some value for informal recreation, the effect on community cohesion and engagement is unlikely to be significant should they be developed for housing.
- 3.6.3 With regards to new facilities, the sites proposed for Option 1 are all relatively large scale, and could possibly involve the creation of new open space, and / or facilities that could contribute towards community development. There are fewer sites under Option 2 that fall into this category.
- 3.6.4 It is important to acknowledge that Option 2 presents a 'community' view on the form of development that it wishes to see come forward for Oundle (through the preparation of a neighbourhood plan). Supporting this approach could therefore help to strengthen community engagement and ownership of the area. This would be less so for Option 1, which has not been driven as strongly by community aspirations. **Minor positive effects** are predicted for Option 2, to reflect the role of neighbourhood planning in this instance.
- 3.6.5 The effects for Option 1 are not predicted to be negative though, as there are factors that offset potential dissatisfaction from certain community members (from not pursuing the draft NP approach). For example, the greater potential to secure enhancements to social infrastructure.

3.7 Biodiversity

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	?	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	?
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Overview

- 3.7.1 There are no SSSIs or European sites within the immediate vicinity of Oundle, and as such, none of the sites fall within SSSI risk zones. As a consequence, neutral effects are predicted for both options.
- 3.7.2 With regards to locally important wildlife sites and species, each site is discussed below for both options, and then in combination.

Option 1

- 3.7.3 *Stoke Doyle Road* - The site is adjacent to areas that may have value for wildlife such as a watercourse to the north, and a number of hedgerows. Minor negative effects could therefore occur.
- 3.7.4 *Cotterstock Road* - The site is adjacent to areas that may have value for wildlife such as the River Nene to the east, and a number of hedgerows. The scale of development could lead to negative effects, but it should also be possible to introduce buffer areas and enhancement measures given the scale of the site.
- 3.7.5 *St Christopher's Drive* - There are no important biodiversity features at this site, and so neutral effects would be likely. Given the relatively low value of the site, and the size of area, it may be possible to secure enhancements on site.

Cumulative effects

- 3.7.6 Overall, due to 2 of the sites being located adjacent to high wildlife values areas, the cumulative effects of this scale development could lead to minor negative effects, however mitigation measures are likely to be introduced and on sites of this scale whereby enhancements could be made to the current wildlife corridors within Oundle leading to **uncertain effects**.

Option 2

- 3.7.7 *Site 19-Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* – There are no important biodiversity features at this site, and so neutral effects would be likely. Notable enhancement is unlikely and so net gain is unlikely on site.
- 3.7.8 *Site 20-Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - There are no nearby areas that are designated for wildlife or geological importance, but the site does run adjacent to the River Nene, which is likely to support wildlife. There could therefore be minor negative effects. Mitigation ought to be possible, but it is unclear whether net gains could be achieved on site.
- 3.7.9 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - The location and scale of site is unlikely to generate effects on biodiversity either positive or negative.

- 3.7.10 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - The site is adjacent to areas that may have value for wildlife such as a watercourse to the north, and a number of hedgerows. Minor negative effects could therefore occur.
- 3.7.11 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close (10 dwellings)* - The location and scale of site is unlikely to generate effects on biodiversity either positive or negative.
- 3.7.12 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road (120 dwellings)* - This site contains some hedgerows, but is otherwise not likely to be particularly sensitive from a biodiversity perspective. The scale of the site should allow for enhancements to be secured though, which is potentially positive.
- 3.7.13 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* - The site is adjacent to areas that may have value for wildlife such as the River Nene to the east, and a number of hedgerows. However, the scale of development is small and would avoid these areas, and so neutral effects are likely. With regards to enhancement, the site is small, and would exclude land to the east, which could otherwise have formed part of an enhancement area. Without this falling within the site boundary, it would not be possible to ensure such improvements occurred.

Cumulative effects

- 3.7.14 Due to the scale of the proposed neighbourhood plan sites being a smaller scale this could lead to reduced impact on the biodiversity network, however this is also likely to lead to decreased opportunities to enhance and create new wildlife corridors and biodiversity assets within Oundle. Furthermore, the uncertainty about the delivery of the proposed sites could mean that additional developments come forward, with potential minor negative effects. Therefore, overall **uncertain effects** on biodiversity are predicted.

3.8 Landscape

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	*	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	* *
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Option 1

- 3.8.1 *Stoke Doyle Road* – The 2018 Oundle site assessment states that this is an area of potential sensitivity, including views within the site on undulating land down to a watercourse. However, the site is bounded on three sides by existing urban uses, and so the effects ought to be possible to screen somewhat.
- 3.8.2 *Cotterstock Road* – The 2018 Oundle site assessment states that this is an area of potential sensitivity, with the site being located on undulating land down to a watercourse (River Nene, to the east). However, the initial assessment was based upon a larger site area (east of the existing built form), which has been excluded from the current site allocation. The eastern part of the site, which slopes down to the river, is the most sensitive part of the site. However, a smaller allocation could overcome this impact. Landscape impact has been identified as the most significant development constraint. This could be addressed through reducing the developable area and suitable landscaping along the most sensitive boundaries. However, minor negative effects are certainly possible.
- 3.8.3 *St Christopher's drive* - The 2018 Oundle site assessments states that development of this site is not likely to lead to significant visual impacts or a loss of important landscape function. This being said, the site is currently greenfield land, and offers a degree of separation between the school and a residential area from the A605. It could therefore have some local value. With screening and landscaping, it ought to be possible to avoid notable negative effects though.

Cumulative effects

- 3.8.4 Overall, **minor negative effects** are predicted. This relates mostly to the development at Cotterstock Road, which is on relatively sensitive land, and would be of a scale that would alter the approach to Oundle from the north. With landscaping measures, effects are unlikely to be significant though. The combined impacts on the settlement are minor when considering all three sites together.

Option 2

- 3.8.5 *Site 19 - Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* – The effects are similar to those predicted for Option 1, but a smaller site area is proposed within the plan period.
- 3.8.6 *Site 20 - Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - There could be minor negative effects on the landscape setting in this location, as it is relatively open and would bring the urban area into close proximity to the River Nene.
- 3.8.7 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - Neutral effects are predicted due to the small scale nature of the site within the urban area.
- 3.8.8 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - As per option 1, the likely effects on landscape are minor, as though the site is open, it is bounded on three sides by built up areas.

- 3.8.9 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* - The site is small scale and therefore unlikely to have significant effects on landscape. However, the site is at the settlement edge in a gateway location, with a rural setting. Minor negative effects could occur.
- 3.8.10 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* - Development would be fairly large scale in a gateway location. Though the landscape is not highly sensitive, parts are slightly elevated, and views towards Oundle along Benefield Road would likely be altered. Minor negative effects are predicted.
- 3.8.11 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* - The site has some sensitivity, but the scale of development is small, and should be better able to avoid negative impacts on landscape character.

Cumulative effects

- 3.8.12 In isolation, the majority of sites are unlikely to have notable effects on landscape character. Compared to Option 1, the smaller nature of the same proposed sites (Cotterstock Road, Stoke Doyle, St Christopher's Drive), ought to make it easier to avoid negative effects.
- 3.8.13 However, two additional sites are proposed that could generate negative effects on the character of the landscape (North of Benefield Road and South of Herne Road).
- 3.8.14 Further, option 2 seeks to cap/ restrict the numbers of dwellings proposed for a range of sites. If a more appropriate density of development or site capacity comes forward this would have the potential for increasing the overall quantum of development proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan across the seven sites identified.
- 3.8.15 As a consequence, the overall effects are predicted to be **slightly more negative** when compared to Option 1. The negative effects are still not likely to be significant, but they are moderate rather than minor, and there is a greater degree of **uncertainty** compared to Option 1.

3.9 Cultural heritage

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	0
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Option 1

- 3.9.1 *Stoke Doyle Road* - There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the site. The site is also distant from the Conservation Area, and does not contribute towards the setting of heritage assets. The site is however, adjacent to the Cemetery, which has community value, and a historical relevance to certain people. Development could therefore be perceived as intrusive in this location, which is a minor negative effect. Mitigation such as landscaping with native trees should help to ensure that such effects are minimised.
- 3.9.2 *Cotterstock Road* - There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the site. It is also distant from the Conservation Area, and does not contribute strongly to the character of the surrounding built environment (which is mostly modern residential development to the south of the site area). Consequently, neutral effects are predicted for this site with regards to cultural heritage.
- 3.9.3 *St Christopher's Drive* - There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within close proximity to the site. It is also distant to the Conservation Area and dominated by the A605. Therefore neutral effects are predicted for this site.

Cumulative effects

- 3.9.4 Each of the sites is unlikely to lead to negative effects on cultural heritage when considered individually. In combination, no cumulative effects would occur either, as the sites are at some distance from one another, and the overall scale of growth across Oundle would not notably alter the character of the built environment and the settlement boundaries. On balance, **neutral effects** are predicted for Option 1.

Option 2

- 3.9.5 *Site 19 - Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* - The effects at this site are predicted to be broadly the same as those identified for the same site under Option 1 (i.e. neutral). Though the scale of development in the plan period is lower, the sensitivity of this area is low, and so the effects of higher growth are neutral anyway.
- 3.9.6 *Site 20 - Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the sites. In this respect, no effects are likely. However, along Herne Road there are a number of large dwellings with relatively large amounts of land that help to define this part of the town. Whilst development could have minor negative impacts, a low density approach with similar homes would allow for such character to be retained. So an uncertain effect is predicted.
- 3.9.7 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the site. Though the site is in close proximity to the Conservation Area boundary, it is small scale and unlikely to significantly alter the character of the built environment.

- 3.9.8 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - Similar effects to those discussed for Option 1 are predicted. However, with a slightly lower scale / density of development, the effects ought to be easier to mitigate.
- 3.9.9 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* -There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the site. The scale of development is also very small, and therefore neutral effects are predicted.
- 3.9.10 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* -There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments on this site or within a close proximity to the site. Though it is a large site on the edge of the settlement boundary, it would be opposite existing residential development of fairly recent construction. Therefore, effects on cultural heritage are likely to be minimal.
- 3.9.11 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* – Development would have similar effects to those predicted for the same site under Option 1. However, the scale / density of development would be lower, and therefore the potential for negative effects even lower.

Cumulative effects

- 3.9.12 Each of the sites is unlikely to lead to notable negative effects on cultural heritage when considered individually. In combination, no cumulative effects would occur either, as the sites are at some distance from one another and somewhat dispersed across the settlement. The overall scale of growth across Oundle would not notably alter the character of the built environment and the settlement boundaries. On balance, **neutral effects** are predicted for Option 2.
- 3.9.13 With regards to archaeological potential, there would be a need to explore this through the development process under either option.

3.10 Climate Change

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	0
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- 3.10.1 All of the options propose a similar quantum of housing growth and this is predominantly located in similar areas within the town.
- 3.10.2 Option 2 involved a slightly higher level of growth, however this is marginal in terms of the likelihood to generate more carbon emissions and require additional energy to support operations and transportation. The location of development under both option 1 and 2 is likely to lead to increased transportation to access the sites and increase the traffic generated within the town centre and along the main arterial routes leading to Corby and Northampton. However, from a district wide perspective, the effects on the baseline position are unlikely to be notable given the scale of growth involved.
- 3.10.3 None of the options provide any significant additional opportunities to incorporate renewable energy; therefore neutral effects are predicted in this respect.
- 3.10.4 In summary there are no significant differences between the options in terms of climate change and none are likely to have significant effects; the residual effects are predicted to be **neutral**.

3.11 Air Quality

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	✘	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	✘
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- 3.11.1 There are no designated AQMA's within East Northamptonshire therefore the Council has not produced any Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs). As such, the Council has not published any specific measures related to control and mitigation of sources of local air quality issues.
- 3.11.2 Both options will generate the same increase in traffic overall as they propose the same level of growth across Oundle. The magnitude of additional trips would be unlikely to lead to a significant worsening of air quality, and the current ambient levels are not close to exceeding air quality standards.
- 3.11.3 The differences between the options are minimal, as both predominantly involve growth at the settlement edges. For Option 1, there would be a greater focus of growth to the north at Cotterstock Road, whilst for Option 2; there is a greater focus of growth to the west of the settlement and a dispersal of options that would mean some additional impact across a wider area locally. It would be expected that traffic would increase slightly in these immediate locations, but the effect on overall levels of congestion and air quality within Oundle would not be significant. Therefore, only **minor negative effects** are predicted for both options.
- 3.11.4 Each site will generate opportunities to reduce the use of the private car, however they are on the edges of the built up area and residents may still be dependent on the private car.

3.12 Water & Natural Hazard

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	*	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	*
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Water quality

- 3.12.1 Both options involve the same amount of growth, and would therefore create a similar demand for waste water treatment. The scale of growth involved could be accommodated at existing facilities, and so negative effects on water quality ought to be avoidable.

Flooding

- 3.12.2 With regards to flooding, the sites proposed for each option are discussed in turn below, and then the combined effects are summarised.

Option 1

- 3.12.3 *Land East of St Christopher's Drive* - The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1, but there are some quite large areas at high and moderate risk of surface water flooding throughout the site. Whilst development could potentially mitigate such effects, the potential for minor positive effects exists.
- 3.12.4 *Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - The site falls within Flood Zone 1, but is adjacent to areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3. There are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Overall, the risk of flooding ought to be low at this site.
- 3.12.5 *Land East of Cotterstock Road* – The site falls within Flood Zone 1, but is adjacent to Zones 2/3 to the eastern boundary. There is no surface water flood risk on site though. Overall, the risk of flooding ought to be low at this site.
- 3.12.6 Overall, the risk of flooding on the sites is minor, with only one site presenting the potential for negative effects (which should be possible to mitigate). The scale of the sites involved should also allow for sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated, helping to reduce surface water flood risk, and minimise the down-stream impacts. **Minor negative effects** are recorded.

Option 2

- 3.12.7 *Site 19 - Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* – The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1. But some quite large areas are at high and moderate risk of surface water flooding. This presents the potential for minor negative effects, but mitigation ought to be possible.
- 3.12.8 *Site 20 -Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* – An area of flood zone2/3 borders the site but there are no substantial surface water flood risk on site, and the majority of the area falls within Flood Zone 1. Development is therefore likely to have neutral effects.
- 3.12.9 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - The site falls into flood zone 1 and there are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Development is therefore likely to have neutral effects.

- 3.12.10 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - The site falls within Flood Zone 1, but is adjacent to areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3. There are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Overall, the risk of flooding ought to be low at this site.
- 3.12.11 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* – The site falls into flood zone 1 and there are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Development is therefore likely to have neutral effects.
- 3.12.12 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* –The site falls into flood zone 1 and there are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Development is therefore likely to have neutral effects.
- 3.12.13 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* – The site falls into flood zone 1 and there are no areas of surface water flood risk on site. Development is therefore likely to have neutral effects.
- 3.12.14 Overall, the risk of flooding on the sites is minor or neutral (for most sites), with only one site presenting the potential for negative effects (which should be possible to mitigate). The scale of some of the sites involved should also allow for sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated, helping to reduce surface water flood risk, and minimise the down-stream impacts. Though smaller sites would have less potential to deliver such improvements, their scale would be unlikely to cause flood risk issues. Minor negative effects are recorded.
- 3.12.15 On balance, both options perform relatively the same with regards to water and flooding.

3.13 Soil and land

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	*	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	**
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Overview

3.13.1 Both options involve development on sites that are classified as Grade 3 agricultural land. However, it is uncertain whether this is Grade 3a or 3b. What can be determined though is whether the land is in active use for agriculture or is of a recreational nature / natural space.

Option 1

3.13.2 For Option one each site is discussed briefly below:

3.13.3 *Stoke Doyle Road* – This is wholly Grade 3 agricultural land that appears to be in use as arable fields. Whilst a loss of this resource is negative, it is only small in scale (3.5ha), and so effects are minor.

3.13.4 *Cotterstock Road* - This is wholly Grade 3 agricultural land that appears to be in use as arable fields. Whilst a loss of this resource is negative, it is only small in scale (3.5ha), and so effects are minor.

3.13.5 *St Christopher's Drive* – This is wholly Grade 3 land, but is not in active use and appears to be of a lower land grade. Therefore, despite a loss of 5ha of land, the effects would be neutral.

3.13.6 In total, approximately 13.5 ha of grade 3 land would be lost. However, only 8.5ha appears to be in productive use for agriculture (crops). Whilst this is a permanent loss of such resources, only **minor negative effects** are predicted given the low magnitude involved.

Option 2

3.13.7 For Option two, each of the sites is discussed briefly below:

3.13.8 *Site 19-Policy 0.19 - Land East of St Christopher's Drive* - This site is wholly classified as grade 3 land, but does not appear to be in agricultural use.

3.13.9 *Site 20 -Policy 0.20 - Land South of Herne Road* - This site is wholly classified as grade 3 land, but does not appear to be in agricultural use.

3.13.10 *Site 21 - Policy 0.21 - Millers Field, Benefield Road* - This site is wholly classified as grade 3 land, but does not appear to be in agricultural use.

3.13.11 *Site 22 - Policy 0.22 - Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road* - This is wholly Grade 3 agricultural land that appears to be in use as arable fields. Whilst a loss of this resource is negative, it is only small in scale, and so effects are minor.

3.13.12 *Site 23 - Policy 0.23 - Land South of Wakerley Close* - This site is wholly classified as grade 3 land, but does not appear to be in agricultural use.

- 3.13.13 *Site 24 - Policy 0.24 - Land North of Benefield Road* – This site is wholly classified as grade 3 land which appears to be in use for grazing. Whilst there would be a permanent loss of this resource, the effects are minor.
- 3.13.14 *Site 25 - Policy 0.25 - Land East of Cotterstock Road* – This site is wholly Grade 3 agricultural land that appears to be in use as arable fields. Whilst a loss of this resource is negative, it is only small in scale (1ha), and so effects are minor.
- 3.13.15 In total, about 15ha of grade 3 agricultural land is likely to be lost under option 2, which would be irreversible. However, only 10ha of land appears to be of the quality to support agriculture, with approximately 5ha appearing to be grazing and 5ha as arable. Overall, this equates to a **minor negative effect**.

Summary

- 3.13.16 Both options therefore perform very similarly to one another with regards to the effects on agricultural land. Neither would generate significant negative effects.
- 3.13.17 In terms of the efficiency of land usage, Option 1 performs more favourably, as it involves three large development sites that would be used in their entirety at suitable densities. Option 2 involves a range of smaller sites, in addition to several large sites, but the densities proposed in some locations are lower. Whilst this would result in an overall greater use of greenfield land compared to option 1, the effects are fairly similar.

3.14 Minerals

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	0
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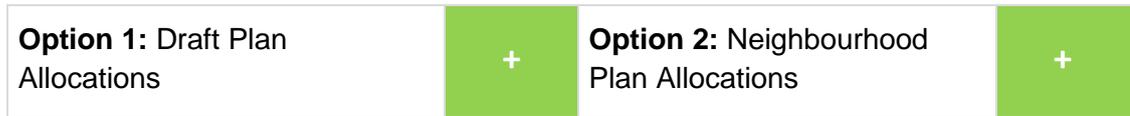
- 3.14.1 Each of the sites under Option 1 falls into Mineral Safeguarded Areas for sand and gravel. Whilst resources theoretically exist in these areas, it is unlikely that such minerals would be extracted given the nature and location of these sites. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted.
- 3.14.2 For Option 2, most of the sites also fall within Mineral Safeguarded Areas for sand and gravel, but like for Option 1, the nature and scale of sites would be unlikely to be suitable for extraction. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted also.

3.15 Energy Use & Waste

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	0	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	0
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- 3.15.1 Both options involve similar levels of housing growth, and so any additional waste or energy use would be unlikely to be notably different for either option. Neither option presents a particular opportunity with regards to the development of low carbon energy schemes either.
- 3.15.2 With regards to waste collection, the distribution of development under either option would be in locations that could be appropriately serviced.
- 3.15.3 Overall, **neutral effects** are predicted for both options with regards to energy and waste.

3.16 Employment & Wealth Creation & Skills



- 3.16.1 For both options, the sites involved are allocated for housing, rather than employment. Therefore, the effects on the creation of jobs are limited (aside from construction related jobs for new homes).
- 3.16.2 The housing sites involved for both options are more suitable for housing, rather than employment, and so there would be no negative effects with regards to land availability for jobs and local business growth.
- 3.16.3 The neighbourhood plan development options include several sites (23 & 24) that are proposed solely for the development of executive homes with larger gardens and net floor space. These are likely to be more desirable / affordable for working professionals who are likely educated and working in management roles. This could lead to a greater wealth creation within Oundle, as these groups have more disposable income to spend in the local economy, to contribute towards Council tax and to generate a greater skilled workforce. This is a minor positive effect.
- 3.16.4 Though the local plan options do not specify that executive homes should be developed, the sites could still be developed as such, and would still support local spending and contributions in Council tax. Therefore minor positive effects are also predicted.

3.17 Town Centre

Option 1: Draft Plan Allocations	+	Option 2: Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	+ [?]
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- 3.17.1 For both options the sites are not within close proximity to the town centre, and so it is not certain that residents would choose to walk into and use the services on offer. However, an increase in dwellings should help to support the vitality of the town, and with measures in place to support walking and cycling, links into the centre could perhaps be improved.
- 3.17.2 For both options, the sites are at the periphery of the town, with several of the neighbourhood plan options being slightly farther away. Despite this, there is likely to be little difference upon the effects that would be generated with regards to the town centre performance.
- 3.17.3 On balance, **minor positive effects** are predicted for both options. There is a greater degree of uncertainty associated with Option 2 though, as some of the sites proposed may not come forward.

3.18 Summary of effects

SA Topic	Option 1	Option 2
Accessibility	x	x x
Housing	+++	+ / ?
Health and liveability	+	++
Crime	0	0
Community Value	0	+
Biodiversity	?	?
Landscape	x	x x
Cultural Heritage	0	0
Climate change	0	0
Air quality	x	x
Water and natural hazard	x	x
Soil and land	x	x x
Minerals	0	0
Energy use and waste	0	0
Employment, skills and wealth creation	+	+ [?]
Town centres	+	+

- 3.18.1 The two strategic options perform relatively the same across the range of sustainability topics. This is not unsurprising given that they are in the same settlement, propose similar levels of growth (though option 2 could require additional development), and involve some of the same sites (albeit different boundaries).
- 3.18.2 For both options, neutral effects are predicted for a range of factors, including; minerals, energy use and waste, crime, climate change and cultural heritage.
- 3.18.3 Minor negative effects arise for both options with regards to air quality, water and natural hazards. These issues are more relevant at a settlement scale, and pose no particular issue for either approach.
- 3.18.4 For other factors, some differences in the two options can be noticed. In particular, Option 2 is likely to generate more prominent negative effects with regards to the efficient use of land, effects on landscape character and accessibility. However, none of these effects are likely to be significant provided that mitigation measures are secured as proposed.
- 3.18.5 From a positive perspective, each option would have similar benefits with regards to the creation of jobs in construction, an injection of spending into the local economy and town centres, and through wealth creation. However, differences are noted between the approaches for three SA topics. For housing, the Local Plan approach (Option 1) provides a more deliverable approach, and the scale of developments would be better placed to support infrastructure improvements and affordable housing. Therefore, it would have significant positive effects. This contrasts with Option 2, which proposes several sites with deliverability issues that could prevent significant positive effects from being generated. This is quite a critical issue.
- 3.18.6 Where Option 2 does perform more favourably though is in the likely generation of greater positive effects (than option 1) with regards to community development (given that the approach has been developed by the 'community', and also in terms of health and liveability).

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1.1 The Council has recently consulted upon a draft Plan. A key element of the plan is the allocation of housing sites to meet needs in Oundle.
- 4.1.2 It is important to identify and address alternatives to this key decision, and this is crucial role of the SA.
- 4.1.3 The appraisal has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the draft Plan, but it was not possible to publish the Interim SA Report at the same time.
- 4.1.4 However, it is important that the findings of the SA are taken into account by the Council before the Plan is finalised for Pre-Submission consultation. This will ensure that the Plan strategy is influenced by the appropriate evidence.
- 4.1.5 It is also important for interested stakeholders to understand the sustainability implications of the draft Plan compared to reasonable alternatives. This is why an Interim SA Report has been prepared and has been made available for consultation.
- 4.1.6 The Council is now working towards the publication of the Local Plan (Part 2). This will take account of consultation feedback, the findings of the SA (as set out in this interim report) and any new evidence.
- 4.1.7 A full SA Report will be prepared to support the publication version of the Local Plan. This Interim SA Report will be subsumed into the final SA Report. There will also be inclusion of site assessment findings, and appraisal of Plan 'as a whole' including all its policies, and establishing potential monitoring measures. Further mitigation or enhancement measures will also need to be considered.

