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# Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

## Sustainability Appraisal Additional Scoping

Prepared by LUC  
August 2014



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August 2014

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) is producing a Local Plan, which will set out the long term spatial vision for the Borough, and includes the strategic policies and development principles required to deliver that vision over the period up to at least 2031.
- 1.2 This Sustainability Appraisal Additional Scoping Report has been prepared by LUC on behalf of WHBC as part of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.
- 1.3 The SA process is concerned with assessing the potential social, economic and environmental effects that may arise from the implementation of the Local Plan. LUC originally prepared a Scoping Report<sup>1</sup> on the Welwyn Hatfield Local Development Framework (LDF) on behalf of the Borough Council, and this was consulted on in March 2008. Since then, various SA materials have been produced as WHBC has carried out work and consultation on documents that will inform the final version of the Local Plan.
- 1.4 This Additional Scoping Report has been produced with respect to the proposed consultation that Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council intends to carry out in the Winter 2014/15 in order to inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The focus of the consultation and the SA is on the overall spatial strategy and site allocations. Retail components of the Local Plan will not be appraised at this stage on the basis that these are unlikely to have significant effects. Development management policies will also not be appraised at this stage.
- 1.5 The purpose of this Additional Scoping Report is to set out the methodology for undertaking the SA, including the assumptions that will be used by which the likely effects of the potential site allocations in the emerging Local Plan can be assessed. It is not intended to replace the earlier SA work, but to supplement it, in order that the consultees can provide their views on the approach to be taken with respect to the scope and level of detail of the SA work during this stage of the plan preparation.
- 1.6 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Emerging Core Strategy is also being undertaken by LUC on behalf of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and the emerging findings of that assessment are being taken into account where relevant throughout the SA process. The next stage of the HRA will be undertaken following the Winter 2014/15 consultation.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.7 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It is designed to ensure that the plan preparation process maximises the contribution that a plan makes to sustainable development and minimises any potential adverse impacts. The SA process appraises the likely social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies within a plan (in this case the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan) from the outset of its development.
- 1.8 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is also a statutory assessment process, required under the SEA Regulations (Statutory Instrument 2004, No 1633). The Regulations require the formal assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and set the framework for future consent of projects requiring Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under EU Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC concerning EIA. The purpose of SEA, as defined in Article 1 of the SEA Directive 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....with a view to promoting sustainable development'*.

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<sup>1</sup>LUC for WHBC (March 2008) Welwyn Hatfield Local Development Framework Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

- 1.9 SEA and SA are separate processes but have similar aims and objectives. Simply put, SEA focuses only on the likely environmental effects of a plan whilst SA includes a wider range of considerations, extending to social and economic impacts. The National Planning Practice Guidance shows how it is possible to satisfy both requirements by undertaking a joint SA/SEA process, and to present an SA report that incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. This document has been prepared in the spirit of this integrated approach and throughout the report the abbreviation 'SA' should therefore be taken to refer to both SA and SEA.
- 1.10 The SA process typically comprises a number of stages, with Scoping being Stage A as follows.

#### **Main stages of SA**

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

Stage D: Consulting on the preferred options of the Local Plan and SA report

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan

- 1.11 It is common for the SA Scoping stage to not only set out the SA framework and consult on the scope of the SA but also to present the relationship of the Plan being assessed with other relevant plans and programmes and to analyse existing environmental characteristics of the Plan area and their likely evolution without implementation of the Plan to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive. The approach adopted in this Scoping Report is to provide a short sustainability profile of the Plan area to provide context for the proposed SA framework, since it is the framework and the related assumptions that will underpin the SA method that are the primary focus of this component of this additional scoping consultation.

## Structure of this SA Additional Scoping Report

- 1.12 This introductory section (**Section 1**) provides background information regarding the preparation of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and explains the requirement to undertake SA. The remainder of the main body of this report is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** outlines the background to the Local Plan, its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes and the environmental protection objectives which have been taken into account in its preparation. It also sets out the work undertaken on the Local Plan to date.
  - **Section 3** outlines the key sustainability issues in the Borough to provide context for the proposed SA framework.
  - **Section 4** outlines the proposed SA methodology, including the SA framework against which the Local Plan will be appraised.
  - **Section 5** describes the next steps to be undertaken in the SA of the Local Plan.

## 2 Background to the Local Plan and Policy Context

### Introduction

- 2.1 As part of this Additional SA work it is necessary to develop an understanding of the policies, plans and strategies that are of relevance to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.

The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2 require that the Environmental Report sets out:

*(a) "an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes"; and*

*(e) "the environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation"*

- 2.2 This section and **Appendix 1** address these requirements.

### The Local Plan

- 2.3 The Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan will set out the Council's vision, objectives and delivery strategy for new development in Welwyn Hatfield Borough to at least 2031 and will eventually replace the saved policies in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
- 2.4 The Local Plan will include the overall spatial strategy, including the amount, type and location of development including affordable housing, jobs, shopping and leisure, community facilities, the environment, travel and infrastructure. In addition to the overall spatial strategy, it will include specific site allocations where development will be acceptable so long as certain criteria are met, plus a series of development management policies that will help to guide the delivery of development and will be used by the Council to determine whether development proposals are acceptable, and the conditions that should apply to development.
- 2.5 WHBC no longer intend to produce a separate Core Strategy, Site Allocations or Development Management Plans, but will now include these within one integrated Local Plan.

### Work undertaken on the Local Plan to date

- 2.6 WHBC carried out the following consultation exercises with respect to the Local Plan to date:
- Issues and Options – Consultation of Issues and Options Plan March 2009.
  - Alternative Housing Targets – Spring 2011.
  - Emerging Core Strategy – October 2012.
- 2.7 Each consultation exercise was accompanied by SA commentary/reports.
- 2.8 In addition to the consultation exercises, WHBC has been gathering evidence to inform the preparation of the Local Plan, including in relation to:
- Employment.
  - Environment and climate change.
  - Green Belt.

- Historic environment.
- Housing.
- Infrastructure.
- Open space, sport and community facilities.
- Population.
- Viability.

2.9 These studies will also help to inform the SA work being undertaken.

## Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes

- 2.10 The Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan will have particular regard to the following plans produced by Hertfordshire County Council:
- Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (adopted November 2012).
  - Minerals Local Plan (adopted 2007).
  - Saved Policies of the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan (adopted 1999).
  - Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (2011).

### Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.11 Neighbourhood Plans give communities an opportunity to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood. Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the policies of the Local Plan. Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council is currently seeking designation of the parish as a neighbourhood planning area.

## Review of Key Changes to National and Regional Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.12 The planning system has undergone a significant change the replacement of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance (PPSs and PPGs) with a single, streamlined document, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012.
- 2.13 Although most of the objectives of the earlier PPSs and PPGs have been incorporated into the NPPF, the NPPF places an increased emphasis on economic development in the form of a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The presumption means that Local Plans *'should meet objectively assessed needs...unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits...'*.
- 2.14 A further notable feature of the NPPF in respect of Local Plans is that in the absence of an up-to-date and consistent plan, planning applications must be determined in accord with the NPPF, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development. This provides an added impetus for Local Authorities to complete the plan-making process in a timely fashion.
- 2.15 The NPPF is supported by a range of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) published in March 2014. Specific guidance on SEA and SA has been produced which sets out the relationship between SEA and SA, and provides further guidance on SA requirements for Local Plans.

## Environmental protection objectives

- 2.16 Relevant International and national environmental protection objectives are set out in **Appendix 1**. The Appendix goes on to describe the implications of each of these objectives for the policies

of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and for the framework of sustainability objectives against which the Plan will be assessed.



# 3 Key Sustainability Issues

## Introduction

- 3.1 A significant amount of work has already been carried out in relation to the SA of the Emerging Core Strategy which is to be replaced by the Local Plan. The baseline data presented in the SA of the Emerging Core Strategy (2012) and the Emerging Core Strategy itself have been used to inform the key sustainability issues for the Borough presented below.

## Characterisation of the Borough

- 3.2 The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield is located in the centre of Hertfordshire with the very south of the Borough bordering the London Borough of Enfield and Central London only around 15 miles south of the Borough boundary. It contains the two towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield and a number of large and small villages providing a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas, with each town and village having its own identity and character. The Borough also contains large areas of open countryside and nearly 80% of the Borough is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. The towns are the main sources of housing, shopping, leisure and employment in the Borough.
- 3.3 Welwyn Hatfield is highly accessible from the north and south by road and rail. Motorway connections are good with the A1(M) passing through the Borough north-south and connecting to the M25 to the south. The A414 runs east-west across the Borough connecting to Hertford to the east and St Albans to the west. The main east coast railway line runs from London to the North East of England and Edinburgh. Regular services run from Kings Cross to Cambridge and Peterborough calling at Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City and Welwyn North. In addition, slower services to Moorgate also call at Welham Green and Brookmans Park. There is also a station at Cuffley which is on the suburban line from London to Stevenage via Hertford North.
- 3.4 Despite being relatively self-contained, the Borough's proximity to London and the good transport network in and around Welwyn Hatfield mean that it has strong links to London and also links to Stevenage to the north and St Albans to the west in terms of commuting patterns and housing markets. Welwyn Garden City town centre is a major town centre and serves a sub-regional catchment area, however it competes with other centres nearby such as Stevenage, St Albans and Hertford. Hatfield town centre is smaller and serves a smaller catchment area of mainly just Hatfield.
- 3.5 Welwyn Hatfield is located within the Hertfordshire Central River Valley and the South Hertfordshire Plateau and contains three river catchments (the Upper Colne, Upper Lee and the Lower Lee) and three main rivers (the Lee, Mimram and the Mimmshall Brook). The river valleys of the Mimram and the Lee are generally shallow in character. Due to the topography of the borough the floodplains associated with these watercourses are relatively constrained.
- 3.6 Overall, 79% of land within Welwyn Hatfield is rural. The Borough includes the largest amount of woodland of any district in Hertfordshire. There are no nationally designated landscapes, such as AONBs and National Parks, located within Welwyn Hatfield.
- 3.7 With respect to nature conservation, there are no Ramsar sites within Welwyn Hatfield but areas of the Lee Valley Ramsar site/Special Protection Area fall within about 6km of the Borough. Welwyn Hatfield Borough contributes to Wormley-Hoddesdon Park Woods which is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Borough has five Sites of Special Scientific Interest, five Local Nature and a number of County and District Wildlife Sites.
- 3.8 Welwyn Hatfield has a wealth of historic interest from archaeological remains dating back to Roman Occupation to the Garden City movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Borough is characterised by a network of small and large villages, most of which developed along the principal Roman roads that ran through Hertfordshire to London. Welwyn itself emerged as a

small urban centre on the outskirts of what is now St Albans, which became the third largest town in Roman Britain. The Borough also has 73 Areas of Archaeological Significance.

- 3.9 Close proximity to London made Hertfordshire a popular retreat for nobility. Hatfield House, built in 1611, has its history closely interwoven with that of the town and Tudor times, as the town of Old Hatfield developed around the gates of the Royal Palace of Hatfield, what is now known as Hatfield House. There are five Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within the Borough, and 30 unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens which are locally significant. There are eight Conservation Areas within the Borough, seven Grade 1 Listed Buildings, 25 Grade 2\* Listed Buildings and a large number of Grade 2 Listed Buildings.
- 3.10 Also of principal historical significance to the Borough is its planning. Welwyn Garden City, one of only two Garden Cities in the country, was founded and planned by Ebenezer Howard in 1920 as a model for low-density urban development based on a combination of city and nature. With the passing of the New Towns Act 1946 both Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield were designated as New Towns and are characterised by parks, trees and open spaces, as outlined in the original design of the towns. As such, Welwyn Hatfield represents the physical, social and cultural ideals of the period in which the Borough was conceived and, in planning terms, has global significance.
- 3.11 The following sections provide an overview of the key sustainability issues facing the Borough drawing upon information in the Emerging Core Strategy and accompanying SA (2012) and the 2008 SA Scoping Report. It is considered that many of the issues identified in 2008 and 2012 remain relevant in 2014. Review of the baseline data at later stages of the SA will allow the initial assessment of key sustainability issues (below) to be brought up to date. This will formally address the SEA Regulation requirements in respect of describing:
- Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and their likely evolution without the plan.
  - The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.
  - Existing environmental problems relevant to the plan.
- 3.12 Should this future review of baseline environmental conditions highlight any significant new sustainability issues not covered by the proposed SA framework (see **Section 4**), the SA framework will be amended accordingly.

### Cross Cutting Issues

- 3.13 A number of sustainability issues cut across several topic areas. Reducing the Borough's contribution to climate change is a key cross cutting issue, addressed directly through the topic paper on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint, but also through the topic papers addressing transport, economy, waste and minerals issues. The overarching theme of sustainable resource use relates closely to climate change, and is covered in topic papers on transport, waste and landscape / historic character, for example in relation to sustainable construction and design.
- 3.14 While Health is included as a separate topic area with deprivation and crime, it is also closely linked to the sustainability issues identified in under transport, access and travel patterns, recreation, leisure and sport, as well as access to housing and education / skills development.
- 3.15 Community is another cross cutting issue which is also one of the priority areas in the Welwyn Hatfield Business Plan 2012-2015<sup>2</sup>. Involvement in the community is a key aspect of citizenship which was identified as an issue at the early Scoping Workshop, and as such the issues identified under the recreation, leisure and sport, and historic and cultural heritage below are particularly important, along with those identified under skills, education and employment.

### Key Sustainability Issues

#### *Economy*

- 3.16 Key sustainability issues identified are as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> Welwyn Hatfield Business Plan 2012-2015 – Update for 2014/2015

- The supply of good quality employment land needs to be managed in the face of pressure from housing, retail and leisure uses.
- Welwyn Hatfield's location within the London/Oxford/Cambridge 'golden triangle' needs to be promoted to encourage future investment from the knowledge-based sector, whilst also capitalising on the University of Hertfordshire and Royal Veterinary College.
- Outward commuting can create dormitory towns and villages.
- Out of town retail centres still threaten the success of some town centres. For example, Hatfield's town centre is up against competition from the out-of-centre Galleria shopping centre and Oldings Corner.
- Sustain rural communities and their rural economies, possibly through rural diversification.
- Reduce the environmental impacts of the economy, decoupling greenhouse gas emissions from economic growth.
- Promote the regeneration of areas and sectors of the economy in decline.
- Rail links to Kings Cross /St Pancras as a driver/opportunity.
- Blurring of the distinction between homes and jobs (i.e. to facilitate home working, live-work units).
- Need to allow micro-businesses to expand where they are located.
- Need to allow business expansion without compromising principles of green belt.
- Main transport corridors for road and rail are north-south. East-west travel is slower and only by road.

#### *Skills, Education and Employment*

3.17 Key sustainability issues identified are as follows:

- Levels of unemployment have increased in recent years due to the economic downturn, although they remain below the national and regional average.
- There are more deprived wards in the Borough that experience higher levels of unemployment compared to others.
- There are signs of possible mismatches between skills and jobs available in the Borough, and pay of residents can be lower than the County average.
- Need to improve the quality of secondary education in the Borough in light of high levels of students' under-performing at GCSE level.
- The percentage of 16-18 year olds not in employment, education, or training (NEET) is decreasing in the Borough and Hertfordshire has one of the lowest NEET rates in the Country. However, despite these improvements this issue still needs careful attention to ensure rates don't rise.

#### *Health and Deprivation*

3.18 Key sustainability issues relating to health and deprivation, and including crime, are identified as follows, the first being a key point:

- Within a relatively prosperous Borough there are pockets of multiple deprivations with the most deprived areas being around Hatfield Central and Peartree wards in Welwyn Garden City.
- Health inequalities are an issue with clear disparities in the health and life expectancy of those living in the most and least deprived areas within Welwyn Hatfield.
- Weekly participation by adults in sport are below the national average and 1 in 5 people smoke and 1 in 5 people are obese. The percentage of adults classed as overweight in the Borough is lower than the national average.
- The Borough may experience a continued increase in the number of older/retired people, which is likely to have economic implications.
- Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour is high.

- Offences for all crimes per 1,000 population have decreased to below National levels but this remains a key issue for the Borough.

#### *Housing*

3.19 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment will inform the Local Plan. The final bullet point is an overarching issue which is reflected in the SA Framework.

3.20 Key sustainability issues for housing are identified as:

- Current supply of affordable housing is not meeting all of the need in the Borough.
- Homelessness is slowly rising in the Borough.
- Affordability of housing may mean that people leave the Borough to purchase property elsewhere.
- Supplying the right type of housing in the right locations to meet local needs.

#### *Transport, Access and Travel Patterns*

3.21 While the north south transport network is good, there are no east west rail links, and there are localised congestion problems. Key sustainability issues are identified as:

- Public transport utilisation needs to improve in addition to increased accessibility to public transport, alongside a co-ordinated and joined up approach between different modes of transport.
- Capacity constraints could affect the future growth of the rail and road transport network.
- Gaps in the cycle network could reduce the potential of the Borough's cycle network to be used as an efficient alternative mode of transport to the car for local journeys.
- Congestion is an issue in some urban areas within the Borough and along major transport routes such as the A1(M) and A414, which is exacerbated by the lack of an accessible east-west road network.
- There is a lack of an efficient walking network within some town centres in the Borough.

#### *Waste*

3.22 Key sustainability issues identified for waste are as follows:

- There is a need to reduce household waste as far as possible in the Borough.
- Recycling and composting rates must continue to improve, particularly if the County target of 50% by 2020 is to be reached.
- There needs to be a progressive reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- There is a need to decouple waste growth from economic growth and put more emphasis on waste prevention and re-use and economic investment in waste management.
- Recycling rates are lower in more deprived areas within the Borough.

#### *Land, Geology, Soil and Minerals*

3.23 Key sustainability issues identified are:

- Need to prevent sterilisation of mineral resources, whilst taking into account development pressures.
- Minimise development on best and most versatile agricultural land.
- Use soils sustainably, and encourage better management of agricultural soils.

#### *Landscape*

3.24 Key sustainability issues relating to landscape are identified as:

- The quality, quantity and character of open spaces in Welwyn Hatfield should be maintained and enhanced.

- Insensitive proposals for development in the countryside (farm diversification, recreation, energy schemes, tourism related) could have an erosive effect on landscape character.
- Increasing traffic volumes will continue to erode tranquillity and air quality and quality and appearance of rural and urban areas.
- Light pollution is an existing problem associated with development generally, but in particular the A1/M, major urban areas and sports and industrial developments.

#### *Recreation, Leisure and Sport*

3.25 Key sustainability issues are identified as follows:

- Ensure everyone has access to green and open spaces for everyone as part of green infrastructure provision.
- The provision of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways needs to increase.
- Increase opportunities for access to and participation in sport in all sections of the community.
- Increase provision of leisure facilities for all sections of the community
- Increase provision of cultural opportunities for all sections of the community (involvement in drama, dance, visual art and literature, media, technologies, sports, crafts etc).
- There is insufficient facilities to meet the needs of all young people in the Borough.
- There is a lack of resources to subsidise the running of recreational, leisure and sports facilities in Welwyn Hatfield<sup>3</sup>.

#### *Historic and Cultural Heritage*

3.26 Key sustainability issues identified are:

- Ensure the historic character of the Borough is maintained to retain a sense of place and local distinctiveness.
- Increase education and awareness of the historic environment.
- Ensure access to the historic environment for everyone.

#### *Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna*

3.27 This topic has links to water resources and air quality. Key sustainability issues are identified as:

- Development pressures and climate change may lead to changes in habitat structure, species composition, and possible gains and losses of species in the Borough.
- The percentage of SSSIs found to be in favourable condition is well below the national target of 95%.
- Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works is at/near capacity and could have adverse impacts on biodiversity, and in particular Natura 2000 sites, if overloaded.
- Ensuring BAP targets are achieved and reviewed as appropriate and aims of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership are taken into account.
- Maintain and enhance all designated wildlife areas and promote any opportunities for increasing biodiversity in the Borough.

#### *Air Quality*

3.28 Air quality is not currently a problem in Welwyn Hatfield and measured air quality currently meets the national standards. The only identified potential future issue relates to localised junctions and sections of busy roads, where particulate levels may exceed air quality strategy levels from 2010. However, this was not considered a significant issue at the Scoping Workshop. One sustainability issue was identified as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Welwyn Hatfield Sports Facility Study (2013)

- The impact of air quality on Natura 2000 sites needs to be considered as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

#### *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Carbon Footprint*

3.29 Key sustainability issues are identified as:

- Significantly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the industrial and commercial sector.
- Significantly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from road transport.
- Significantly reduce average annual domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per dwelling through retrofitting existing buildings.
- Significantly reduce average annual domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per dwelling in new developments.
- A continuation in the progressive reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill to reduce methane emissions from waste.
- Significantly increase the installation of renewable energy capacity.

#### *Water Resources and Quality*

3.30 Key sustainability issues are identified as follows:

- While biological water quality in Welwyn Hatfield is improving, chemical water quality is deteriorating.
- There is a need to reduce both domestic and commercial per capita water consumption in the Borough, particularly in light of new housing provisions for Hertfordshire, which could put a serious strain on water resources, and due to the fact that Welwyn Hatfield has been identified as an area of serious water stress with local rivers suffering from over abstraction.
- Climate change is likely to lead to water shortages in the summer months in future.
- Rye Meads sewage treatment works is at/near capacity and could have adverse impacts on water quality if overloaded.
- Ground water pollution means that local water is imported into the Borough.

#### *Flood Risk*

3.31 Key sustainability issues are identified as follows:

- Although the Borough has relatively few areas within the Environment Agency's medium and high flood risk zones, some areas are still prone to flooding.
- Climate change is likely to exacerbate frequency and severity of flooding events.
- There may be pressures to develop in flood risk areas against Environment Agency advice.

## 4 Proposed SA Methodology

4.1 As described in **Section 1**, the SA work will incorporate the requirements of the SEA Regulations. The approach to carrying out the SA for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan will be based on current best practice and the following guidance:

- A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive (September 2005), Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- SA guidance within national Planning Practice Guidance (<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>).

4.2 The SA will be undertaken in close collaboration with the WHBC officers involved in considering the alternatives for the Local Plan in order to fully integrate the SA process with the production of the Plan.

4.3 The SEA Regulations set out consultation requirements at the SA Scoping stage.

Part 3 of the SEA Regulations 12(5) states that: *when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies.*

4.4 The 'scope' includes the range of SA objectives that will be used to assess the effects of the Local Plan and the approach to that will be taken to the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' (see below). The 'detail' includes the assumptions that will be made in assessing the Plan against each of the SA objectives. All of this information is contained within the SA Scoping Report which will be subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies.

### Approach to the Assessment

4.5 Our SA work on the Local Plan will be mindful of the sustainability issues facing Welwyn Hatfield borough, such as those set out in **Section 3**, and of the need to weigh up potentially opposing sustainability effects that are often associated with development. For example, whilst there may be environmental disadvantages associated with some aspects of proposed housing and economic development, it is important to strike a balance with the likely social and economic advantages of, for example, addressing deprivation. Another area where such tensions often need to be considered is in weighing up the need to seek support from developers for infrastructure and affordable housing against the need to ensure that delivery of housing is not threatened by the level of obligations placed on developers. In addition, the SA work will be mindful of the evidence base assembled to inform the preparation of the Local Plan available at <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=457>.

#### Reasonable alternatives

4.6 In relation to the overarching approach to the assessment, the SEA Regulations require the following.

Part 3 of the SEA Regulations 12(2) require that:

*The report shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of:*

*(a) Implementing the plan or programme; and*

*(b) Reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the Plan or Programme.*

4.7 Therefore, the SA must appraise not only the policies or site allocations preferred by the Plan but "reasonable alternatives" to those policies and allocations. This implies that alternatives that are

not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. In addition, there is no requirement in the SEA Regulations for all possible reasonable alternatives to be subject to appraisal. Part (b) of Regulation 12(2) above notes that reasonable alternatives will take into account the objectives of the plan, as well as its geographical scope. Therefore, alternatives that do not meet the objectives of the Plan or national policy, or are outside the Plan area are unlikely to be reasonable.

- 4.8 For those alternatives deemed reasonable, the SA will set out how they perform in comparative terms, and will describe the reasons for selecting the preferred options, and why other reasonable alternatives have been discounted.

## Sustainability Appraisal framework

The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(6) require the Environmental Report to consider:

*The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on 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 inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a)–(l).*

- 4.9 The development of a set of SA objectives is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and other sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared. The SA will therefore take an 'objectives-led' approach to the assessment i.e. the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan policies and allocations will be assessed in relation to a framework of sustainability objectives and supporting assessment criteria. This will address the sustainability issues identified in **Section 3** whilst ensuring that all the SEA topics ((a) to (l) in the box above) are covered.
- 4.10 The proposed SA Framework is included in **Appendix 2**. The SA objectives and questions in Column 1 of the SA Framework are the same ones that have been used in all the SA work to date on the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan. It is important that consistency is achieved throughout the SA process. There is no evidence to suggest that any changes need to be made and that it remains fit for purpose.
- 4.11 As the main purpose of this part of the Local Plan preparation is to consult on potential housing site allocations, assumptions have been developed for each SA objective to show how the effects will be identified and evaluated for each site option appraised.
- 4.12 Each site allocation option will be assessed against each SA objective, and a judgement will be made as to the likely effect of the option on the objective using the assumptions listed in the SA Framework. These judgements will differentiate between significant effects and other more minor effects through the use of colour coded symbols, as shown in the key below. Mixed effects will be recorded for an SA objective where there is potential for positive effects in relation to one sub-objective but potential for negative effects in relation to another.

### Key to symbols and colour coding to be used in the SA of the Local Plan

++	Significant positive effect likely
+	Minor positive effect likely
0	Negligible effect likely
-	Minor negative effect likely
--	Significant negative effect likely

<b>+/-</b>	Mixed effect likely <sup>4</sup>
<b>?</b>	Likely effect uncertain
<b>N/A</b>	Policy is not relevant to SA objective

- 4.13 The dividing line in making judgments is often quite small. Where we distinguish significant effects from more minor effects, this is because, in our judgement, the effect of the allocation or policy on the SA objective will be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect compared with other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.
- 4.14 The SA of employment allocated sites will be based on similar assumptions which will be adapted to be relevant to employment sites and issues.

## Proposed structure of the SA Reports

- 4.15 WHBC intends to make consultation documentation available for formal representations in Autumn 2014. This is in accordance with the consultation requirements of Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.16 An SA Report for each consultation stage of the Local Plan is being produced as a key output of the appraisal process. The SA Report will contain information on the effects of the proposed plan options, policies or site allocations (depending on the stage) and will be published for formal public consultation.
- 4.17 The SA reports will, as far as possible, be written in a user-friendly way in order to ensure that they will be understood by as wide an audience as possible. The SA Reports are likely to be structured as set out below:

### Summary and outcomes

- Non-technical summary (Proposed Submission stage only).
- A statement of the likely significant effects.
- Statement on the difference the process has made.
- How to comment on the SA Report.

### Background

- Purpose of the SA and the SA Report.
- Local Plan objectives and an outline of its contents.
- Compliance with the SEA Regulations.

### Appraisal methodology

- Approach to the SA.
- When the SA was carried out.
- Who carried out the SA.
- Who was consulted, when and how.
- Difficulties encountered in compiling information or carrying out the assessment.

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<sup>4</sup> There may be a need to distinguish further between mixed effects which will be addressed in the appraisals

### **Sustainability objectives, baseline and context**

- Links to other strategies, plans and policies and sustainability objectives and how these have been taken into account.
- Description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline.
- Difficulties in data collection and its limitations.
- The SA Framework, including objectives, targets, indicators, and assumptions.
- Main social, environmental and economic issues and problems identified and the likely evolution of those issues without implementation of the Local Plan.

### **Findings of the SA**

- Main options considered and how they were identified, including consideration of reasonable alternatives.
  - Comparison of their social, environmental and economic effects.
  - How social, environmental and economic impacts were considered in choosing the preferred option.
  - The reasons for selecting the preferred options and for discounting options that are not preferred.
  - Any proposed mitigation measures.
  - Proposals for monitoring.
- 4.18 Sustainability appraisal matrices presenting the detailed assessment of each potential site allocation against each of the SA objectives will be presented as appendices to the main SA report, along with information about how any consultation responses received in response to earlier stages of the SA have been addressed.
- 4.19 Once the appraisal work is undertaken, it may be necessary to make refinements to the proposed report structure described above, in order to present the findings of the SA in the most easily understandable way. However, the content of the reports will reflect the above list of issues, and will be fully compliant with the reporting requirements of the SEA Regulations.

## 5 Next Steps

- 5.1 To meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations, the views of the three statutory consultees (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) will be sought in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in the SA. This requirement is being met by publishing this Additional SA Scoping Report for consultation with the three statutory bodies for a five week period from **22<sup>nd</sup> August 2014 to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014**.

**Consultees are asked as part of their response to consider the following questions in particular**

- Are any significant sustainability issues or opportunities missing or misrepresented in the sustainability profile for the area? If so, provide evidence to support suggested additional issues. (**Section 3**)
- Do the SA framework assumptions provide a reasonable basis through which to address the likely **significant** environmental / sustainability effects of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan? (**Section 4**).

- 5.2 Comments should be sent to:

<b>Main Contact</b>
Mrs A Day Principal Planner, Planning Policy
<a href="mailto:a.day@welhat.gov.uk">a.day@welhat.gov.uk</a> 01707 357510

- 5.3 Responses from the consultees will be addressed during the SA/SEA, and reported in the Sustainability Appraisal Report. The appraisal process will continue with the development of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan. The next formal output will be the Proposed Submission version in 2015.

# Appendix 1

## Environmental Protection Objectives

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>				
<b>EU Directives</b>				
<p><i>SEA Directive 2001</i></p> <p>Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment</p>	<p>Provides for a high level of protection of the environment and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>The Directive must be applied to plans or programmes whose formal preparation begins after 21 July 2004 and to those already in preparation by that date.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive at the national level.</p>	<p>Requirements of the SEA Directive must be met in Sustainability Appraisals.</p>
<p><i>The Industrial Emissions Directive 2010</i></p> <p>Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control)</p>	<p>Lays down rules on integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from industrial activities. It also lays down rules designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole.</p>	<p>The Directive sets emission limit values for substances that are harmful to air or water.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objective for reducing pollution.</p>
<p><i>The Birds Directive 2009</i></p> <p>Directive 2009/147/EC is a codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended</p>	<p>Requires the preservation, maintenance, and re-establishment of biotopes and habitats to include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of protected areas.</li> <li>• Upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones.</li> <li>• Re-establishment of destroyed biotopes.</li> <li>• Creation of biotopes.</li> </ul>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Policies should make sure that the upkeep of recognised habitats is maintained and not damaged from development.</p> <p>Should also avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats or any other disturbances affecting birds.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives for the protection of birds.</p>

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
<p><i>The Waste Framework Directive 2008</i></p> <p>Directive 2008/98/EC on waste</p>	<p>Aims to prevent or reduce waste production and its harmfulness and to increase the recovery of waste by means of recycling, re-use or reclamation. Aims to achieve recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without using processes that could harm the environment.</p>	<p>Development of clean technology to process waste and promote recycling.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives that minimise waste production as well as promote recycling.</p>
<p><i>The Floods Directive 2007</i></p> <p>Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks</p>	<p>Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods.</p>	<p>Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments to be completed by December 2011. Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps to be completed by December 2013. Flood Risk Management Plans to be completed by December 2015.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives that relate to flood management and reduction of risk.</p>
<p><i>The Water Framework Directive 2000</i></p> <p>Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of water policy</p>	<p>Protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwaters.</p>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to protect and minimise the impact on water quality.</p>
<p><i>The Landfill Directive 1999</i></p> <p>Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of waste</p>	<p>Prevent or reduce negative effects on the environment from the landfilling of waste by introducing stringent technical requirements for waste and landfills.</p>	<p>Reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill to 75% of the 1995 level by 2010. Reduce this to 50% in 2013 and 35% by 2020.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste.</p>

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
<p><i>The Drinking Water Directive 1998</i></p> <p>Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption</p>	<p>Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.</p>	<p>Member States must set values for water intended for human consumption.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to protect and enhance water quality.</p>
<p><i>The Air Quality Framework Directive 1996</i></p> <p>Directive 96/62/EC on ambient air quality assessment and management</p>	<p>Avoid, prevent and reduce harmful effects of ambient noise pollution on human health and the environment.</p>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to maintain and enhance air quality.</p>
<p><i>The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive 1994</i></p> <p>Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste</p>	<p>Harmonise the packaging waste system of Member States. Reduce the environmental impact of packaging waste.</p>	<p>By June 2001 at least 50% by weight of packaging waste should have been recovered, at least 25% by weight of the totality of packaging materials contained in packaging waste to be recycled with a minimum of 15% by weight for each packaging material.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to minimise the environmental impact of waste and promote recycling.</p>
<p><i>The Habitats Directive 1992</i></p> <p>Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</p>	<p>Promote the maintenance of biodiversity taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. Conservation of natural habitats and maintain landscape features of importance to wildlife and fauna.</p>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to protect and maintain the natural environment and important landscape features.</p>

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
<p><i>The Nitrates Directive 1991</i></p> <p>Directive 91/676/EEC on nitrates from agricultural sources.</p>	<p>Reduce water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and prevent further such pollution.</p>	<p>Identification of vulnerable areas.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to reduce water pollution.</p>
<p><i>The Urban Waste Water Directive 1991</i></p> <p>Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban waste water treatment</p>	<p>Protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water collection, treatment and discharge, and discharge from certain industrial sectors.</p>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to reduce water pollution.</p>
<b>European plans, policies and programmes</b>				
<p>EU Seventh Environmental Action Plan (2002-2012)</p>	<p>The EU's objectives in implementing the programme are:</p> <p>(a) to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital;</p> <p>(b) to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy;</p> <p>(c) to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing;</p> <p>(d) to maximise the benefits of the Union's environment legislation;</p> <p>(e) to improve the evidence base for environment policy;</p>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p>	<p>Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objectives to protect and enhance the natural environment and promote energy efficiency.</p>

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
	<p>(f) to secure investment for environment and climate policy and get the prices right;</p> <p>(g) to improve environmental integration and policy coherence;</p> <p>(h) to enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities;</p> <p>(i) to increase the Union's effectiveness in confronting regional and global environmental challenges.</p>			
European Spatial Development Perspective (1999)	Economic and social cohesion across the community. Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage. Balanced competitiveness between different tiers of government.	No targets or indicators.	Develop policies that take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive contained in the NPPF.	Include sustainability objectives to conserve natural resources and cultural heritage.
European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2002)	The convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning.	No indicators or targets.	Develop policies that take account of the Convention.	Include sustainability objectives to protect the archaeological heritage.
<p>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)</p> <p><i>Revision of the 1985 Granada Convention</i></p>	<p>Protection of the archaeological heritage, including any physical evidence of the human past that can be investigated archaeologically both on land and underwater.</p> <p>Creation of archaeological reserves and conservation of excavated sites.</p>	No indicators or targets.	Develop policies that take account of the Convention.	Include sustainability objectives to protect the archaeological heritage.
<b>Other international plans, policies and programmes</b>				

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (2002)	<p>Commitment to building a humane, equitable and caring global society aware of the need for human dignity for all.</p> <p>Renewable energy and energy efficiency. Accelerate shift towards sustainable consumption and production.</p>	<p>Greater resource efficiency.</p> <p>New technology for renewable energy.</p> <p>Increase energy efficiency.</p>	Develop policies that take account of the Declaration.	Include sustainability objectives to enhance the natural environment and promote renewable energy and energy efficiency.
Aarhus Convention (1998)	<p>Established a number of rights of the public with regard to the environment. Local authorities should provide for:</p> <p>The right of everyone to receive environmental information</p> <p>The right to participate from an early stage in environmental decision making</p> <p>The right to challenge in a court of law public decisions that have been made without respecting the two rights above or environmental law in general.</p>	No targets or indicators.	Develop policies that take account of the Convention.	Ensure that public are involved and consulted at all relevant stages of SA production.
<b>NATIONAL</b>				
<b>White Papers</b>				
<p>Natural Environment White Paper, 2011</p> <p><i>The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature</i></p>	<p>Protecting and improving our natural environment;</p> <p>Growing a green economy; and</p> <p>Reconnecting people and nature.</p>	No targets or indicators.	Protect the intrinsic value of nature and recognise the multiple benefits it could have for communities.	Include a sustainability objective relating to the enhancement of the natural environment.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
Electricity Market Reform White Paper 2011, <i>Planning our Electric Future: A White Paper for Secure, Affordable and Low-Carbon Electricity</i>	This White Paper sets out the Government's commitment to transform the UK's electricity system to ensure that our future electricity supply is secure, low-carbon and affordable.	15 per cent renewable energy target by 2020 and 80 per cent carbon reduction target by 2050.	Develop policies that support renewable energy generation and encourage greater energy efficiency.	Include sustainability objectives to reduce carbon emissions and increase proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.
The Future of Transport White Paper 2004: A network for 2030	<p>Ensure we can benefit from mobility and access while minimising the impact on other people and the environment, now and in the future.</p> <p>Get the best out of our transport system without damaging our overall quality of life.</p> <p>Develop strategies that recognise that demand for travel will increase in the future.</p> <p>Work towards a transport network that can meet the challenges of a growing economy and the increasing demand for travel but can also achieve the government's environmental objectives.</p>	20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010 and 60% reduction by 2050. Transport is currently responsible for about a quarter of total emissions.	Develop policies that provide for an increase in demand for travel whilst minimizing impact on the environment. Policies also needed to promote public transport use rather than increasing reliance on the car.	Include sustainability objectives to reduce the need to travel and improve choice and use of sustainable transport modes.
<b>Policies and Strategies</b>				
DCLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework	<p>Presumption in favour of sustainable development.</p> <p>Delivering sustainable development by:</p>	No targets or indicators.	Development plan has a statutory status as the starting point for decision making.	Sustainability appraisal should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
	Building a strong, competitive economy.	No targets or indicators.	Set out clear economic visions for that particular area.	Include a sustainability objective relating to strengthening the economy.
	Ensuring vitality of town centres.	No targets or indicators.	Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities.	Include a sustainability objective relating to the vitality of town centres.
	Promoting sustainable transport	No targets or indicators.	To implement sustainable transport modes depending on nature/location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure.	Include a sustainability objective relating to sustainable transport.
	Supporting high quality communications infrastructure.	No targets or indicators.	Enhance the provision of local community facilities and services by supporting the expansion of electronic communications networks.	Include a sustainability objective relating to improving communication.
	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.	No targets or indicators.	Identify size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations.	Include a sustainability objective relating to housing availability and quality.
	Requiring good design.	No targets or indicators.	Establish a strong sense of place to live, work and visit.	Include a sustainability objective relating to good design.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
	Promoting healthy communities.	No targets or indicators.	Promote safe and accessible environments with a high quality of life and community cohesion.	Include a sustainability objective relating to health and well-being.
	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change.	No targets or indicators.	Use opportunities offered by new development to reduce causes/impacts of flooding.	Include a sustainability objective relating to climate change mitigation and adaption.
	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.	No targets or indicators.	Recognise the wider benefits of biodiversity.	Include a sustainability objective relating to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.
	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	No targets or indicators.	<p>Sustain and enhance heritage assets and put them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.</p> <p>A local plan may be considered unsound if there has been no proper assessment of the significance of heritage assets in the area, and the plan does not contain a positive strategy for the conservation, enhancement and</p>	Include a sustainability objective relating to the conservation of historic features.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
			enjoyment of the historic environment.	
	Facilitating the use of sustainable materials.	No targets or indicators.	Encourage prior extraction of minerals where practicable and environmentally feasible.	Include a sustainability objective relating to sustainable mineral extraction.
DfT (2013) <i>Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration</i>	<p>The strategy's vision is for an inclusive, integrated and innovative transport system that works for everyone, and where making door-to-door journeys by sustainable means is an attractive and convenient option. Four key areas to address are highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving availability of information;</li> <li>• simplifying ticketing;</li> <li>• making connections between different steps in the journey, and different modes of transport, easier; and</li> <li>• providing better interchange facilities.</li> </ul>	No targets or indicators.	Enhance public transport provision and encourage active modes of travel such as walking and cycling.	Include a relevant sustainability objective relating to sustainable transport.
DCLG (2012) Planning Policy for Traveller Sites	<p>Government's aims in respect of traveller sites are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.</li> <li>• To ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.</li> <li>• To encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.</li> </ul>	No targets or indicators.	Ensure that relevant considerations are taken into account when producing Local Plan.	Include relevant sustainability objectives relating to social inclusion and environmental protection.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development.</li> <li>• To promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites.</li> <li>• That plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies.</li> <li>• To increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.</li> <li>• To reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions.</li> <li>• To enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.</li> <li>• For local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.</li> </ul>			
<p>DEFRA (2011) <i>Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's</i></p>	<p>The strategy aims to guide conservation efforts in England up to 2020, and move from a net biodiversity loss to gain. The strategy includes</p>	<p>The strategy develops ambitious yet achievable goals for 2020 and 2050, based on Aichi Targets set</p>	<p>Develop policies that promote conservation and enhancements of biodiversity.</p>	<p>Include sustainability objective that relates to biodiversity.</p>

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
<i>wildlife and ecosystem services</i>	<p>22 priorities which include actions for the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture;</li> <li>• Forestry;</li> <li>• Planning and Development;</li> <li>• Water Management;</li> <li>• Marine Management;</li> <li>• Fisheries;</li> <li>• Air Pollution; and</li> <li>• Invasive Non-Native Species.</li> </ul>	at the Nagoya UN Biodiversity Summit in October 2010.		
DCLG (2011) Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management	<p>Key planning objectives are identified within PPS10, requiring planning authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy</li> <li>• provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste</li> <li>• help implement the national waste strategy, and supporting targets</li> <li>• help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment,</li> <li>• reflect the concerns and interests of communities, waste collection authorities, waste disposal authorities and business</li> <li>• protect green belts but recognise the particular locational needs of some</li> </ul>	<p>No targets or indicators.</p> <p>Requires planning authorities to implement targets set through the national waste strategy</p>	Develop policies that promote sustainable waste management and use of the waste hierarchy.	Include sustainability objective that relates to waste reduction.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
	<p>types of waste management facilities when defining detailed green belt boundaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management</li> </ul>			
DCLG (2011) <i>Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England</i>	Aims to provide support to deliver new homes and improve social mobility.	No targets or indicators	Develop policies that encourage development of residential properties.	Include sustainability objective that assesses whether housing need is being met.
DEFRA (2011) <i>Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy</i>	<p>Enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life for future generations. There are 4 shared priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sustainable consumption and production;</li> <li>climate change and energy;</li> <li>natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and</li> <li>sustainable communities.</li> </ul>	Sets out indicators to give an overview of sustainable development and priority areas in the UK. They include 20 of the UK Framework indicators and a further 48 indicators related to the priority areas.	Develop policies that meet the aims of the Sustainable Development Strategy.	Include sustainability objectives to cover the shared priorities.
Department of Health (2010) <i>Healthy Lives, Healthy People: our Strategy for public health in England</i>	Protect the population from serious health threats; helping people live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives; and improving the health of the poorest, fastest. Prioritise public health funding from within the overall NHS budget.	No targets or indicators.	Policies within the Local Plan should reflect the objectives of the strategy where relevant.	Include a sustainability objective relating to health and well-being.

Strategy / Plan / Programme	Key objectives relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Key targets and indicators relevant to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan and SA	Implications for the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan	Implications for SA
DECC (2009) <i>The UK Renewable Energy Strategy</i>	<p>Increase our use of renewable electricity, heat and transport, and help tackle climate change.</p> <p>Build the UK low-carbon economy, promote energy security and take action against climate change.</p>	<p>15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020.</p> <p>Reducing UK CO2 emissions by 750 million tonnes by 2030.</p>	Encourage developments that would support renewable energy provision including electricity, heat and transport.	Include a sustainability objective relating to increasing energy provided from renewable sources.
DEFRA (2007) <i>The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland</i>	<p>Make sure that everyone can enjoy a level of ambient air quality in public spaces, which poses no significant risk to health or quality of life.</p> <p>Render polluting emissions harmless.</p>	Sets air quality standards for 13 air pollutants.	Develop policies that aim to meet the standards.	Include sustainability objectives to protect and improve air quality.
<b>Legislation</b>				
Housing Act 2004	<p>Protect the most vulnerable in society and help create a fairer and better housing market.</p> <p>Strengthen the Government's drive to meet its 2010 decent homes target.</p>	No indicators or targets.	Develop policies that help to create a fairer and better housing market.	Include sustainability objectives to improve access to good quality and affordable housing.

# Appendix 2

## Proposed SA Framework and Assumptions



SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
<b>Long-term Objective 1: Health Improvement</b>	
<p>...lead to reduced health inequalities, and in particular improve the health of those living in communities characterised by relatively poor health? (1.1)</p>	<p>Sites that are within straight line walking distance (720 m)<sup>5</sup> of three or more different types of the following service/facility/asset:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP surgery;</li> <li>• local shopping centre;</li> <li>• post office;</li> <li>• pharmacy;</li> </ul> <p>...and within 1,400 m<sup>6</sup> of two or more of the following types of service/facility/asset:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sports/recreation facility or an area of open space;</li> <li>• hospital;</li> <li>• primary or secondary school;</li> <li>• Major Employment Site or Town Centre.</li> </ul>
<p>...lead to improved health for all? (1.2)</p>	<p>...are assumed to have a minor positive (+) effect on this aspect of the SA objective because of the potential to use these facilities. Allocations which are also located in an area within one of the 20% most deprived areas within the District ('access to services' domain of English Indices of Deprivation) are assessed as having a significant positive (+ +) effect on this aspect of the objective.</p> <p>Other allocations are assessed as having a negligible (0) effect.</p> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of GP surgeries, hospitals, sports/recreation facilities, open spaces, post offices, local shopping centres, primary schools, secondary schools, Major Employment Sites, Town Centres; English Indices of Deprivation)</p>
<b>Long-term Objective 2: Safer Communities</b>	
<p>...reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, and reduce fear of crime? (2.1)</p>	<p>The effects of new development on safety, crime and fear of crime will depend on design proposals for the allocated sites and factors such as the inclusion of open spaces that are overlooked by buildings to improve safety and security and sufficient lighting. Generally, these issues will not be influenced by the location of development and will instead be determined through the detailed proposals for each site. This SA objective does not, therefore, form part of the SA of Site Allocations.</p> <p>(Sources required: none)</p>

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from target distances in Welwyn Hatfield Community Facilities Study, October 2012

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of the appraisal, walking distance will be measured as the straight line distance from the edge of the site option to existing services and facilities, and therefore actual walking distances are likely to be greater (depending on the house location within a larger site and the availability of a direct route). It is considered that a straight line walking distance of 720m typically equates to a walking distance of 1200m or 15 minutes' walk, and a straight line walking distance of 1400m typically equates to a walking distance of 2400m or 30 minutes' walk.

<b>SA Question: Will the policy...</b>	<b>Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites</b>
<p>...ensure there is no increase in flood risk to people or property, taking into account climate change? (2.2)</p>	<p>Development on sites that are within areas of high flood risk may have negative effects on this SA objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites having a significant proportion of land (&gt;=25%) within flood zones 3a or 3b, have an 'extreme' flood hazard rating in the SFRA, and/or include flood storage areas are assumed to have a significant negative (--) effect.</li> <li>• Sites having as significant proportion of land (&gt;=25%) within flood zone 2 or that are 5-25% within flood zone 3 are assumed to have a minor negative (-) effect. Sites that include a very small part of a flood storage area would also have a minor negative effect.</li> <li>• Sites with less than 5% of their land within flood zone 3, less than 25% of their land within flood zone 2 and do not include flood storage areas are assumed to have a negligible (0) effect.</li> </ul> <p>The opportunity to incorporate SuDS to mitigate the risks of surface water flooding and surface water contamination is a design issue and does not form part of the SA of Site Allocations.</p> <p>(Sources required: EA flood zones; SFRA; flood storage areas)</p>
<p><b>Long-term objective 3: Good Citizenship</b></p>	
<p>...encourage involvement of the public in the planning process? (3.1)</p>	<p>Not applicable for appraisal of site allocations.</p>
<p><b>Long-term objective 4: Improving the environment</b></p>	
<p>...significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from built development? (4.1)</p>	<p>While any additional development is likely to increase <u>total</u> energy consumption in the District, it is likely to be built to a higher energy efficiency standard than existing housing stock as a result of increasingly stringent Building Regulations requirements and the Government's 2016 zero carbon target for new dwellings, thereby helping to improve energy efficiency. It may also offer opportunities for incorporating local renewable energy generation. However, these issues will not be determined by the location of the development and will, instead, be determined through the detailed proposals for each site. Therefore, this aspect of the SA objective is not assessed in the SA of the Site Allocations.</p>
<p>...significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport? (4.2)</p>	<p>In terms of location, greenhouse gas emissions are most closely linked to emissions from vehicles. Vehicles are more likely to be used as distances to destinations increase or travel by alternative more sustainable modes become less attractive. As an indication of effects on this aspect of the SA objective, the following is assumed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where an allocation is within straight line walking distance (1,400 m) of a Major Employment Site or Town Centre there is a significant positive (++) effect on this aspect of the SA objective due to minimising travel distances and car use related greenhouse gas emissions, and enabling easier access to employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Where an allocation is within 720 m of a Local Shopping Centre a minor positive (+) effect is assumed.</li> <li>• Where a site is within walking distance of a site or centre but there are potential barriers to access for all ages and abilities (e.g. topography, major road), the score is downgraded to the next lowest score (e.g. ++ score becomes + or + becomes 0).</li> </ul>

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites within walking distance of a rail station (1,400 m) or bus stop on a route providing a six day a week service (400 m) are assumed to have a significant positive (++) effect on this aspect of the SA objective.</li> <li>• Other housing sites will be assessed as having a negligible (0) effect on this aspect.</li> <li>• Other allocations are assessed as having a minor negative (-) effect.</li> </ul> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of Major Employment Sites, Town Centres and Local Shopping Centres; train stations; bus stops on routes providing a six day a week service)</p>
...avoid and reduce air pollution? (4.3)	<p>In terms of location, air pollution is most closely linked to emissions from vehicles. Vehicles are more likely to be used as distances to destinations increase or travel by alternative more sustainable modes become less attractive. As an indication of effects on this aspect of the SA objective, the following is assumed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where an allocation is within straight line walking distance (1,400 m) of a Major Employment Site or Town Centre there is a significant positive (++) effect on this aspect of the SA objective due to minimising travel distances, air pollution and enabling easier access to employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Where an allocation is within 720 m of a Local Shopping Centre a minor positive (+) effect is assumed.</li> <li>• Where a site is within walking distance of a site or centre but there are potential barriers to access for all ages and abilities (e.g. topography, major road), the score is downgraded to the next lowest score (e.g. ++ score becomes + or + becomes 0).</li> <li>• Sites within walking distance of a rail station (1,400 m) or bus stop on a route providing a six day a week service (400 m) are assumed to have a significant positive (++) effect on this aspect of the SA objective.</li> <li>• Other housing sites will be assessed as having a negligible (0) effect on this aspect.</li> <li>• Other allocations are assessed as having a minor negative (-) effect.</li> </ul> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of Major Employment Sites, Town Centres and Local Shopping Centres; train stations; bus stops on routes providing a six day a week service)</p>
...protect and enhance open space and landscape character, retaining local distinctiveness? (4.4)	<p>Where a significant proportion (&gt;=25%) of an allocated site is within an existing area of open space a significant adverse (--?) effect is assumed. Where a smaller part (5-25%) of an allocated site is within an existing open space a minor negative (-?) effect is assumed. In both cases uncertainty relates to the extent to which the development will contribute to alternative provision of open space that is lost to development. Sites that are &lt;5% open space are assumed to have a negligible (0) effect.</p> <p>Potential effects on landscape features and character will be assessed through the sensitivity score given for each landscape area assessed in the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, Oct 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites that are within areas that are assessed as being of low sensitivity are likely to have a negligible (0) effect on landscape character and features.</li> <li>• Sites that are within areas that are assessed as being of medium sensitivity could have a minor negative (-?) effect on landscape character and features.</li> </ul>

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites that are within areas that are assessed as being of high or very high sensitivity could have a significant negative (--?) effect on landscape character and features.</li> </ul> <p>In all cases, potential negative effects will be uncertain as the exact impacts on the landscape will depend on factors relating to the specific design and layout of the new development.</p> <p>Where sites are mainly or entirely (&gt;=50%) within an existing area of open space, a significant negative (--?) effect is assumed on this aspect of the SA objective due to loss of the open space. Where a small part of a site (&lt;50%) is within an open space a minor negative effect (-?) is assumed. In both cases uncertainty relates to whether alternative, off-site open space will be provided by the developer.</p> <p>With regards to assessing the coalescence of villages the WHBC Green Belt Review Stage 2 (in preparation August 2014) report will be used. A 'significant' score presented in the Green Belt review will be assumed to equate to a significant negative (--) SA effect. A 'partial' score presented in the Green Belt review will be assumed to equate to a minor negative (-) SA effect.</p> <p>All other sites will be assessed as having an uncertain (?) effect on landscape character and features.</p> <p>In all cases, potential effects will be uncertain as the exact impacts on the landscape will depend on factors relating to the specific design and layout of the new development.</p> <p>In addition, if the Council's internal site assessment process (SHLAA site assessment) identifies the site as previously developed land a significant positive effect on townscape (++?) will be assumed but with uncertainty relating to the appropriateness of the design of the development. This aspect will not be assessed if this information is not recorded on the Council's site assessments.</p> <p>Other townscape, design and green infrastructure aspects of this SA objective are not relevant to SA of the location of housing site allocations.</p> <p>(Sources required: settlement boundaries; SHLAA site assessment; landscape sensitivity study, Green Belt study, open space boundaries)</p>
<p>...protect and enhance the Borough's character, sense of place and local distinctiveness, historic and cultural assets? (4.5)</p>	<p>English Heritage bases its definition of the setting of a heritage asset on the previous national Planning Policy Statement 5, as <i>"the surroundings in which [the asset] is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral"</i><sup>7</sup>. Therefore, it is not possible to precisely determine effects on the setting of heritage assets during a desk-based strategic SA exercise such as this.</p> <p>As an indication of potential effects on heritage assets from housing development, the following is assumed:</p>

<sup>7</sup> English Heritage. The Setting of Heritage Assets REVISION NOTE June 2012.

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant negative effect (--?) may occur where the development location is adjacent to or includes a designated heritage asset (e.g. listed building, Scheduled Monument, Registered Park and Garden or Conservation Area).</li> <li>• Where development is between 250 m and 1 km from heritage assets, a minor negative (-?) effect may occur.</li> <li>• Where sites are more than 1 km from any heritage designations, a negligible (0) effect on this objective is assumed.</li> </ul> <p>All potential negative effects are assumed to be uncertain as the actual effects on historic assets will depend on the exact scale, design and layout of the new development and opportunities may exist to enhance the setting of heritage features (e.g. where sympathetic development replaces a derelict brownfield site which is currently having an adverse effect). Scores may therefore need to be moderated depending on local circumstances.</p> <p>Development locations that will bring 'at risk' heritage assets (e.g. listed buildings) back into productive use will be assumed to have a significant positive effect (+ +?) on the basis that the fabric of the asset will therefore be restored and maintained but with uncertainty relating to whether the restoration/maintenance will be sympathetic to the asset's historic significance.</p> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas, 'at risk' heritage assets to be brought back into use)</p>
<p>...protect and enhance biodiversity, taking into account the impacts of climate change? (4.6)</p>	<p>Similar to heritage assets, there is not a fixed distance at which biodiversity sites may be affected by new development, as the habitats and species for which biodiversity sites are designated are different, and different types of effects can be transmitted across different distances (e.g. air or water pollution may travel much further than noise or disturbance from physical presence of humans or dogs). Therefore, it is not possible to determine actual effects on the structure and function of habitats and populations of species during a desk-based strategic SA exercise such as this.</p> <p>As an indication of potential effects on biodiversity assets from housing site allocations, the following assumptions are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where allocated sites overlap with an internationally (SAC, SPA, Ramsar), nationally (SSSI, NNR) or locally (Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve) designated wildlife site or area of Ancient Woodland, significant adverse (--) effects are assumed.</li> <li>• Where allocated sites are within 500m of the boundary of an internationally (SAC, SPA, Ramsar), nationally (SSSI, NNR) or 250m of a locally (Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve) designated wildlife site or area of Ancient Woodland, uncertain significant adverse (--?) effects are assumed.</li> <li>• Where allocated sites are between 500m and 1,000m of the boundary of an internationally (SAC, SPA, Ramsar), nationally (SSSI, NNR) or between 250m and 500m of a locally (Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve) designated wildlife site or area of Ancient Woodland, uncertain minor adverse (-?) effects are assumed.</li> <li>• Where allocated sites have a significant proportion of undesignated greenfield land (&gt;=25%) an uncertain (?) effect is assumed due to the potential for impacts on undesignated biodiversity interest.</li> </ul> <p>Where sites are within the remainder of the Plan area, the effect on this SA objective is assessed as negligible (0).</p>

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	(Sources required: boundaries of designated wildlife sites)
...reduce water consumption, and provide for reliable sources of water supply even in drought conditions? (4.7)	<p>Development standards in relation to water efficiency are not related to site location therefore the SA of site allocations does not assess this; potential effects of water efficient design are instead dealt with in the SA of DM policies.</p> <p>(Sources required: None)</p>
...avoid water pollution? (4.8)	<p>The location of housing allocations may affect water quality due to spatial variations in the capacity of existing WwTWs and the foul and combined sewer network to accommodate additional demand from new development as well as variations in the sensitivity of groundwater and surface water receptors.</p> <p>Reference will be made to the Water Cycle Studies in order to inform this part of the assessment.</p> <p>Groundwater Source Protection Zones represent where there is a risk of contamination of groundwater resources from certain activities. Housing construction within these zones is assessed as having a minor adverse effect on the SA objective but with uncertainty (-?) relating to the construction activities (e.g. dewatering) and mitigation that would be employed.</p> <p>Pollution risks to surface waters from construction of housing are assumed to be fully addressed by compliance with Environment Agency pollution prevention guidance and do not form part of the SA of Site Allocations.</p> <p>(Sources required: groundwater Source Protection Zones)</p>
...minimise the amount of waste generated and maximise the re-use, recycling or composting of waste that cannot be reduced? (4.9)	<p>Waste generation is not related to site location therefore the SA of site allocations does not assess this; potential effects of resource use and minimising waste are instead dealt with in the SA of DM policies.</p> <p>(Sources required: None)</p>
...promote the conservation and sustainable use of productive agricultural land and maximise the sustainable use of previously developed land? (4.10)	<p>Where allocated sites are on high quality (grade 1, 2 or 3*) agricultural land there is assumed to be a negative effect on preserving soil quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites with a significant proportion (=&gt;25%) of grade 1 or 2 agricultural land are assumed to have a significant negative (--) effect.</li> <li>• Sites that are between 10% and 25% on grade 1 or 2 agricultural land are assumed to have a minor negative (-) effect.</li> <li>• Sites with a significant proportion (&gt;=25%) of grade 3 agricultural land are assumed to have a minor negative (-) effect.</li> </ul> <p>All other sites are considered to have a negligible effect (0) on high quality agricultural land.</p> <p>In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites with a significant proportion (&gt;=25%) of brownfield land are assumed to have a minor positive effect (+).</li> <li>• Sites with a significant proportion (&gt;=25%) of greenfield land are assumed to have a minor negative (-) effect.</li> </ul>

<b>SA Question: Will the policy...</b>	<b>Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...resulting in overall mixed effects when taken together with effects on agricultural land.</li> </ul> <p>If the site is known to be contaminated and remediation would be a condition of housing development then assess as having a significant positive effects on this aspect of the objective (++); if contamination status is unknown assess effect as uncertain (?); if site is not thought to be contaminated assess effect as negligible (0).</p> <p>Note: Agricultural Land Classification maps do not distinguish between grade 3a, which is considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land, and grade 3b, which isn't.</p> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of agricultural land classifications, brownfield land)</p>
<b>Long-term Objective 5: Decent Housing</b>	
<p>...provide the right amount, type and tenure of housing to meet identified local needs? (5.1)</p>	<p><b>Amount of housing</b></p> <p>To meet the Borough's housing targets<sup>8</sup> allocated sites that provide capacity for at least 5% of the housing target (in this instance at least 350 homes) are assumed to have a significant positive effect (++). Sites that provide capacity for up to 5% of the housing target (1-5% which equates to 70-349 homes) are assumed to have a minor positive effect (+). All other sites with a capacity of less than 1% of the housing target are assumed to have a negligible effect (0).</p> <p><b>Affordable housing</b></p> <p>Emerging Core Strategy policy CS7 requires that, subject to viability,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development within Hatfield proposing 15 or more dwellings or land with an area of 0.38 ha or more should provide 25% affordable dwellings.</li> <li>• development within Welwyn Garden City proposing 15 or more dwellings or land with an area of 0.38 ha or more should provide 30% affordable dwellings</li> <li>• development within Excluded Villages proposing 5 or more dwellings or land with an area of 0.13 ha or more should provide 35% affordable dwellings</li> </ul> <p>Sites of this size are assessed as having a significant positive (++) effect on this aspect of the SA objective. Sites below these thresholds are not required to make affordable provision due to viability evidence. They will therefore be assessed as having a negligible (0) effect.</p> <p><b>Dwellings for older people</b></p> <p>Emerging Core Strategy policy CS7 requires that, subject to viability and design restrictions, development proposing 5 or more dwellings should include 20% of market dwellings meeting Lifetime Homes standards. Sites identified with potential to provide 5 dwellings or more will therefore be assessed as having a significant positive (++) effect</p>

<sup>8</sup> Policy CS2 of the Emerging Core Strategy (2012)

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	on this aspect of the SA objective. Sites below this threshold are not required to make Lifetime Homes provision. They will therefore be assessed as having a negligible effect (0).
<b>Long-term objective 6: A thriving economy</b>	
...ensure the supply, location and quality of business and employment sites reflects the needs of local businesses and encourages a mixed and greener economy? (6.1)	Not applicable to housing sites.
...encourage economic investment in those areas most in need of regeneration, in a way that will benefit those most in need of rewarding employment? (6.2)	Not applicable for housing sites.
...enhance the vitality and attraction of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town retail centres? (6.3)	Housing sites within straight walking distance (1,400 m) of Welwyn or Hatfield town centres are assumed to provide support for their vitality, and will result in a minor positive (+) effect.  All other sites are likely to have a negligible effect (0).  (Sources required: town centre boundaries).
...sustain rural communities and their economies, small businesses and other rural diversification, while protecting rural character? (6.4)	Not applicable for housing sites.
...avoid the sterilisation of mineral resources? (6.5)	Some areas of Hertfordshire have been identified as Preferred Areas for mineral extraction in the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan, 2007. This does not mean that development could not occur in these locations, but that the County Council would need to be consulted to determine whether prior extraction of the mineral resource was required before development. Since the outcome of this consultation will be unknown at the time the site is allocated, an uncertain effect is identified on this SA objective.  Sites that overlap a Preferred Area are assumed to have an uncertain minor negative effect (-?).  (Sources required: Minerals Preferred Areas)
...provide access to training, skills development and lifelong learning to meet identified needs? (6.6)	The effects of housing development on this objective will depend on the availability of school and college places to serve the new residents.

SA Question: Will the policy...	Assumptions for SA of Housing Sites
	<p>Where sites are within reasonable straight line walking distance (1,400 m) of existing or newly provided schools or colleges, a potential significant positive (++) effect may occur because it could be easier and more resource/cost efficient to expand those existing facilities to accommodate new residents as required, rather than building new schools to serve the new residents.</p> <p>Where a site is within walking distance (1,400 m) of existing schools or colleges but there are potential barriers to access for all ages and abilities (e.g. topography, major road), a minor positive uncertain (+?) rather than a significant positive score is given.</p> <p>(Sources required: GIS mapping of education facilities; OS base map)</p>