

Sustainability Appraisal of the Cholsey Neighbourhood Development Plan

Including the requirements of
the SEA Directive

February 2018



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Acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CNP	Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
GI	Green Infrastructure
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LCT	Landscape Character Type
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PC	Parish Council
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPP	Policies, Plans and Programmes
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
WRMP	Water Resource Management Plan

Non-technical Summary

What is Sustainability Appraisal?

N1 Lepus Consulting is conducting an appraisal process for the Cholsey Parish Council to help them write their Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). The process is known as sustainability appraisal (SA). The appraisal includes the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.

N2 SA is the process of informing and influencing the preparation of the plan to optimise the sustainability performance of the plan. There is no legal requirement for NDPs to prepare an SA, but there is a requirement to screen the NDP for likely significant effects and potentially a legal requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment.

N3 This non-technical summary provides a synopsis of the full SA report.

Purpose and content of the Sustainability Appraisal report

N4 The purpose of this SA Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives;
- Inform the preparation of the Plan; and
- Provide an opportunity for statutory consultees, interested parties and the public to offer views on any aspect of the SA process which has been carried out to date.

N5 The SA Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the NDP and its relationship with other relevant plans, programmes and strategies;
- Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and key sustainability issues for the plan area;
- The SA Framework of objectives and indicators against which the plan has been assessed;
- The appraisal of reasonable alternatives identified during the plan making process to date, including an explanation about how they were identified, and either rejected and selected;
- The likely significant effects of the NDP in terms of sustainability;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects which may arise as a result of the plan; and

- A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.

The scoping stage

N6 The first phase of preparation for the SA was the scoping stage. Scoping is the process of deciding the scope and level of detail of the SA process.

N7 The purpose of the Scoping Report is to set the criteria for assessment (including the SA Objectives) and establish the baseline data and other information, including a review of relevant policies, programmes and plans. The Scoping Report that accompanies this SA report was prepared by Cholsey Parish Council in 2017.

Assessment of reasonable alternatives

N8 In the UK, reasonable alternatives are commonly referred to as 'options'. The assessment of reasonable alternatives refers to the plan making process stage of exploring policy options. The NDP Steering Group started the plan-making process with an identification of potential development policies and sites, via the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), a call for sites and through the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (2033). The Steering Group came to the decision that there were reasonable alternatives for Policy HO1, *'Providing sufficient market and affordable housing to meet local Cholsey needs [...]'*

N9 All reasonable alternatives for Policy CNP H1, as identified by the NDP Group, have been assessed by Lepus Consulting within this SA Report. Assessment results for reasonable alternatives are presented in **Appendix A** and **Chapter 4**.

Pre-submission NDP

N10 This report represents an SA of the pre-submission version of the NDP (February, 2018) which includes various development management policies and an allocation of approximately 190 dwellings across four sites (see Policy HO1). The assessment of the NDP, including reasonable alternatives, was undertaken using a combination of empirical evidence, and to a lesser extent, professional judgement. The findings are presented in matrix format and are accompanied by a commentary on identified effects. The matrix is not a conclusive tool. Its main function is to show visually whether or not the NDP proposals are likely to bring positive, adverse or uncertain effects in relation to the SA Objectives. The assessment commentary within the accompanying tables is used to interpret the matrix findings.

N11 The overall SA findings have been summarised in **Tables N1** and **N2** below. In the case of any potential negative effects, recommendations are made in terms of mitigation and monitoring, where possible. In-combination effects are discussed in **Chapter 7**.

Table N1: Potential positive effects of the CNP

Biodiversity
The NDP contains policies that will be likely to contribute towards protecting and enhancing local biodiversity and connectivity of habitats across the plan area. These actions will help support a coherent ecological network throughout the parish; progress and effects of the policies on biodiversity should be monitored.
Landscape
Policies include measures to protect or enhance landscape and townscape, through protecting distinctive features and using landscaping to protect the visual amenity of existing development. Policy H5 in the NDP is anticipated to help ensure that development located in sensitive landscapes, which have a lower capacity for change, will be of the appropriate quality in design so as to minimise discordance with the landscape setting.
Cultural Heritage
Policies are in the NDP that are anticipated to help protect the settings and features of heritage assets in the plan area, including heritage tourism.
Climate change adaptation
Policies in the NDP are anticipated to help Cholsey adapt to the impacts of future climate change. Policy CNP I4 encourages development that includes sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). The incorporation of green space and planting in and around development may also be beneficial in the light of future climate change. A number of sites are located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.
Climate change mitigation
Good access to Cholsey train stations and bus stops for residents, as well as convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists to most sites, will likely increase the use of sustainable transport.
Environmental quality
Some policies in the NDP look to improve environmental quality in Cholsey. Policy CNP I3 requires development to include water and wastewater impact assessments.
Housing
The plan has positive impacts on housing as it is expected to meet the type and number of

dwellings required in the area over the plan period.

Transport

All sites in the NDP are considered to be within the target and/or optimal distance of at least one sustainable transport link such as bus stops and railway stations, whilst also having convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Health

Policies within the NDP include provisions which would positively impact human health and wellbeing through the development of the public realm. Policies that promote access to the green infrastructure network are expected to further positively affect quality of life for residents.

Economy

The plan is expected to improve the local economy, through encouraging job creation and by making the plan area more attractive to visitors.

Table N2: Potential adverse effects of the CNP

Landscape

The proposed allocation at CHOL2 is located on a local plateau, and the setting of the two AONBs must also be carefully explored in more detail to better understand the landscape impact of the proposal. The same proposal includes a strong commitment to green infrastructure, associated green space and design principles that help integrate the new build with the existing settlement.

Climate change mitigation

An increase in residents, workers and visitors in Cholsey may lead to an increase in consumption and energy demands of the village. Some energy may be non-renewably sourced, and as such it is considered that greenhouse gas emissions may subsequently rise. An increase in car use associated with the proposed new 250 homes will also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Cultural heritage

Exploration of potential archaeological heritage is recommended at location CHOL2 to avoid potentially adverse effects on as yet unidentified cultural heritage.

Health

Access to a local GP surgery and NHS hospital is presently limited. This could have negative impact on health if residents are not able to access essential health services. It is noted that policy CNP I2 proposes support for a doctor's surgery which would mitigate this adverse effect. As does CNP H1 which proposes medical facilities but does not specify what these might be.

Material Assets

CNP H1 will lead to the loss of land with an Agricultural Land Classification of Grade 2. This is the

village's most rich and versatile land that is capable of producing high yields of agricultural crops. It is noted that the total land to be lost would be less than 20ha (the trigger for consulting Natural England) which supposes that the loss of land might be acceptable to the LPA were they to consider a planning application at this site.

To better understand predicted congestion levels, road traffic research and modelling is recommended. This will help future planning in general, but the proposed development should research this issue as part of the design brief for the site.

Mitigation

N12 In cases where potentially adverse effects have been identified, including through uncertainty, mitigation suggestions have been cited. Mitigation should be considered as part of a sequential hierarchy to deal with adverse effects: avoid, reduce, and then mitigate. Mitigation prescriptions might include changes to policy wording, advocating design guides, offsetting biodiversity effects or provision of new supporting green infrastructure. In the case of this SA Report, mitigation has been supplied to help address potential negative effects associated with classifications of uncertainty in the assessment process so that, if possible, no residual effects remain.

Recommendations

N13 Whilst the NDP brings a range of positive sustainability effects, a number of recommendations have been proposed to help further improve its sustainability performance when implemented.

Monitoring

N14 The SA Report explains why there should be a monitoring programme for measuring the NDP's implementation in relation to the areas where the SA has identified significant effects, and where opportunities for an improvement in sustainability performance may arise. Monitoring for the SA could be carried out in conjunction with other monitoring processes.

Conclusions

N15 Having appraised Cholsey's NDP in full, the process has identified several positive and a smaller number of potentially negative effects. Whilst mitigation has been proposed for some effects, where this is not possible or likely to

mitigate the nature of effect such that it is nullified, the following residual significant adverse effects remain and are drawn to the attention of the plan makers. These include potentially minor but negative effects associated with:

- Landscape;
- climate change;
- cultural heritage;
- access to health services;
- soils; and
- congestion.

Next Steps

N16 The NDP will be published for consultation, together with other pre-submission documents including this SA Report. This provides a formal opportunity for statutory consultees, the local community and other interested parties to consider the NDP. South Oxfordshire District Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to submit to an independent examiner. If the examiner deems the plan to meet the basic conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended), it will be subject to local referendum. If over 50% of votes are in favour of the NDP, the NDP will be adopted as part of the local development framework.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting is conducting the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Cholsey, on behalf of the Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Group. This document presents an assessment of the sites and policies in the Cholsey NDP.

1.1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) to be carried out on Development Plan Documents but not Neighbourhood Development Plans. Cholsey wished to prepare an SA. This report meets the requirement of the SEA Directive and under the the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004).

1.2 Purpose of this report

1.2.1 This report has been prepared to help inform Cholsey NDP Group's preparation of their Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It is not the role of the SA to decide which is the most appropriate alternative from those set out in the plan, rather it is an assessment of the alternatives to be given due consideration in the decision-making process and identification of the best performing option.

1.2.2 Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive states that:

'Where an environmental assessment is required under Article 3(1), an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated. The information to be given for this purpose is referred to in Annex I.'

1.2.3 PPG Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 11-018-20140306 states that:

‘Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable.’

1.3 History of the NDP

- 1.3.1 The creation of neighbourhood plans started with the Government’s Localism Act which came into effect in April 2012. The Act sets out a series of measures to shift power away from central government and towards local people. One of the Localism Act’s key components is the Neighbourhood Plan; a new tier in planning policy which enables local people to shape the development of the community in which they live.
- 1.3.2 Cholsey Parish Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) has been prepared for the entire parish of Cholsey, a rural area in the County of Oxfordshire and the district of South Oxfordshire. Cholsey village has been designated a large village in the Local Plan with approximately 1400 households and is located between the City of Oxford and Reading.
- 1.3.3 The Parish Council (PC) held a meeting to find volunteers who were representative of the community and willing to help prepare an NDP for the area. These meetings led to the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, consisting of 15 members of the community. The CNP has been produced by the steering group along with the support of the PC. The process started in 2016 with the establishment of a vision and objectives for the area.
- 1.3.4 Cholsey community has been actively engaged in the community planning process through a number of consultations and the development of the CNP. The community wish to influence and manage the development process for the benefit of the village and to help achieve more sustainable development in the area, and to address social, economic and environmental issues together.

- 1.3.5 The CNP Steering Group has consistently ensured, from the commencement of the work through to the formal neighbourhood plan consultation process, that residents and other stakeholders, including local authorities, have regularly been consulted and that their comments have been noted, and where appropriate, incorporated into the plan as it evolved.
- 1.3.6 Documents have been made available (in draft) for review and comment on the www.cholsey-plan.com website. Regular public events and consultations have also been held at key stages during the production of the plan. The CNP Steering Group has developed an up-to-date email database which is used to inform residents with the latest updates. Those residents that do not have internet access have been kept informed of updates printed in copies of both the Cholsey Newsletters and the Forty magazine. The Forty magazine is delivered to every household with a community survey and leaflet drop to every household. It is estimated that between these channels 95% of all households in the parish have been kept informed.
- 1.3.7 Following the decision made by Cholsey PC to take the lead in the preparation of the CNP, the topic has been a regular agenda item and minuted at each full PC meeting.
- 1.3.8 To support the formal consultation stage of the CNP, the PC established a consultation document on the CNP website at www.cholsey-plan.com. This website also includes the facility to submit comments. At the same time, the PC wrote to the formal consultees which include the statutory agencies, local authorities and neighbouring parishes, inviting their comments.
- 1.3.9 Consultation responses were used to inform the pre-submission version of the CNP.

1.4 Relationship with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033

- 1.4.1 A principal requirement is that the Cholsey NDP is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the South Oxfordshire development plan for the area, this consists of:

- South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (2012)

- Saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 (2006)
- Made neighbourhood development plans.

1.4.2 South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) is preparing a new Local Plan referred to as the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033, (previously known as the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031) which is scheduled to be adopted in 2018.

1.4.3 The Local Plan was subject to an integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Between 29 March and 17 May 2017, South Oxfordshire consulted on the Second Preferred Options draft of the emerging Local Plan. South Oxfordshire subsequently consulted on the publication version of the emerging Local Plan in Autumn 2017. The Plan is intended to be submitted for examination in Spring 2018.

1.5 The SEA process

1.5.1 The European Union Directive 2001/42/EC or 'SEA Directive' applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes on land use, energy, waste, agriculture, transport etc. (see Article 3(2) of the Directive for other plan or programme types). The SEA procedure can be summarised as follows: an environmental report is prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment and the reasonable alternatives of the proposed plan or programme are identified. The public and the relevant environmental authorities are informed and consulted on the draft plan or programme and the environmental report prepared. Further details on methodology are explained in **Chapter 3**.

1.5.2 The Directive has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations, SI no. 1633). Detailed guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM, 2005).

1.5.3 Under the requirements of the SEA Directive and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), specific types of plans that set the framework for the future development consent of projects, must be subject to an environmental assessment.

1.5.4 Where a Neighbourhood Development Plan could have significant environmental effects, it may fall within the scope of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and so require a SEA. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European obligations.

1.5.5 Whether a Neighbourhood Plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. A SEA may be required, for example, where:

- The neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- The neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of higher order plans.

1.5.6 The key stages of Neighbourhood Plan preparation and their relationship with the strategic environmental assessment process are shown in **Figure 1.1**, which is taken from National Planning Practice Guidance produced by DCLG.

1.6 Best Practice Guidance

1.6.1 A range of guidance documents has been utilised in preparing the SEA of the Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. These are presented in **Box 1**.

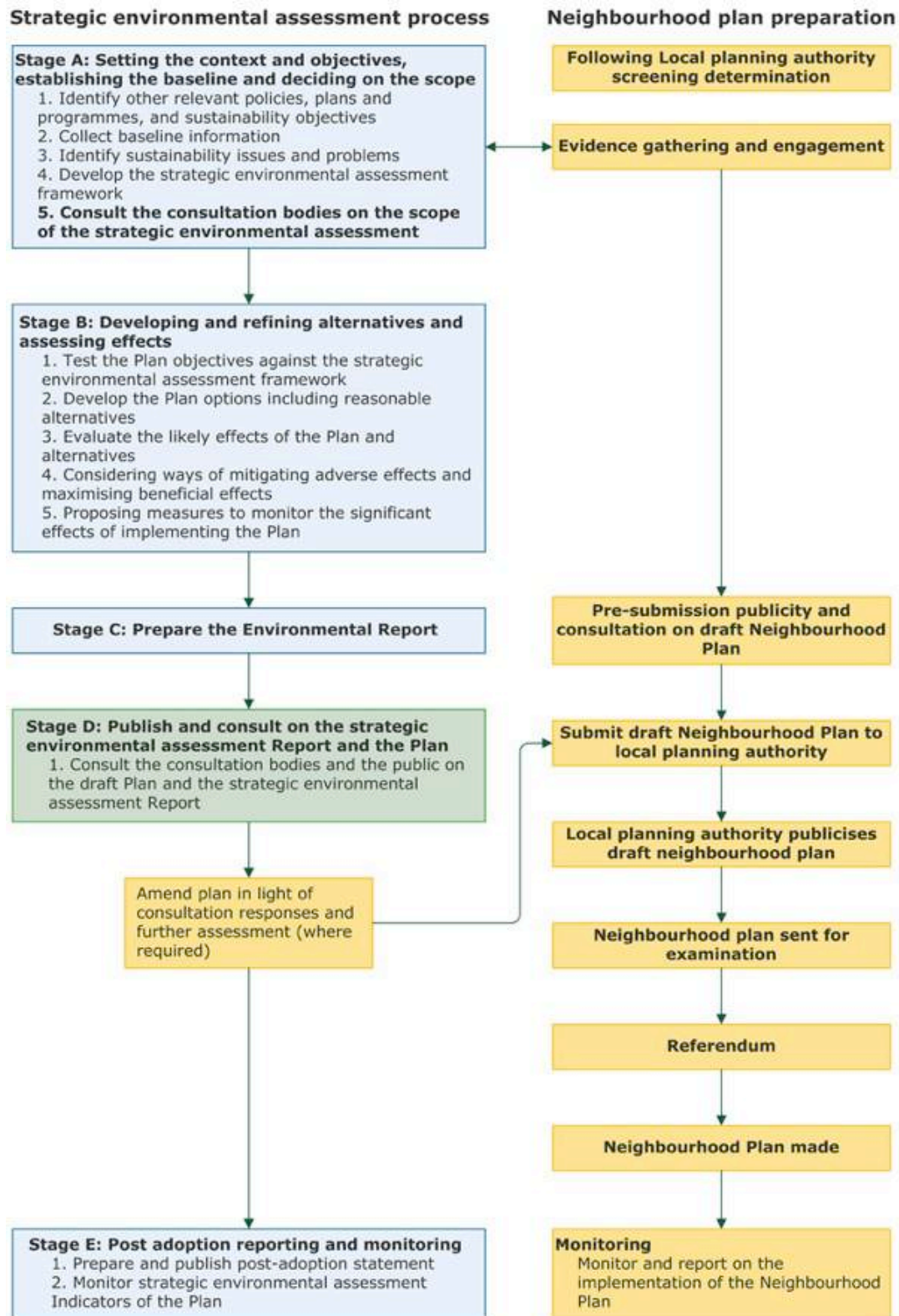


Figure 1.1: The key stages of SEA in neighbourhood plan preparation (DCLG 2015)

Table 1.1: Meeting the requirements of the SEA Directive

Requirement for Environmental Report	Location
Include an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	SA Scoping Report, Chapters 1 to 4
Include information on the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	Section 6.12
Describe the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	SA Scoping Report, Chapters 4 and 5
Specify any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	SA Scoping Report, Chapter 5
Consider the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	SA Scoping Report, Chapter 6 SA Report Chapter 2
Assess the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, and cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.	SA Report Chapter 4, 5 and 6
Give details of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	SA Report Chapter 6
Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	SA Report Chapter 4
Include a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	SA Report Chapter 7
Include a non-technical summary of the information provided	SA Report Non-Technical Summary

1.7 Meeting the SEA Directive requirements

1.7.1 **Table 1.1** includes the requirements of the SEA Directive and shows where they are met within the SEA process. This document is an Environmental Report under the requirements of the SEA Directive.

1.8 About the Plan

1.8.1 Cholsey NDP sets out 30 policies for managing development and infrastructure to meet the environmental, social and economic challenges facing Cholsey up to 2033. These are presented in **Table 1.2**.

1.8.2 The version of the CNP to which this SA relates is Version 'Winter 2018 v2.00'.

1.9 Using this document

- **Chapter 1** presents the introduction to this report;
- **Chapter 2** presents the scoping stage;
- **Chapter 3** presents the assessment methodology;
- **Chapter 4** explains reasonable alternatives;
- **Chapter 5** presents the appraisal findings of the policies;
- **Chapter 6** presents significant effects and mitigation;
- **Chapter 7** presents conclusions, monitoring and next steps.

Table 1.2 Policies in the NDP

Policy number	Policy description
Housing	
H1	Housing site allocations
H1a	CHOL1 and CHOL7a Masterplan
H1b	Housing density
H2	Built-up Area Boundary
H3	Housing mix
H4	Affordable housing
H5	New housing requirements
H6	Distance requirements
H7	Parking standards
H8	Extensions
Environment & Services	
E1	Rural developments
E2	Riverside recreation
E3	Historic environment
Infrastructure	
I1	Facilities for sport and recreation
I2	Doctor's surgery
I3	Water resources
I4	Surface and groundwater drainage
I5	The Forty
I6	Community facilities
	<i>I7 does not exist</i>
I8	Recreation ground facilities
I9	Employment land
I10	Working from home
I11	Micro businesses
I12	Allotments
I13	Tourism
Transport	
T1	Walking, cycling and road safety
T2	Public transport facilities
Education	
ED1	Cholsey Primary School
ED2	Pre-school

2 Scoping

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The first phase of preparation for the SEA was the scoping stage. Scoping is the process of deciding the scope and level of detail of an SEA, including the environmental effects and alternatives to be considered, the assessment methods to be used, and the structure and contents of the SEA Report.

2.1.2 The purpose of the Scoping Report is to set the criteria for assessment (including the SEA Objectives), and establish the baseline data and other information, including a review of relevant policies, programmes and plans. The scoping process involves an overview of key issues, highlighting areas of potential conflict.

2.1.3 The Scoping Report covers the early stages of the SEA Process and includes information about:

- Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and environmental objectives;
- Collecting baseline information;
- Identifying environmental issues and problems; and
- Developing the SEA Framework.

2.1.4 The Scoping Report that accompanies this report was carried out by Cholsey NDP Group in 2017¹.

2.2 Policy, plan and programme review

2.2.1 A plan or programme may be influenced in various ways by other plans or programmes, or by external environmental protection objectives such as those laid down in policies or legislation. The SEA process takes advantage of potential synergies and addresses any inconsistencies and constraints.

¹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Available at: <http://www.cholsey-plan.com/documents>

2.2.2 The Scoping Report presented an analysis of the objectives of the key policies, plans and programmes (including legislation) that are relevant to the NDP and the SEA assessment process. These were presented by their geographic relevance, from international to local level.

2.3 Baseline Data and Information

2.3.1 A key part of the scoping process is the collection of baseline data. The purpose of this exercise is to help identify key issues and opportunities facing the area which might be addressed by the NDP, and to provide an evidence base for the assessment.

2.3.2 The baseline chapter in the Scoping Report, Chapter 4, provided a review of existing environmental conditions within Cholsey and their likely evolution in absence of the NDP. One of the purposes of consultation on the Scoping Report was to seek views on whether the data selected was appropriate. Helpful comments were received from a range of stakeholders in response to the Scoping Report and in some cases new baseline information was provided.

2.4 The SA Framework

2.4.1 The purpose of the SA Framework is to provide a way of ensuring that the NDP considers the environmental needs of Cholsey in terms of its environmental effects. It also enables the environmental effects of the NDP policies to be described, analysed and compared.

2.4.2 The SA Framework consists of environmental objectives, which, where practicable, the achievement of which is measurable using indicators. There is no statutory basis for setting objectives but they are a recognised way of considering the environmental effects of a plan and comparing alternatives. The SA Objectives provide the basis from which effects of the NDP were assessed.

2.4.3 The SA Objectives were developed through the PPP review, the baseline data collection and the key issues identified for the plan area. The SA Framework has been aligned with those of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033 in order to provide consistency of assessments across the tiers of plan-making. The topics identified in Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive² were one of the key determinants when considering the SA Objectives to be used for appraisal purposes. The SA Objectives seek to reflect each of these influences to ensure the assessment process is robust and thorough. The full SA framework is presented in **Appendix B**.

² Biodiversity flora and fauna; Population; Human health; Soil; Water; Air; Climatic factors; Material assets; Cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage); and Landscape.

3 Methodology

3.1 Approach to assessment

- 3.1.1 The approach to assessment uses geographic information, the SA Framework and established standards (where available) to help make the assessment decisions transparent and robust.
- 3.1.2 The sites and policies have been assessed against the SA Framework (see **Appendix B**). The SA Framework is composed of objectives and decision-aiding questions. Acting as yardsticks of sustainability performance, the SA Objectives are designed to represent the topics identified in Annex 1(f)³ of the Directive. Including the SEA topics in the SA Objectives helps ensure that all of the environmental criteria of the SEA Directive are included. Consequently, the eleven SA Objectives seek to reflect all subject areas to ensure the assessment process is transparent, robust and thorough.
- 3.1.3 To expand on the central focus of each SA Objective (as they are high-level and potentially open-ended) the SA Framework includes a series of questions or 'decision aiding questions' for use when applying the SA Framework to the assessment of sites or proposed policies.
- 3.1.4 The purpose of the SA Objectives is to provide a way of ensuring that the proposed plan considers each site on a fair and consistent basis.
- 3.1.5 **Table 3.1** below sets out the 11 Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

³ Annex 1(f) identifies: 'the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'.

Table 3.1: SA Framework Objectives

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives		
1	Biodiversity	Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity
2	Landscape and townscape	Conserve and enhance the landscape and, in particular, those areas designated for their landscape / townscape value. Ensure development is of a high-quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.
3	Cultural Heritage	Conserve and enhance the historic environment, and, in particular, those areas designated for their heritage importance.
4	Climate Change adaptation	Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.
5	Climate Change mitigation	Reduce contributions to climate change through a) sustainable building practices and b) maximising potential for renewable energy and c) energy conservation and minimising use of fossil fuels.
6	Environmental Quality	Reduce air, soil and water pollution.
7	Housing	Ensure that existing and future residents have the opportunity to live in a decent home.
8	Transport and accessibility	Improve the existing transport network, improve travel choice and connectivity, reduce the need to travel by car and reduce the negative impact of transport on the environment. Improve accessibility for everyone to local amenities, community facilities and services.
9	Health	Maintain and improve the health, well-being and community cohesion of the population and reduce social deprivation.
10	Material Assets	Protect and conserve natural resources. Reduce waste generation and disposal, and promote the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle/compost, energy recovery and disposal.
11	Economy and Employment	Promote a strong, balanced and sustainable economy. Retain existing businesses and associated employment, while developing new businesses and associated employment opportunities.

3.1.6 The use of a suite of objectives lends itself to a matrix based assessment where each alternative or approach is assessed against each SA Objective. It should be noted that the ordering of the SA Objectives does not infer any prioritisation.

3.2 Appraisal process

- 3.2.1 The appraisal process has used the SA Framework, the review of plans, programmes and policies, and the baseline (including various mapped data sources), as presented in the SA Scoping Report, to assess each option. Assessments have been undertaken using this empirical evidence and, to a lesser extent, expert judgement.
- 3.2.2 The first stage of assessment involves answering each of the questions in the SA Framework in turn with a yes (+), no (-), uncertain (+/-) or negligible / no effect / not applicable (0). The results of this indicate whether the scenario is likely to bring positive, negative or uncertain effects in relation to the SA Objectives. This information is then used to inform the overall effect of the site on the SA Objective.
- 3.2.3 The second stage of assessment considers the level of significance of the effects identified in the first stage (described above). Leading from the likelihood of positive or negative effects, the assessment draws on criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of the SEA Directive and presented in Annex II of the Directive (see **Box 3.1**). The majority of identified positive or negative effects can be considered to be significant. Any assessment rated as negligible is not considered to represent a significant effect. The extent of significance is perhaps most helpfully expressed by orders of magnitude.
- 3.2.4 At a strategic level it can be difficult to assess significant effects in the absence of widespread data. Instead, orders of magnitude are used, based on geographic significance and impact magnitude. **Table 3.2** illustrates such orders of magnitude for positive and negative effects.
- 3.2.5 Each of the effects identified in the first stage of assessment are assigned a colour and corresponding symbol to reflect the level of significance of the effect and whether it is positive or negative. Orders of magnitude are not assigned to uncertain effects. A single value from **Table 3.2** is allocated to each SA Objective and presented in the text of the report (see **Chapters 5 and 6**).

- 3.2.6 When selecting a single value to best represent the sustainability performance of the relevant SA Objective, the Precautionary Principle is used. This is a worst-case scenario approach. Values presented at the first stage of assessment (see the questions in the SA Framework) are used to determine whether the single value for the SA Objective is positive, negative, uncertain or neutral.
- 3.2.7 If a positive effect is identified in relation to one question and a negative effect is identified in relation to another question within the same SA Objective, that Objective will be given an overall negative value.
- 3.2.8 Assessment results are presented in a single matrix format with accompanying narrative text to interpret the sustainability performance of each site.

Table 3.2: Guide to impact significance matrix

Key:	
Likely strong positive effect	++
Likely positive effect	+
Neutral/no effect	0
Likely adverse effect	-
Likely strong adverse effect	--
Uncertain effects	+/-

- 3.2.9 Whilst the orders of magnitude are determined by impact magnitude and geographic significance or sensitivity, the determination of impact takes into consideration the characteristics of the resultant effect as presented in **Box 3.1**.
- 3.2.10 As demonstrated in **Table 3.2**, significance is determined by the sensitivity or geographic scale of the receptor and the impact magnitude. The coloured boxes represent the level of significance of the predicted effect. The text in each of these boxes describes the level of significance, whilst the plus (+) and minus (-) symbols, along with the colours, give a visual representation of this.

- 3.2.11 To understand the overall effect of the site or policy being assessed, the effect identified against each objective needs to be taken into account to gain a balanced outcome that takes into account the environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability. A site or policy that is found to have negative effects against certain objectives is not necessarily unsuitable as these negatives must be considered in light of any positive effects that may have been identified. Note too that the impact magnitudes are not intended to be summed. For example, two '+' are not to be considered equal to a single '++'. The scores assigned are a matter of professional judgement taking into account the baseline data, policy context and other sources of information available to inform the assessment.
- 3.2.12 Geographic scale relates primarily to the level of importance of the receptor, or the level at which it is designated, if applicable. Geographic scale may also refer to the physical area of the receptor, or the part of the receptor likely to be affected.
- 3.2.13 Impact magnitude relates to the degree of change the receptor will experience, including the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects (see **Box 3.1**). The terms used in **Table 3.2** are explained in more detail below.
- 3.2.14 Limitations in terms of the level of detail and confidence of assessment are cited in the explanatory text; the worst-case scenario has been assumed in accordance with the Precautionary Principle.

Box 3.1 Annex II of the SEA Directive

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

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

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

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

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
- the cumulative nature of the effects;
- the transboundary nature of the effects;
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
- exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
- intensive land-use; and
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

3.3 Assumptions and limitations to assessment

- 3.3.1 There are a number of limitations, which should be borne in mind when considering the results and conclusions of this assessment. The use of the assumptions and limitations text allow individual site assessments to focus on site specific impacts, and avoid repetition within the individual site assessment text.

3.4 Universal assumptions and limitations

3.4.1 The Sustainability Appraisal is a tool for predicting potential significant effects. Prediction of effects is made using an evidence based approach and incorporates a judgement.

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

3.4.3 Distances have been measured from the furthest boundary of the site to the furthest boundary of the receptor. These have been measured as the crow flies. Distances to facilities and amenities have been considered sustainable if they are within the maximum recommended distances stated in Barton, Grant and Guise (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods for local health and global sustainability, which is a commonly used reference point. All distances are approximate. Travel times, include those for driving and walking, have been sourced from Google Maps.

3.5 SA Objective specific assumptions and limitations

3.5.1 Assumptions were made for a number of the SA objectives as detailed below. No assumptions were made relating to SA Objectives 2, 4, and 6.

SA Objective 1: Biodiversity

3.5.2 No site visits have been undertaken as a part of the SA to survey and record habitat or species information at each site as this level of site-specific detail is not necessary at this stage.

3.5.3 Without species-specific data for each site, assessment of impacts has concentrated on habitat presence and diversity.

3.5.4 The following list of species is associated with particular habitat types. It is assumed that detailed species surveys to determine presence will be prepared at the planning application stage:

- Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are associated with ponds, lakes and other suitable water features;

- Bats are associated with mature woodland, certain buildings, quarries and caves;
- Reptiles are associated with railway embankments, allotments, quarries and rough grassland;
- Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) are associated with coppiced woodland and mature hedgerows, especially ancient semi-natural woodland, near suitable woodland locations;
- White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotomobius pallipes*) are associated with freshwater streams, rivers, canals and lakes;
- Badgers (*Meles meles*) are associated with hedgerows, woodlands, arable and pasture farmland and grassland;
- Breeding and wintering birds are associated with woodland, trees, hedgerows, and other shrubby structures;
- Otters (*Lutra lutra*) are associated with freshwater habitats, particularly rivers;
- Water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*) are associated with vegetated river, stream, canal, ponds and ditch banks; and
- For the purpose of this document, habitats of principal importance are those listed under s.41 of the NERC Act⁴;

SA Objective 3: Cultural Heritage

3.5.5 It is assumed that all historic statutory designations, including listed buildings and conservation areas, will not be lost to development. The effects of a development on any given historic asset depends substantially on the design and implementation of development, with the potential for both positive and negative effects to occur.

3.5.6 The design of any of the developments that may take place on the sites is not known at this stage. Ultimately therefore, the effect remains uncertain. However, there is a risk of adverse effects occurring, some of which may be unavoidable. As such, this risk has been reflected in the assessment as a negative effect where sites are in close proximity to historic assets. The severity of the effect has been assigned based on the sensitivity of the historic asset in question.

⁴ Her Majesty's Stationary Office (2006) Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

SA Objective 5: Climate Change mitigation

- 3.5.7 Sites with good public access are considered less likely to lead to increases in greenhouse gas emissions caused by increases in vehicular traffic.

SA Objective 7: Housing

- 3.5.8 It has been assumed that all sites put forward for residential development as part of the reasonable alternatives will contribute to fulfilling housing needs, including a contribution to affordable housing.

SA Objective 8: Transport

- 3.5.9 For the purpose of this assessment, in line with Barton et al, 2010⁵, 400m is the recommended distance for travelling to a bus stop, and 2km is used for train stations.

SA Objective 9: Health

- 3.5.10 It has been assumed that all public rights of way will be retained or re-routed around the site.
- 3.5.11 Barton et al (2010) gives target distances and maximum distances to certain facilities and amenities as show in **Table 1.1**.

Table 3.3: Sustainable distances to facilities and amenities⁶. These distances are ‘as the crow flies’.

Features	Optimal distance	Target distance
Local park/ green space	400m	600m
Leisure centre	1.5km	2km
Doctor’s surgery	800m	1km
NHS Hospital	5km	8km

⁵ Barton et al (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods for local health and global sustainability. 2nd edition

⁶ Barton et al (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods for local health and global sustainability. 2nd edition

SA Objective 10: Material assets

- 3.5.12 It is assumed that development on previously developed land (brownfield) is preferable, provided that it is not of high environmental value. This is in accordance with the core planning principles of the NPPF⁷.
- 3.5.13 The Agricultural Land Classification system forms part of the planning system in England and Wales. It classifies agricultural land into five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. The top three grades, Grade 1, 2 and 3a, are referred to as 'Best and Most Versatile' land. Grade 4 and 5 are described as poor quality agricultural land and very poor quality agricultural land.
- 3.5.14 Where it is not known whether a site classified as Grade 3 under the Agricultural Land Classification system is Grade 3a, which is the best and most versatile agricultural land, or 3b, which is not, for the purposes of this assessment it has been assumed that they are within Grade 3a, in accordance with the Precautionary Principle.

SA Objective 11: Employment and Education

- 3.5.15 For the purpose of this assessment, in line with Barton (Barton *et al*, 2010), 1km is the recommended distance for travelling to a primary school, and 2km is used for secondary schools. All schools identified are publically accessible state schools.
- 3.5.16 At this stage, there is not sufficient information available to be able to accurately predict the effect of new residential development on the capacity of local schools. This would require a breakdown of proposed residential tenure types and the number of bedroom per dwelling. It would also require a start date for the occupation of the dwellings. As such, at this stage the SA assesses whether there are publically available schools in the local area and their accessibility.

⁷ Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

4 Reasonable alternatives

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that the SA process considers:

‘Reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme’ and give ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’ (Article 5.1 and Annex I (h)).

4.1.2 In the UK, reasonable alternatives are commonly referred to as ‘options’. The assessment of reasonable alternatives refers to the plan making process stage of exploring policy options.

4.1.3 The role of the SA is to inform the plan making group in their selection and assessment of options. The findings of the SA can help with refining and further developing these options in an iterative and on-going way. The SA findings do not form the sole basis for decision-making; other studies, the feasibility of the option and consultation feedback will also contribute to the decision made by Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Group and South Oxfordshire District Council.

4.1.4 Options assessment is proportionate; in higher levels of strategic planning, such as the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033, the assessment may have a criteria-based approach and focus on the key differences between possibilities for scale, distribution and quality of development. The options do not have to be mutually exclusive and elements of each may be further developed into a preferred option. Consequently, the process is fluid with options changing and developing as further studies are undertaken, additional findings are established and the responses from previous consultation stages are considered.

4.1.5 The results of an SA may reveal that there is no single, best performing option. Where there is no obvious discernible difference at a strategic scale, the SEA process will record this as an outcome for that particular stage of the assessment process. Whilst SA informs plan making and selection of policies, the plan makers are not obliged to carry forward the most sustainable options if they have reason to prefer an alternative option.

4.2 Reasonable Alternatives: housing numbers

4.2.1 The NDP group have considered four different housing numbers that inform the scale of development across the plan area: 135, 175, 250 and 310 dwellings. Housing numbers should conform with the local plan, a document which itself is subject to sustainability appraisal. The latest information available from the publication version of the emerging Local Plan is that 175 homes are required to be provided in Cholsey.

4.2.2 To attempt to differentiate the sustainability performance of the four housing numbers, it must be borne in mind that the SA process is high level and can only assess at the level of detail for which available information exists. The selection of final housing numbers therefore can be informed by generic sustainability principals which include seeking to ensure that appropriate service provision and capacity is available for the selected total number of dwellings. This relates to health and education services, and infrastructure in terms of sustainable transport options and road capacity. Environmental considerations should include the potential impact on biodiversity and natural resources such as rivers and soils.

4.2.3 Drawing on available information, it is not possible to say which option performs the best since detail about location is not provided in terms of considering the numbers alone. Readers are therefore directed to the assessment of sites (see **section 4.3**) which provides details of sustainability performance for a range of dwelling scenarios as part of the appraisal process.

4.3 Reasonable Alternatives: sites

- 4.3.1 In May 2017, the plan makers identified eight reasonable alternative sites for assessment through a process of consultation and reviewing evidence supplied by the local planning authority. Since that time additional sites have become available and nine sites have now been assessed. Baseline information has been provided in the form of a site assessment document which has been used to inform the assessments⁸. **Table 4.1** shows the reasonable alternatives considered. The sites include a range of dwelling numbers at each location.
- 4.3.2 Planning Policy Guidance notes that 'Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable'.
- 4.3.3 It also states that 'Proposals in a draft neighbourhood plan, and the reasonable alternatives should be assessed to identify the likely significant effects of the available options. Forecasting and evaluation of the significant effects should help to develop and refine the proposals in the neighbourhood plan'.
- 4.3.4 Each site represents a 'reasonable alternative' and has been individually assessed against the SA Objectives. **Appendix A** contains the results of this appraisal. The results for each site can be found in a single line matrix, which summarises whether the policy has been assessed positively or negatively against each SA Objective. The values in the matrix are contextual rather than absolute. Tables have been prepared which include assessment narrative which explains the sustainability issues in more detail. Where negative or uncertain effects have been identified, early mitigation considerations support the appraisal findings.

⁸ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments – January 2018. Cholsey Site Assessments v16

Table 4.1: Reasonable alternative sites

CNP Ref.	Land registry description	Dwellings
CHOL1	East End Farm	62
CHOL4	Kentwood Farm	Unknown
CHOL5	Land north east of Church Road	100+
CHOL6	Land north of Church Road and north west of Wallingford Road	65
CHOL7	West of Wallingford Road	100
CHOL8	Part of Blackall's Farm	6
CHOL9	Boshers Yard corner of A329 and Papist Way	9
CHOL10	Fairmile	14

4.3.5 High level mitigation was applied to the assessment findings as detailed mitigation would be abortive if options are not taken forward. Mitigation can be prepared in more detail on an iterative basis for preferred options once chosen.

4.3.6 Nevertheless, it is useful to provide the plan maker with some idea of potential available mitigation since in circumstances where an adverse effect can confidently be mitigated, it is worth identifying for the plan maker.

4.3.7 It should be noted that site CHOL3 (see CNP Site Assessments, May 2017) was allowed on appeal in 2016 and development has commenced. The site is included with the already committed homes figure and does not count towards the further homes required and is not part of the SA.

4.4 Summary of site assessment results

4.4.1 **Appendix A** presents the findings for all nine sites. **Table 4.2** presents a summary of the matrix findings for each reasonable alternative site. The best performing option in terms of environmental performance was CHOL9, although this site is not large enough to deliver the total housing requirement for the NDP area. Of the other options, it was not possible to identify a best performing option.

4.4.2 Negative effects were identified with regards to SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10. Strong negative effects were identified against the following SA Objectives:

- SA Objective 1 (biodiversity) for part of site CHOL7, due to the impact on a s.41 NERC Act priority habitat and area of natural or semi-natural greenspace;
- SA Objective 2 (landscape) for site CHOL4, due to the impact on the North Wessex Downs AONB;
- SA Objective 4 (climate change adaptation) for sites CHOL5 and CHOL6 development being located within Flood Zones 2 and 3; and
- SA Objective 9 (health and well-being) for all sites due to the distance to health services;

4.4.3 Uncertain effects were identified with regards to SA Objectives 1, 2, 4, 6 (environmental quality), and 10 (material assets).

Table 4.2 Sites assessed as having uncertain impacts on one or more of the SA Objectives.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
CHOL 1	-	-	-	+/-	0	+/-	+	+	--	-	+
CHOL4	-	--	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	0	+
CHOL 5	-	-	-	--	0	+/-	+	+	--	+/-	+
CHOL 6	-	-	-	--	+	0	+	++	--	+/-	+
CHOL 7	--	-	-	+/-	0	0	+	+	--	+/-	+
CHOL 8	+/-	+/-	-	+	+	+/-	+	++	--	+	+
CHOL 9	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	+	+
CHOL 10	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	+	+

4.5 Development Options

4.5.1 Two reasonable alternatives have been identified to meet Cholsey's housing need:

- **Option 1:** delivering a total of approximately 189 dwellings across CHOL 1 and CHOL 7a combined (c165 dwellings), CHOL 9 (ten dwellings) and CHOL 10 (c14 dwellings); and
- **Option 2:** delivering a total of approximately 194 dwellings across CHOL 5 (80 dwellings), CHOL 6 (90 dwellings), CHOL 9 (10 dwellings) and CHOL 10 (14 dwellings).

4.5.2 The CNP Site Assessment paper sets out the advantages and disadvantages of potential housing sites. This demonstrates along with the findings of this SA why Option 1, including sites CHOL 1, CHOL 7c, CHOL 9 and CHOL 10, has been selected and included in the site allocation policy of the pre-submission draft NDP. The following summary explanation taken from that paper sets out the reasons for that choice.

4.5.3 CHOL 2 is a potential site in the parish that has been eliminated as a reasonable option. A 14ha portion of the site was put forward by the neighbourhood plan in the first Pre-submission plan, but doubt has been expressed about that site's viability and potential developers for the site have indicated that they will not bring this smaller site forward. The entire site is 28ha and this was put forward by the developer. The 28ha option for CHOL 2 was eliminated by the CNP team as it would result in more than double the housing requirement identified for Cholsey in the emerging local plan. It would also result in development which exceeds the capacity of local services and infrastructure without providing sufficient new infrastructure for future residents. In addition to this, the scale of development is significantly beyond the local community's aspirations for growth. The scale of the proposed 28ha development is significantly beyond any scale which has been supported by the community at any stage in the plan preparation process and it is considered to be highly likely that a plan with this site allocation would fail at referendum.

- 4.5.4 Both development options considered would result in around 43% (excluding windfalls) growth of the village between 2011 and 2033, providing capacity for a housing growth at a scale needed to meet SODC housing requirements for Cholsey and the growth aspirations of the local community.
- 4.5.5 The CNP steering group's preferred option is development option 1, which combines CHOL 1, CHOL 7c, CHOL 9 and CHOL 10 to deliver significant community benefits. It would be likely to result in improved local connectivity, new pedestrian and cycle links, road safety measures, community facilities, green infrastructure and a net gain for biodiversity. Development option 1 would not significantly conflict with the Plan objectives and would avoid significant adverse impacts on all SA Objectives. It is therefore considered to be the most sustainable option.
- 4.5.6 Option 2 includes two sites, CHOL 5 and CHOL 6, which are situated in the active floodplain, with some portions of each site in flood zones 2 and 3 where the flood risk is high. Residential development is not compatible with flood zone 3b and would need to pass the Exception test before being permitted to be located in flood zone 3a. These sites would be likely to cause congestion and compromise pedestrian and vehicle safety on Church Road, which is in close proximity to the primary school, pre-school, playgroup and day centre. Development option 2 would also be likely to harm the setting of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONB. Car parking has been offered to help relieve Church Road and open space areas would be provided next to Cholsey Brook. The option would conflict significantly with the plan objectives the benefits are not seen to outweigh the harm resulting from development of these sites.
- 4.5.7 The CNP site assessment paper has looked at all the suggested sites in relation to the neighbourhood plan objectives. Each development option has been assessed for their likely impacts on sustainability and each SA Objective, as set out in the following sections.

4.6 Development Option 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	-	0	+	+	+/-	++	++	--	-	+

4.6.1 Development Option 1 would deliver a total of approximately 190 dwellings through a combination of development at the following sites:

- CHOL 1 and a part of CHOL 7: c165 dwellings;
- CHOL 9: c10 dwellings; and
- CHOL 10: recent development at Fairmile estate, 14 dwellings.

4.6.2 CHOL 10 is a brownfield site which contains Listed Buildings. An agreement has already been reached at this location for 14 dwellings.

4.6.3 Individual site assessments for the sites that make up this development option are presented in **Appendix A**. This section of the SA will consider the potential combined sustainability benefits and impacts of proceeding with Development Option 1. Just over half of the proposed development under this Option would be situated within the 3.6ha CHOL 7a, which constitutes a ‘reduced area’ of CHOL 7 (see **Appendix A**). By reducing the area of CHOL 7 to the size proposed under CHOL 7a, the CNP group will be able to direct development away from the sensitive orchard, nature reserve and woodland scrub area, and thereby avoid most of the adverse impacts on the landscape and biodiversity objectives identified for CHOL 7.

- 4.6.4 CHOL 7a is predominantly in use as an arable and open field which is considered to be of limited biodiversity value. An existing building within the site perimeter of CHOL 1 contains a low status roost for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) whilst habitats along the site's farmland periphery have been identified as supporting populations of slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*), grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) and common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*). By only selecting part of CHOL 7, which does not include the nature reserve and an important biodiversity area, the worst impacts of this option on biodiversity would be avoided. Development Option 1 would lead to the development of 7ha of greenfield land. Development at CHOL 7a and CHOL 1 would therefore be anticipated to have a minor but adverse impact on the biodiversity objective. CHOL 9 and CHOL 10 are previously developed brownfield sites and the proposed development here would have no impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 1: Biodiversity).
- 4.6.5 All sites are located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. Guidelines for this LCT seek to improve the landscape structure and land management on the fringes of built areas. Option 2 is considered to have an overall landscape sensitivity as Medium/Low⁹. CHOL1 would be an extension of the urban centre of Cholsey into the open landscape and may set precedent for further development to the north east of the settlement. Despite being located within the North Wessex Downs AONB, CHOL9 is previously developed land. The impacts of the proposed development at this location on landscape would therefore be expected to be negligible.

⁹ Atlantic Consultants (2003) South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Character Area 7: Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/policy-publications/south>

- 4.6.6 The recent landscape capacity assessment for CHOL 7 found that by reducing the area to CHOL 7a, adverse impacts on key landscape features, including the nature reserve, orchard and woodland scrub area, would be avoided¹⁰. The scale of the site would provide for an area of development which would be commensurate with the existing village pattern. Development at CHOL 7a could potentially alter views from nearby spots in the Chilterns AONB, although the reduced site size leaves room for a substantive landscape buffer which would mitigate this effect. Overall, it is considered that a minor adverse impact on local landscapes cannot be ruled out (SA Objective 2: Landscape).
- 4.6.7 The setting of the Grade II Listed Building 'Duxford', sitting just 25m north of CHOL1, could potentially be adversely impacted by the proposed development. CHOL1 is also within an area of archaeological interest. A geophysical survey 200m south of the site has recorded archaeological features dating from either the later prehistoric or Roman period. Aerial photographs have identified three Bronze Age barrows 500m east of CHOL1.
- 4.6.8 Three Grade II Listed Buildings sit adjacent to CHOL 7. By reducing the site area to CHOL 7a, adverse impacts on views of and from the three nearby Listed Buildings will to some extent be avoided. However, the proposed development at CHOL 7a would be likely to alter the rural context of these heritage assets, which a landscape buffer would be likely to help mitigate. Development of CHOL9 and CHOL 10 would be expected to have a negligible effect on cultural heritage (SA Objective 3: Cultural heritage).
- 4.6.9 Each site is situated in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at minimal risk of fluvial flooding. Further investigation is required at CHOL1 and CHOL7 to better establish the potential threat of surface water runoff (SA Objective 2: Climate change adaptation).
- 4.6.10 CHOL 7a sits behind existing residential built form and is considered to have somewhat limited access in its current form. However, a key benefit of Development Option 1 is the anticipated improvement in access to CHOL 7a as a result of the proposed development at CHOL 1.

¹⁰ Kirkham Landscape Planning (2018) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Additional Landscape Capacity Assessment of CHOL2 and CHOL 7

- 4.6.11 Each site in Option 1 is considered to have good access to Cholsey Railway Station, which provides residents with a sustainable mode of transport to Oxford, Didcot, London and beyond. CHOL 9 and CHOL 10 are within an easily walkable distance of bus stops, which provide residents with a sustainable mode of transport to nearby villages. Residents at CHOL 1 and CHOL 7a would have a slightly longer walk to reach the nearest bus stop, although this walk would still be no more than 500m. Overall, the sustainable transport options accessible to residents would be anticipated to help reduce dependence on personal car use and to improve access to local amenities and services (SA Objective 8: Transport).
- 4.6.12 The lower reliance on personal car use for new residents will be likely to help reduce road transport associated GHG emissions (SA Objective 5: Climate change mitigation).
- 4.6.13 Residents at CHOL 9 and CHOL 10 may potentially be exposed to noise, air and light pollution associated with the A329. In response to SODC's concerns about this, further investigative work is planned for the site. The proposed development at other sites in this Development Option would be expected to have negligible impacts on environmental quality (SA Objective 6: Pollution).
- 4.6.14 Development Option 1 would deliver the desired quantity of housing for the NDP area and as such would be expected to have a significantly positive impact on the housing objective. The NDP will be in accordance with Policy CSH3 of the Core Strategy and therefore development at each site of more than ten homes will be 40% affordable housing (SA Objective 7: Housing).
- 4.6.15 Overall, the development option would not be anticipated to help facilitate active and healthy lifestyles of new residents due to there being no NHS hospitals within 8km and the nearest GP surgery being 2km – 3km away. Access to formal leisure facilities at each site is also limited. However, new residents will have excellent access into the countryside and a diverse range of natural habitats which is beneficial to mental and physical wellbeing. CHOL 7a would also provide new residents with good access to playing fields and allotments (SA Objective 9: Health).

4.6.16 CHOL1 and CHOL7a are predominantly greenfield with Grade 2 agricultural soils. However, it does contain some previously developed land as well as an area of contaminated land. CHOL 7a is within a mineral safeguarding area whilst CHOL9 and CHOL 10 are brownfield sites. Overall, Development Option 2 makes some efficient proposals for the use of land but would also result in the loss of 7ha of greenfield land with good agricultural value. It would therefore have a minor adverse impact on local natural resources (SA Objective 10: Material assets).

4.6.17 This development option would help to ensure new residents have good access to a range of amenities and services in Cholsey town centre, less than 0.5km away. Residents would also have good access to Cholsey Primary School, although the nearest secondary school would be outside of the target distance and could be difficult for some residents to reach (SA Objective 11: Economy).

4.7 Development Option 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	--	-	--	+	+/-	++	++	--	-	+

4.7.1 Development Option 2 would deliver a total of approximately 190 dwellings through a combination of development at the following sites:

- CHOL 5: c80 dwellings;
- CHOL 6: 90 dwellings;
- CHOL 9: 10 dwellings; and
- CHOL 10: recent development at Fairmile estate, 14 dwellings.

4.7.2 CHOL 5 is an arable parcel of land which could potentially deliver 80 dwellings, whilst CHOL 6, which is situated north of Church Road and north west of Wallingford Road, is a pasture agricultural parcel of land which could potentially deliver 90 dwellings. CHOL 9 is a brownfield site. CHOL 10 is also a brownfield site for which agreement has already been reached at this location for 14 dwellings.

- 4.7.3 The trees and hedgerow delineating the site perimeters provide CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 with some biodiversity value. These trees and hedgerows may act as a corridor to provide and connect habitats for species¹¹, and should be retained where possible. The parcel of woodland just south west of CHOL 5 and just north east of CHOL 6 could potentially be supporting a range of species, possibly including some s.41 NERC Act priority species¹², and should therefore be protected.
- 4.7.4 Cholsey Brook runs between CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 and could potentially be providing suitable habitat to a variety of species. The watercourse running just south of CHOL 5 has been identified as supporting water vole (*Arvicola amphibious*), a species which responds quickly to habitat change and is therefore a good indicator of a functioning ecosystem. Development could potentially increase the risk of contamination or pollution of the waterway, or the disturbance of water voles from public access associated disturbances. Careful consideration should be given to government guidance on the matter¹³. The site assessment indicates a buffer along the site's southern perimeter could help to protect the waterway from adverse impacts¹⁴. It is considered that a minor adverse impact of this development option on the biodiversity objective cannot be ruled out (SA Objective 1: Biodiversity).

¹¹ Ignatieva, M., Stewart, G.H., and Meurk, C. (2011) Planning and Design of Ecological Networks in Urban Areas. Landscape and Ecological Engineering. 7.17-25.

¹² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) UK BAP priority species and habitats. Available at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705>

¹³ Gov.uk Guidance: Water Voles: Surveys and mitigation for development projects. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-voles-protection-surveys-and-licences>

¹⁴ ¹⁴ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

- 4.7.5 Each site is situated in the LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. Management of this LCT seeks to improve landscape structure on the fringes of built up areas¹⁵. CHOL 6 and CHOL 5 are both agricultural parcels in the village. This development option would be likely to extend the urban built form into the countryside, with CHOL 5 extending the built form up to the North Wessex Downs AONB boundary. It is considered to be likely that this development option would impact on views from the North Wessex Downs AONB. The development at CHOL 6 could potentially adversely impact on the AONB boundary itself, disrupting its openness and scenic beauty¹⁶. It is therefore considered that a significant adverse impact on the landscape objective cannot be ruled out for this development option (SA Objective 2: Landscape).
- 4.7.6 The site assessments have identified some archaeological constraints at CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 which are due to be further investigated¹⁷. There is a Grade II Listed Building 75m south east of CHOL 5, the setting of which could potentially be impacted by the proposed development. 25m south west of CHOL 6 is the Grade II Listed 'Causeway House' whilst CHOL 6 also sits adjacent to the Cholsey Conservation Area. This development option would therefore be anticipated to adversely impact on the setting of heritage assets in the local area (SA Objective 3: Cultural heritage).
- 4.7.7 CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 are both partially within Flood Zone 3, land which is at a high risk of fluvial flooding. In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, residential development should not be located within Flood Zone 3b¹⁸. Residential development within Flood Zone 3a would be subject to an Exception Test (SA Objective 4: Climate change adaptation).

¹⁵ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

¹⁶ Atlantic Consultants (2003) South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Character Area 7: Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/policy-publications/south>

¹⁷ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

¹⁸ Planning Practice Guidance (2014) Flood Zone and Flood Risk Tables <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/flood-zone-and-flood-risk-tables/table-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-and-flood-zone-compatibility/>

- 4.7.8 Access to sustainable transport modes for new residents in this development option is good. Cholsey train station is located 1.1km southeast of CHOL 5 and 1.3km south east of CHOL 6, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. The significant majority of residents would be anticipated to be within the 400m target distance of a bus stop, although some residents may be up to 500m away. The 136 bus service provides residents with access Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. This bus route is circular and may therefore not be a reasonable means of commute or travel for some residents in certain directions, in which case they may be more inclined to rely on personal car usage. CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 are in close proximity to a primary school, which may reduce the need for residents to drive as frequently.
- 4.7.9 Residents at CHOL 5 may be further inclined to use the car as a primary mode of transport due to the direct access to Church Road the site offers. Church Road runs north from the site towards neighbouring villages South Moreton and Didcot. Overall it is considered to be likely that this development option would encourage the use of sustainable transport modes and thereby help to reduce GHG emission rises. (SA Objective 5: Climate change mitigation and SA Objective 8: Transport).
- 4.7.10 Cholsey Brook runs in between CHOL 5 and CHOL 6. It is considered to be likely that the risk of pollution and/or contamination of this waterway could potentially rise as a result of development at these two sites (SA Objective 6: Pollution).
- 4.7.11 Development Option 2 would deliver the desired quantity of housing for the NDP area and as such would be expected to have a significantly positive impact on the housing objective. The NDP will be in accordance with Policy CSH3 of the Core Strategy and therefore development at each site of more than ten homes will be 40% affordable housing (SA Objective 7: Housing).

- 4.7.12 Overall, the development option would not be anticipated to help facilitate active and healthy lifestyles of new residents due to there being no NHS hospitals within 8km and the nearest GP surgery being 2km – 3km away. Access to formal leisure facilities at each site is also limited. However, new residents will have excellent access into the countryside and a diverse range of natural habitats which is beneficial to mental and physical wellbeing. There is accessible open space adjacent to CHOL 5 which offers residents excellent recreational opportunities (SA Objective 9: Health).
- 4.7.13 CHOL 5 and CHOL 6 are previously undeveloped greenfields. It is currently unknown if they are Grade 3a or Grade 3b agricultural land. It is considered that the combined impact of these sites being developed in combination would be the loss of a valuable stock of soils to some extent (SA Objective 10: Material assets).
- 4.7.14 This development option would help to ensure new residents have good access to a range of amenities and services in Cholsey town centre, less than 0.5km away. Residents would also have good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is 150m from CHOL 6 and is adjacent to CHOL 5. Access to a secondary school is somewhat more limited, being outside the target distance of all sites, and residents may be inclined to use the car to get there.

Box 4 Justification for selection of the preferred approach

CHOL1 East End Farm

A decision on a planning appeal for 68 homes is expected in March 2018.

Although the site was not favoured in the first pre-submission version of this plan, discussions have continued with land owners, developers, and the community, to mitigate its perceived shortcomings. In particular, looking comprehensively at sites CHOL 1 and CHOL 7c together will enable greater benefits and minimize harm to the immediate neighbourhood.

The site abuts the village and is not intrusive in the wider landscape. It is relatively close to the primary school and shops and a proportion of future residents should walk to these facilities. Access is proposed via an improved junction with the Wallingford Road and a zebra crossing for pedestrians. Traffic calming will benefit all Wallingford Road residents. Other benefits are described under CHOL 7c.

The larger site will achieve economies of scale and with fewer homes will enable outstanding issues with the existing proposal to be addressed. This site meets the plan objectives well.

CHOL3 Celsea Place

The site was allowed on appeal in 2016 and is included with the already committed homes figure and does not count towards the further homes required.

CHOL5 and CHOL6

Sites in Church Road - Parts of each of these sites are in flood zones 2 and 3, although they may be amended to exclude the flood zone area without site level flood risk assessments we cannot be sure that the sites will not flood or exacerbate flooding elsewhere. Both sites have offered to provide parking for the primary school which would help address congestion on Church Road at school drop off and pick up times. However, the access points are likely to cause conflict with other road users and encourage an increase in traffic through the village. The parking benefit is not considered to outweigh the other issues with these sites. CHOL5 will be likely to cause significant harm to the landscape setting of the village and the AONB and to the important historic environment around the church. The landscape capacity assessment does not support housing on this site. No information has been submitted to support the northern part of CHOL6 and there is no suitable access to serve housing on this north part. The sites do not contribute to significantly improving connectivity in the village. Neither CHOL 5 nor CHOL 6 meet our plan objectives well.

CHOL7 - West of Wallingford Road

This site has three sub-sites:

A Land adjacent Old Blackalls Lane and the Wallingford Road (A)

B Land at rear of Red Cow Cottage (B)

C Agricultural land adjoining CHOL1 and bounded by the old Wallingford Road and the concrete track from Caps Lane to the vets(C)

Sub-site A - A planning application for 39 homes has been submitted. This sub-site has a high biodiversity interest and the SODC Green Infrastructure Strategy indicates it likely to support priority BAP species. It would not increase connectivity or pedestrian and cycle routes around the village. There may be underground springs which need investigation. The access does not provide for the safety of pedestrians or vehicles and the sites location would be likely to encourage car journeys. The sub-site does not meet our plan objectives well, it is not a sustainable site and is not supported.

Sub-site B - This land is used as a nature reserve, it is not a submitted site and is discounted

Sub-site C - The only acceptable access to the site is through CHOL1. Part of the sub-site (3.6 ha) has been identified as suitable for development in the landscape assessment leaving the remaining sizeable areas for green infrastructure. The site provide pedestrian and cycle links between Ilges Lane, Caps Lane and Wallingford Road. The combined sites CHOL 1 and 7c meet the plan objectives well and are supported.

CHOL 8 Part of Blackalls Farm

A small site lying outside the village containing a range of mainly poor quality farm buildings used for small commercial enterprises. The vehicle and pedestrian access and safety is poor and there are potentially unneighbourly farm uses retained adjoining the site. This site does not meet our plan objectives well and is not supported.

CHOL 9 Boshers Yard

This is a brownfield site in the built-up area of the village. In view of the site's location tightly surrounded by houses and its existing unrestricted commercial use redevelopment for housing will provide a more neighbourly use. The site meets our plan objectives well and is supported.

CHOL 10 Part of Fairmile

A brownfield site within Fairmile containing listed buildings. Agreement has been reached with SODC on a housing scheme for 14 homes.

5 Assessment findings: Policies

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Each policy has been individually assessed against each of the eleven SA Objectives. This chapter contains the results of this appraisal. The results for each policy can be found in a single line matrix, which displays whether the policy has been assessed positively or negatively against each SA Objective. The matrices are followed by a tabulated explanation of the results.

5.2 Policy CNP H1: Housing site allocations

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	-	0	+	+	+/-	++	++	--	-	+

5.2.1 Policy CNP H1 allocates a total of 189 dwellings across:

- 165 dwellings at the Sites East End Farm (a combination of CHOL 1 and a part of CHOL 7),
- 10 dwellings at Boshers Yard corner of A329 and Papist way (CHOL 9); and
- 14 dwellings Fairmile (CHOL 10).

5.2.2 Each of these sites have been assessed for their sustainability impacts (see **Appendix A**). The impacts and benefits of the combination of each of these sites are presented in **Section 4.6**.

5.3 Policy CNP H1a: East End Farm masterplan

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0

5.3.1 Policy CNP H1a will require development proposals for East End Farm to be in accordance with the site’s Masterplan. This includes various requirements which would be anticipated to positively impact on the biodiversity, landscape, climate change mitigation, cultural heritage, transport and health objectives. This is primarily due to the improved access into the site, the provision for pedestrian and cycle links, the consideration of Listed Buildings and the landscape buffer space for Green Infrastructure.

5.4 Policy CNP H1b: Housing density

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

5.4.1 In accordance with policy H1b new development in the NDP area will need to make effective use of natural resources. This would be through ensuring developments of ten or more dwellings are at a density of at least 25dph.

5.4.2 By ensuring an efficient use of land, this policy will be likely to have a positive impact on the biodiversity, landscape, housing and material assets SA Objectives.

5.5 Policy CNP H2: Village boundary

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	+	+	0	0	++	0	+	++	0

5.5.1 This policy looks to promote development within the village boundary in sustainable locations. Redevelopment of brownfield sites would have a positive effect on material assets, as this would make positive use of Cholsey’s natural resources.

5.5.2 The policy supports development which would not have negative environmental effects, through maintaining the ecological value of sites, and preserving the areas character and appearance. This is likely to positively impact landscape and cultural heritage, through maintaining within the built limits of the settlement, conserving the characteristic townscape and historic features of the area.

5.5.3 The policy will also have positive effects on social objectives through ensuring development maintains importance community open spaces and not creating problems or causing disturbances to neighbours. As such, the policy is expected to enhance human health and quality of life.

5.6 Policy CNP H3: Housing mix

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0

5.6.1 This policy is considered to have a positive impact on a number of social and economic objectives, particularly the objectives linked to providing an opportunity of decent and affordable homes for all, and the consequent benefits to well-being and reducing social deprivation.

5.6.2 The policy will have a largely negligible impact on environmental objectives because it relates to the tenure of housing.

5.7 Policy CNP H4: Affordable housing

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	+

5.7.1 This policy is considered to have a positive impact on a number of social and economic objectives, particularly the objectives linked to providing an opportunity of decent and affordable homes for all, and the consequent benefits to well-being and reducing social deprivation.

5.7.2 Policy CNPH4 will further positively impact human health through the priority allocation of homes to people with a strong local connection to Cholsey. This will boost the sense of community in the area, having a positive impact on quality of life. This may also positively impact the economic objective. Prioritising local people that may be less likely to out commute from the area may contribute towards the development of the local economy.

5.7.3 The policy will have a largely negligible impact on environmental objectives because it relates to the tenure of housing.

5.8 Policy CNP H5: New housing requirements

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	+

5.8.1 This policy has positive effects on social and economic objectives through ensuring development in Cholsey is supported by the necessary facilities and infrastructure. This not only positive impacts the local economy, but also ensures residents have good access to day-to-day facilities, having a positive effect on quality of life.

5.8.2 Providing good quality, well designed homes which are in keeping with local character, materials and colour palette will further positively impact environmental and social objectives, ensuring development is in keeping with the local landscape and townscape, and providing homes for all. The policy specifically looks to ensure proposals provide an attractive environment whilst maintaining Cholsey’s distinctiveness, and requests proposals meet the objectives in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide¹⁹. The Design Guide provides a suite of objectives, critical for delivering high quality development.

¹⁹ South Oxfordshire District Council (2016) South Oxfordshire Design Guide. Available at: http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=628048297&CODE=CE02022649B7F765DCAEE995A402C111

5.8.3 Further positive impacts will take place through proposals ensuring that there is good access to effective public transport services, and by ensuring new housing is well and safely connected with the village and surrounding countryside for pedestrians and cyclists. This is likely to positively impact resident's health and wellbeing through the promotion of sustainable transport, and encouraging exercise. This will also positively impact environmental objectives, through reducing the reliance on cars as the primary mode of transport, reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

5.8.4 Further positive effects for environmental objectives include requiring proposals to meet the challenges of climate change and flooding, in addition to tackling noise and odor pollution.

5.9 Policy CNP H6: Distance requirements

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

5.9.1 This is a benign policy which may have health benefits based on the positive design aspirations which will provide pleasant and attractive environments in which to live.

5.10 Policy CNP H7: Parking standards

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	+	-	+	0	0

5.10.1 The policy will be used to manage the provision of parking for new residential development. This is expected to have a positive effect on quality of life for residents by providing sufficient vehicle access at the home. This is also likely to improve the public realm, through ensuring residents park in allocated spaces and providing a safer environment for road users²⁰.

5.10.2 This policy may however have negative effects for transport. Encouraging the ownership of, and therefore use of, the car may reduce the use of sustainable transport options such as the train, bus, or cycle networks and increase congestion. This may result in negative effects for climate change and pollution through increases in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution however car ownership will include electric cars.

5.11 Policy CNP H8: Extensions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	+	+	0	+/-	+/-	++	-	+	0	+

5.11.1 This policy looks to extend existing homes where they meet set criteria. The set criteria include consideration for the character of the area, having positive effects on landscape and heritage. This is further implemented through the retaining and enforcement of areas traditional boundaries, and the safeguarding of daylight, sunlight and outlook of residents. This would also have positive effects on human health and quality of life, through the protection of important views on to the countryside. This would maintain the aesthetic value of the landscape, having further positive impacts on landscape features such as the two AONBs.

5.11.2 As highlighted in Policy CNPH7, the provision of car parking would have positive effects for human health and the public realm, but negative effects for transport, and potentially negative effects on climate change and pollution.

²⁰ Biswas, S., Chandra, S. & Ghosh, I. Transp. in Dev. Econ. (2017) Effects of on street parking in urban context: A Critical Review. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40890-017-0040-2>

5.12 Policy CNP E1: Rural developments

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	++	0	0

5.12.1 The protection and enhancement of designated sites benefits human health in addition to maintaining the sites biodiversity and landscape value.

5.12.2 Access to the natural environment positively impacts human well-being, providing numerous ecosystem services²¹ such as flooding regulation and recreational benefits. Ecosystem services have economic value²², and as such this policy will positively impact the economy objective.

5.12.3 The protection of the rural setting of the village will have further positive impacts on landscape, and cultural heritage, through the maintenance of Cholsey’s distinctive character and townscape.

5.12.4 The policy requires new development to avoid harm to features such as natural green space, the setting of the River Thames and the Ridgeway and Thames National Trails. This will further enhance the connectivity of biodiversity throughout Cholsey, and may contribute towards mediating some of the negative effects of pollutants. Trees and vegetation can play an important role in influencing urban air quality²³, and as such have positive effects for the pollution and climate change objectives.

²¹ World Health Organization (2017) Climate Change and human health: Biodiversity. Available at: <http://www.who.int/globalchange/ecosystems/biodiversity/en/>

²² Gov.uk (2014) Guidance: Ecosystem Services. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ecosystems-services>

²³ Forest Research (date unknown). Benefits of green space. Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/urgc-7edhqh>

5.12.5 As highlighted in the NPPF²⁴, ensuring residents have access to the characteristic features of the area and are provided with opportunity for sport and recreation, can make important contributions to the health and well-being of the community.

5.13 Policy CNP E2: Riverside recreation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+

5.13.1 The policy will likely have a positive impact on a number of environmental, social and economic objectives, encouraging informal recreation as the main way that residents and visitors enjoy the riverside area. The policy will maintain the environmental value of the resource, having positive effects for biodiversity, landscape, and climate change. The policy will also enhance the recreational and sporting value of the resource, where it is currently being used for activities such as rowing, swimming and kayaking.

5.13.2 The policy is expected to have positive effects on improving human health and benefitting the visitor economy by enhancing attractive open spaces for tourists, in addition to improving the river based sport facilities. Whilst this is expected to have positive effects for tourism and the economy, it is also thought that residents would benefit from the aesthetic and recreational improvements to the area. This would have further positive effects for human health.

²⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (Para. 73). Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

5.14 Policy CNP E3: Historic environment

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+

5.14.1 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the various historic assets within the Plan area. These have an important role in Cholsey’s visitor economy and as such their conservation and enhancement is important to the success of the local economy.

5.14.2 The policy would be expected to conserve and enhance local environmental quality, townscapes and landscapes, as this contributes towards the enjoyment of the historic environment, first and foremost by residents. The policy would be expected to protect and enhance local environmental character and distinctiveness, including promoting high quality design and the effective reuse of buildings.

5.14.3 It is also highlighted that there is archaeological significant interest in the Cholsey area, for example with known Bronze Age and Roman finds in the parish and nearby. Areas of archaeological significance are to be protected and maintained for their interest value. Sites which have not been previously disturbed are likely to need archaeological research.

5.15 Policy CNP I1: Facilities for sport and recreation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	++	0	+

5.15.1 Positive effects on economic and social objectives are considered to occur as a result of this policy, as new developments are supported for the provision of facilities and services. The policy requires developments to provide a range of facilities for the local community, serving the day-to-day needs of the area, and may also encourage tourism in the village. Facilities are to include shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship); and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

5.15.2 The policy is likely to improve accessibility to sport and recreation, having a positive effect on human health and well-being, and may also have positive climate change, pollution, and biodiversity impacts through the provision of shared open spaces. Positive effects are also predicted for cultural heritage, through the provision of cultural buildings. The provision of community facilities such as this will have a positive effect on community well-being and sense of place. There will be improved accessibility to key facilities for residents, as a result of concentration of development within the existing village centre.

5.16 Policy CNP I2: Doctor’s surgery

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	+	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	++	0	+

5.16.1 The provision of a GP surgery in the village would positively affect human health and well-being, through improving access to health facilities for residents. Currently, the road distance to a GP is 3.4km compared with an average of 1.8km in South Oxfordshire and 1.2km in England²⁵. This may also take pressure off the transport network as residents would not be out-commuting from the village to a GP. The policy ensures development will only be supported where amenity space is maintained, having positive effects on biodiversity, and maintaining the character of the area.

²⁵ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan

5.16.2 The provision of car parking at the GP however may discourage residents from using sustainable transport to access the GP surgery, and as such may increase vehicles on the road, having a negative effect on climate change and air pollution due to increased greenhouse gas emissions in the village.

5.16.3 The provision of a GP surgery is also expected to have positive effects on the economy, through providing local employment opportunities.

5.17 Policy CNP I3: Water resources

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	+	+	+

5.17.1 This policy is expected to improve water quality. The policy will also contribute to ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to live in a decent home as a result on the policy's emphasis on securing good quality water supplies. It will also minimise health risk and ensure the appropriate treatment of waste sewerage.

5.18 Policy CNP I4: Surface and groundwater drainage

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	+	+	+

5.18.1 Managing flood risk in an appropriate manner is likely to have a positive influence on future economic growth and will support the rejuvenation of Cholsey and the visitor economy. Overall there is likely to be a positive effect on environmental objectives, as the policy approach will help to reduce the risk of flooding and the risk to property and people. The policy would have a substantial benefit in terms of reducing and managing the risk of flooding and reducing the effects of climate change. The CIRCA SuDS manual (2015) is highlighted as technical guidance on the planning, design, construction and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to assist with their effective implementation within both new and existing developments.

5.18.2 The policy will also ensure that the ecological value of waterways will not be compromised by flood risk management schemes. There is likely to be a positive effect on ensuring decent homes are provided away from areas of high flood risk and on enhancing accessibility and facilities through reducing flood risk and preventing risk to human health and well-being.

5.19 Policy CNP 15: The Forty

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	+	+	++

5.19.1 Positive effects on economic objectives are considered to occur as a result of this policy, as the village centres main function is to provide a range of shops and services. Improving the delivery, parking and operational arrangement for shops will encourage visitors to the area, and improve accessibility to shops around The Forty.

5.19.2 The effect on environmental objectives is considered to be largely neutral, with the concentration of development around The Forty. Neutral or positive effects are considered to occur on social objectives, with positive effects likely on the objective to improve accessibility to key services and facilities, again as a result of concentration of development within the village centre.

5.19.3 Negative effects are expected for the transport objective, as improved parking may encourage residents to rely on the car to access the shops/facilities. This would increase traffic in the village and may have adverse impacts on air pollution and climate change as a result of increased greenhouse gas emissions.

5.20 Policy CNP I6: Community facilities

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	+

5.20.1 This policy highlights the immense value of retail businesses in Cholsey. The policy states that change of use or redevelopment of any retail business is only to take place where it can be demonstrated that it is necessary. The policy performs positively for economic objectives, maintaining the amenity value of the village, and ensuring no net loss of shops, pubs, cafes or restaurants. This ensures the local economy is ongoing, and that tourism still features in the village.

5.20.2 The policy also has positive effects for social objectives, as residents hold great value to the retail businesses, contributing to vitality of the village, and maintaining ease of access to these services and facilities. Without which, residents would have to out-commute to neighbouring villages for shops, cafes, etc., which may increase car use.

5.21 Policy CNP 18: Recreation ground facilities

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+

5.21.1 This policy supports proposals which improve facilities at the recreation ground, including the provision of toilets and baby changing facilities, or improvements to the youth club in the pavilion. This policy is expected to have a positive effect on health and wellbeing as it encourages public access to leisure and recreation. Improvements to facilities are expected to make the recreational ground and pavilion more appealing to residents and tourists, encouraging uptake in sport and activity. This would contribute towards healthier lifestyles, and possibly increased community engagement at the recreational sites.

5.21.2 The policy has a neutral effect on environmental objectives, as development will likely be on previously developed land. Positive effects are expected for the economic objective as additional features to the recreational areas may encourage visitors to the area.

5.22 Policy CNP 19: Employment land

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	++

5.22.1 This policy gives protection to existing employment sites, supporting Cholsey's local economy. This has a positive effect on human health and well-being, ensuring access to employment opportunities in the village is maintained.

5.22.2 The effect on environmental objectives is considered to be largely neutral or positive, with positive effects likely in respect of reuse of previously developed land where it is demonstrated that no employment use is viable on the land.

5.22.3 Resisting the loss of employment land also has positive effects for transport and accessibility as the policy looks to maintain employment opportunities within the village, reducing out-commuting by residents.

5.23 Policy CNP I10: Working from home

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	++

5.23.1 This policy has positive effects for the economy, enabling residents to work from home and not out-commute for employment purposes. This also has positive effects for transport, as residents are not travelling to work, and as such positive effects are also expected for climate change and air pollution.

5.23.2 Working from home also benefits human health and quality of life. Two thirds of people want to work from home²⁶, with benefits including no commuting costs, and working on flexible hours which can be tailored to their specific lifestyle.

5.23.3 The effect on environmental objectives is considered to be neutral.

5.24 Policy CNP I11: Micro businesses

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	++

²⁶ Global Workplace Analytics (2015) Costs and Benefits. Available at: <http://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/resources/costs-benefits>

5.24.1 Positive effects on economic objectives are considered to occur as a result of this policy, as small scale businesses in or adjacent to the village would improve the local economy, improving business diversification, and offering employment opportunities for residents. As such, positive effects are also expected for social objectives, particularly human health and wellbeing. Accessible employment opportunities would contribute positively to residents' quality of life, and would also improve the education and skill level of residents.

5.24.2 The effect on environmental objectives is considered to be largely neutral or positive, with the concentration of development within or adjacent to the village leading to positive effects on reducing climate change. This will be as a result of minimising the need to travel, conserving the countryside and promoting the reuse of land.

5.25 Policy CNP I12: Allotments

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
++	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	++	0	0

5.25.1 This policy is expected to have considerable positive effects on environmental objectives, particularly on the objectives to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Often being located near housing developments, allotments are essential habitats for wildlife, acting as green corridors to connect habitats and species and maintain biodiversity in the area²⁷.

²⁷ National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd. (2017) Benefits of allotment gardening. Available at: <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/benefits-of-allotment-gardening/>

5.25.2 The policy will maintain allotment sites for recreational value as well as ensuring the provision of them within major housing schemes. This is expected to have positive effects for social objectives, improving human health and maintaining accessible green space for residents. It is highlighted that there are currently no vacancies, and residents are on a waiting list for allotment plots²⁸. Policy CNPI12 is expected to relieve this pressure and provide access for all to allotment plots, positively affecting residents' quality of life.

5.26 Policy CNP I13: Tourism

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	-	-	0	-	+	0	++

5.26.1 The policy would be expected to benefit the village's economy as it supports local tourism business. Promoting small scale proposals to support the Dame Agatha Christie Trail and The Cholsey & Wallingford Railway would have positive effects for social objectives in addition to economic, through possibly providing employment opportunities for residents. Improving signage to facilities would also likely encourage their use, and therefore increase visitors in the village. This would support all aspects of the local economy as visitors would likely use the local facilities, including cafes, restaurants, shops, and public houses.

5.26.2 Policy CNPI13 may have adverse impacts on some environmental objectives through the increase in visitors in the area. This may lead to increased traffic on roads, and therefore increased greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

²⁸ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan

5.27 Policy CNP T1: Walking, cycling and road safety

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+	+	0	++	+	0	+

5.27.1 This policy looks to improve traffic and road safety in Cholsey. The provision of junction arrangements and traffic calming will ensure that new development does not exacerbate existing traffic issues, and will look to reduce these issues.

5.27.2 Connecting residents to the walking and cycling network will have a positive impact on environmental and social objectives, for example through improving the route surface which joins the National Cycle Network Route 5. However, it is highlighted²⁹ that whilst developers are being pressed to provide convenient footpath and cycle paths within their developments, providing new dedicated cycle paths within the village is not likely to be possible due to the narrow width of many of the roads and the need to allow parking on both sides of the roads.

5.27.3 Nevertheless, where improved access to sustainable transport will be provided, this is expected to have positive effects for climate change mitigation, and improved air quality, benefitting human health. This is also expected to positively impact economic and social objectives, as improved access to sustainable transport will further improve access to key services and facilities. This is expected to enhance social inclusion by making facilities available to a larger percentage of the population, and reduce the dependency on the car.

5.28 Policy CNP T2: Public transport

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+	+	0	++	+	0	+

²⁹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan

5.28.1 Improving the range of sustainable transport available to new housing will boost the local economy through making facilities more easily accessible to a larger percentage of the population. This is also likely to enhance social inclusion by improving access for all.

5.28.2 Improving sustainable travel choices will also have a positive impact on reducing the effects of climate change and improved air quality, benefitting human health. The provision of housing within close proximity of bus or rail stops may also reduce reliance on the car. This is expected to reduce traffic hazards on roads and improve road safety due to less vehicles using the roads. Further to this, improved access to bus and train services may avoid parking issues around the village escalating.

5.29 Policy CNP ED1: Cholsey Primary School

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	++	0	++

5.29.1 This policy has positive effects on economy and education, through increasing the facilities at Cholsey Primary School for children, and reducing pressure on the existing school, and others in the surrounding villages. Increasing facilities at Cholsey Primary School will also improve the education and skill level of residents from an early age.

5.29.2 The provision of additional staff parking is expected to avoid speed and parking issues around the village from escalating, and positively impact the public realm through reduced on-street parking. This may have positive effects for transport through the reduction of congestion. As such positive effects may also result for climate change mitigation and air pollution as a result of reduced greenhouse gas emissions. However, whilst additional staff parking may reduce congestion around the school grounds, it may encourage staff to drive to the school rather than using sustainable transport methods. This would have a negative effect on transport, and resulting negative effects on climate change and pollution.

5.29.3 The policy performs positive for health and wellbeing through continuing to meet at least minimum requirements for playing fields and outdoor play space. Providing children with playing fields and play space is essential for healthy physical and emotional growth, for intellectual and educational development and for acquiring behavioral skills³⁰.

5.29.4 The provision of play space and playing fields may have positive effects for biodiversity, for example where trees, scrub and hedgerows may feature.

5.30 CNP ED2: Pre-school

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	++

5.30.1 This policy has positive effects on economy and education, through increasing access to pre-school for children, reducing pressure on existing pre-schools in and around Cholsey, and improving the education and skill level of residents from an early age.

5.30.2 The provision of a pre-school would also have economic benefits through providing employment opportunities for residents. This would positively impact residents' health and well-being through having sustainable access to employment in the village. Additionally, residents would benefit from a minimal commute to the pre-school for children, contributing positively to the overall quality of life of residents. This would have positive effects for the transport objective as there may be less car use to access the pre-school, and possible uptake of sustainable transport options. This would positively impact climate change mitigation and air pollution through the minimization of greenhouse gas emissions. Where the proposal includes parking access, when residents do drive, this is expected to avoid speed and parking issues around the village from escalating.

³⁰ Charter for Children's Play (2007) Play in schools and integrated settings: a position statement. Available at: <http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/120522/play-in-schools-integrated-settings.pdf>

6 Significant effects and mitigation

6.1 Site and policy assessments

6.1.1 Matrices of all the policies that were assessed as having uncertain or negative impacts on one or more SA Objectives have been collated in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1 Policies assessed as having uncertain impacts on one or more SA Objectives.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
CNP H7: Parking	0	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	+	-	+	0	0
CNP H8: Extensions	0	+	+	0	+/-	+/-	++	-	+	0	+
CNP I2: Doctor's surgery	+	+	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	++	0	+
CNP I5: The Forty	0	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	+	+	++
CNP I13: Tourism	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	-	+	0	++
CNP ED1: Cholsey Primary School	+	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	++	0	++

6.2 SEA Directive requirements

6.2.1 Annex I of the Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that the SA assessment must include:

“The likely significant effects (1) on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”

6.2.2 This SA report has assessed the reasonable alternatives and policies of the Cholsey NDP for their effects on the SA Objectives of the SA Framework that was developed by the Plan Group. The following sections discuss significant effects associated with topics established by Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive.

6.3 Air

6.3.1 The scoping report baseline states that the impacts of low air quality on ecosystem and human health are becoming ever more apparent. Numerous airborne particulates that are common emissions from the human way of life are now known to adversely impact ecosystem health, often in subtle and long-term ways³¹. Air quality has been identified as a key consideration in South Oxfordshire, however Cholsey is not located within close proximity to South Oxfordshire’s three AQMAs³².

6.3.2 The issue of air was taken into account under SA Objective 6 ‘Environmental Quality’ which seeks to reduce air, soil and water pollution. Common indicators of this objective include the location of AQMAs and the proximity of development to busy roads, industrial works and railway lines.

³¹ IAQM (2017) Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality, January 2017

³² South Oxfordshire District Council (2017) South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033. Second Preferred Options. Available at:
http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SODC%20LP2033%20nd%20preferred%20options%20CHAPTERS_2.pdf

6.3.3 Policies CNP H7, CNP H8, and CNP I2, CNP I5 and CNP ED1 were assessed as having uncertain effects on air quality as a result of the provision of car parking facilities in the village, encouraging car use. Policy CNP I13 has been assessed as having negative impacts on air quality as a result of increased visitors driving into the area.

Air – in-combination

6.3.4 The combined effect of constructing approximately 175 homes and increasing the number of people living and working in the village could potentially result in an increase in air pollution, particularly as a result of the increase in vehicular movements and associated congestion.

6.3.5 Residents of sites located adjacent to large roads and the railway station may suffer adverse health consequences as a result of the poor air quality.

Air – mitigation

6.3.6 Policies CNP T1 and T2 aim to reduce negative impacts of development on air quality, whilst also reducing the impacts of poor air quality on residents' and local ecosystem health. The policies look to implement traffic management techniques and increase access to sustainable transport methods for residents.

6.3.7 To ensure that Cholsey NDP is in line with the SEA Directive and paragraph 124 of the NPPF, it is recommended that the following measures are also considered:

- Preference should be given to avoiding exposing residents to the pollutants by attempting to eliminate their source in the local area. This may include ensuring there are sustainable transport links to that location, such as bus, rail, electric car charging points and improving pedestrian and cycle access;
- Tree line roads, canyon wall greening and other forms of green infrastructure to clean polluted air or create 'filtered avenues' in which air is cleaner;
- Off-setting a development's air quality impacts can improve air quality elsewhere, but should only be considered once options for preventing and reducing impacts have been exhausted;

- Raise public awareness to the issue of air quality and the steps residents can take to minimise their contribution to air pollution, such as by opting for sustainable transport methods;
- Enforce speed limits in residential areas to reduce vehicular traffic pollution; and
- Revegetate disturbed areas as soon as possible after disturbance, along with other dust abatement issues.

6.3.8 To better understand predicted congestion levels, road traffic research and modelling is recommended. This will help future planning in general, but the proposed development should research this issue as part of the design brief for the site.

6.4 Biodiversity, fauna and flora

6.4.1 Biodiversity, flora and fauna were predominantly considered under SA Objective 1 'Biodiversity and geodiversity' which, in part, aims to help protect and enhance the natural heritage of the village. Impacts on this objective are considered to be indicated by factors including:

- Location and condition of areas considered important in terms of biodiversity, including SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites, SSSIs, SINCs, NNRs and LNRs;
- Impact of the proposal on Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland.

6.4.2 No policies of the CNP are anticipated to have an adverse or uncertain impact on biodiversity.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna - in-combination effects

6.4.3 The cumulative impacts of the site and projected increase in residents in the village could potentially lead to an overall increase in recreational pressures on important biodiversity features in the surrounding area but this is considered unlikely.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna - mitigation

6.4.4 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states the planning system should contribute to the natural and local environment, not only by minimising impacts on biodiversity, but also by *“providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient...”*.

6.4.5 Cholsey NDP goes some way towards protecting biodiversity in the village. It is recommended that additional efforts are made to help ensure there is a net gain in biodiversity as a result of proposed development within the NDP. Such efforts may include:

- Directing all development away from areas of important biodiversity;
- Where development cannot be directed away from areas of important biodiversity, provide compensatory habitat of at least the same size and condition at an alternative location;
- A large reason for the decline in biodiversity in the UK is because habitats are becoming increasingly fragmented and isolated and are therefore less able to support a rich ecology³³. To the extent that it is feasible, it is recommended that areas considered to be important for biodiversity, flora and fauna are connected as much as possible. Corridors such as hedgerows, strips of woodland or fields set to fallow can form effective connections between wildlife sites. Patches of habitats can also be used for a ‘stepping stone’ effect³⁴.

6.5 Climatic factors

6.5.1 Climate change is anticipated to increase the risk of natural disasters to the village, for example through flooding. The issue is was taken into account in SA Objective 4 *‘Climate change adaptation’*, which seeks to plan for the anticipated levels of climate change, and SA Objective 5 *‘Climate change mitigation’* which focuses on reducing contributions to climate change.

³³ DEFRA (2010) Making Space for Nature: A review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network

³⁴ Moseley. D, Ray. D, Watts. K, & Humphrey. J (2008) Forest Habitats Network Scotland. Contract report to Forestry Commission Scotland, Forestry Commission GB and Scottish Natural Heritage. 18 February 2008

6.5.2 Determining the NDP's contribution to greenhouse gases is indicated by green infrastructure, the sustainable forms of transport on offer and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources. Policy CNP H5 says new housing must meet the challenge of climate change without specifying how. CNP H7 records uncertain effects on climate change associated with an increase in car use. CNP I13 has been assessed as having negative effects on climate change. This is where policies address the provision of parking. Encouraging the ownership of, and therefore use of, the car is expected to have negative effects for climate change through increases in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

6.5.3 Policies CNP I2, CNP I5 and CNP ED1 were assessed as having an uncertain impact on climate change. This is where policies provide both positive and negative effects for climate change and there is not yet enough detail available to accurately assess the policy outcome.

Climatic factors - in-combination

6.5.4 The construction of at least 175 residential units, as well as the infrastructure developments proposed (extensions to Cholsey School and the provision of a new pre-school for example), may rely on the use of materials known to have a high carbon footprint such as concrete, cement and steel. Policy CNP H5 aims to meet the challenge of climate change but needs to be more specific to be effective.

6.5.5 New residents, employees, school children, and visitors in the village may lead to an increase in consumption and energy demands of the village, such as petrol for cars, gas for homes or electricity for business. This is likely to include non-renewably sourced energy and the adverse effects of greenhouse gas emissions.

Climatic factors - mitigation

6.5.6 The CNP takes into consideration the issue of climate change, with Policy CNP H5 stating that *'permission will be granted for new housing in Cholsey where the proposal meets the challenge of climate change'*. It would help if the plan could specify more clearly how proposals might meet the challenge of climate change. The CNP also asks all new development in Cholsey to use the South Oxfordshire Design Guide³⁵. This encourages the use of renewable energy, which would support development proposals for the production of renewable energy and associated infrastructure. Other policies also take in to account issues relevant to climate change.

6.5.7 To ensure that the NDP is in line with the SEA Directive and Chapter 10 of the NPPF, it is recommended that the following mitigation measures be considered:

- Where feasible, promote the use of renewable sources of energy and materials during the construction of new buildings;
- Where feasible, promote the inclusion of green infrastructure in development design. Green infrastructure that connects with green infrastructure in other locations, and forms a functioning ecological network, is highly desirable; and
- Improve sustainable transport links, such as footpaths, cycle paths, bus links and rail links, where feasible for sites currently considered to have sub-optimal sustainable transport options.

6.6 Cultural heritage (inc. architectural & archaeological heritage) and material assets

6.6.1 Cholsey has a rich cultural heritage which includes heritage tourism, and a broad range of archeological features, in addition to heritage assets such as listed buildings and a conservation area. No policies were assessed as having adverse or uncertain impacts on heritage assets or cultural heritage.

Cultural heritage and material assets – in-combination

³⁵ South Oxfordshire Destruct Council (2016) South Oxfordshire Design Guide. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/conservation-and-design/design/design-guide>

6.6.2 No adverse effects are anticipated.

Cultural heritage and material assets – mitigation

6.6.3 Policy CNP E3 requires proposals within the Cholsey Conservation Area and those affecting a listed building or its setting to 'identify the importance of the site and its setting and must be well designed to conserve, respect and ensure the continued enjoyment of the historic context and character of Cholsey's important historic environment.' Policy CNP E3 further requests that 'all proposals must identify the archaeological importance of the site and be designed to record or conserve the historic remains as appropriate'.

6.6.4 To help ensure that the CNP is in line with the SEA Directive, and Paragraph 115 of the NPPF, it is recommended that the following measures are also considered:

- Employ screening vegetation, such as mature locally sourced native trees, to minimise the impacts of site development on the setting of areas of cultural significance. This would also be beneficial to other objectives, such as biodiversity and flora;
- New development is also the opportunity to improve the setting to some extent, such as by restoring or revealing historic views or by improving public access;
- Try to ensure that, where development in the vicinity of sites of cultural significance is unavoidable, public access to the historic site is maintained or enhanced; and
- While no records for archaeology exist at CHOL2, the proposed development should undertake a preliminary archaeological investigation.

6.7 Human health

6.7.1 No policies of the NDP are anticipated to have an adverse or uncertain impact on human health.

6.7.2 Access to health facilities for the village's residents is highlighted as a cause for concern. Since the nearest GP surgery is over 2km from all sites, and the nearest hospital being over 12 miles from all sites.

Human health – in-combination effects

6.7.3 Being located outside of the target distance for health facilities may mean that residents do not receive the medical attention they need. This is exacerbated by the cumulative impact of increased residents in the village. Pressure is expected to be placed on the limited existing health facilities, and as such capacity may be reached, resulting in residents travelling further for accessible health care.

6.7.4 All sites would have to use either public transport or the car to access health facilities, which may put extra strain on the roads, causing congestion, and possibly increased greenhouse gas emissions. The cumulative effects of these sites when considered in-combination could potentially lead to long term adverse impacts on the health of some residents.

Human health - mitigation

6.7.5 Policies CNP T1 and T2 look to improve access to sustainable transport and implement traffic calming methods. These policies may increase access for residents to health services, and improve congestion on roads. This may reduce potential negative in-combination effects predicted for human health.

6.7.6 To help ensure that the CNP is in line with the SEA Directive and Paragraph 7 of the NPPF, it is recommended that:

- Accessible green space and recreational space should be incorporated into new development proposals.
- Issues regarding inaccessibility of health services could be mitigated by the provision of new, accessible health services; and
- As distances to GP surgeries and hospitals are greater than the satisfactory distance, make available sustainable transport methods to existing services that have the capacity for new patients.

6.8 Landscape

6.8.1 The issue of landscape was considered under SA Objective 2 '*Landscape and townscape*', which aims to conserve, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape whilst maintaining and strengthening its distinctiveness. Cholsey consists of high quality landscape and townscape. It lies in close proximity and the setting of two nationally important landscapes, the Chilterns AONB and North Wessex Downs AONB. It is important that new development carefully considers the setting of the AONBs and minimises potential adverse effects.

6.8.2 The 2004 Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment³⁶ suggests that the pressure for housing development is a key issue with regards to protecting the landscape. Some general conclusions are that:

- the unspoilt, rural landscapes of the Wessex Downs, Sinodun Hills, floodplain pastures and parkland/estate landscapes are particularly sensitive to change and therefore less able to accommodate new development;
- development within visually exposed landscapes such as the denuded arable downs and the open flat farmland of the floodplain, will be highly prominent;
- landscapes with strong landform and a mature structure of woods and hedgerows may be more able to absorb small-scale development, as long as it is in character with the locality, carefully sited and well-integrated;
- landscapes on the fringes of settlements are particularly vulnerable to change and special attention should be paid to creating strong landscape 'edges' to reduce the urbanising influences of development on adjacent countryside and to prevent the coalescence of settlements;
- any new development on the fringes of Didcot and Wallingford should avoid visually exposed areas and prominent skylines, and be well-integrated within new landscape frameworks, which provide a strong edge to the built area, to minimise its wider impact on the landscape.

³⁶ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

6.8.3 Policy CNP H1 was recorded as having uncertain impacts on the landscape Objective. This was because of the large, open nature of CHOL2, and the uncertainty as to whether the mitigation proposed would be sufficient.

Landscape – in-combination effects

6.8.4 The synergistic impact of CHOL1 and part of CHOL7 with the existing built form of the village may integrate well with appropriate design and green infrastructure. The change in magnitude may lead to adverse effects, however the planned location of new build appears to fit neatly with the current built form (see Proposals Map on page 79 of the CNP).

Landscape – mitigation

6.8.5 Policy CNP H5 requires, in part, for development proposals to ‘provide an attractive environment maintaining Cholsey’s distinctiveness’, and to ‘provide for sufficient landscaping to soften the impact of the buildings and of the village in the wider landscape’.

6.8.6 Policy CNP H5 is therefore anticipated to mitigate to a limited extent the adverse impacts of the proposed development of these sites on the landscape. However, where sites have strong visual links with the two AONBs, it is not expected that Policy CNP H5 would be sufficient to alleviate adverse impacts on the landscape and its visual amenity.

6.8.7 Some site specific mitigation is presented in the Landscape Character & Capacity Assessment³⁷, which includes ‘providing native tree planting to soften settlement edge and views from the settlement’, and ‘additional tree planning on the boundaries to help integrate development. This is expected to contribute towards mitigating the adverse impacts of housing on the landscape.

6.8.8 To help ensure that the NDP is in line with the SEA Directive and the NPPF, it is recommended that the following mitigation measures are considered:

- Where feasible, require developers to employ techniques that integrate the development in to the surrounding landscape. This

³⁷ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

could involve earth mounding, screen planting, specialist grassland or planting locally sourced native trees with linkages to existing woodland;

- Attempt to mitigate the impacts of any development on the tranquil and peaceful nature of landscapes by minimising noise and light pollution. This could involve noise reducing asphalt in roads, noise barrier, noise attenuation fence and low watt street lights at a zero degree inclination; and
- Preservation of strategic views.

6.9 Population and Material Assets

6.9.1 The issue of population is a broad one and was considered to be tackled in SA Objectives 7 '*Housing*', 8 '*Transport*', and 11 '*Economy*'. The combined effect of these objectives is anticipated to help result in residents who live a higher quality of life for longer, are well educated and have the necessary skills to gain employment and succeed in modern society. Indicators of these objectives include the proximity of sites to schools, accessibility to employment land, proximity to services and amenities.

6.9.2 The development of a pre-school in Cholsey would have a positive residual effect for the population.

6.9.3 Policies CNP H7, CNP H8 and CNP I13 were assessed as having adverse impacts on SA Objective 8 '*Transport*'. This was due to the parking provisions included in the policies. Whilst parking provisions may increase car use in the village, these policies have strong positive effects for housing, which would strongly benefit the population.

6.9.4 Policies CNP I2, CNP I5 and CNP ED1 were assessed as having uncertain impacts on SA Objective 8 '*Transport*'. This is due to the residual effect of the policies on transport being unknown. The policies promote sustainable transport however also support the provision of parking and therefore without more detail the impact of the policy on the issue is uncertain.

Population and Material Assets - in-combination effects

- 6.9.5 Despite the adverse impacts of some policies, overall the NDP is considered likely to have a positive in-combination impact on the population of the village.

Population and Material Assets - mitigation

- 6.9.6 To help ensure that the CNP is in line with the SEA Directive and Paragraphs 18 - 22 of the NPPF, it is recommended that:

- Educational facilities should be able to cope with demand for places; and
- Should residential areas not have reasonable access to community facilities, attempt to improve this accessibility where feasible such as by improving bus links.

6.10 Soil

- 6.10.1 Soil provides the village with a range of services that justify its protection. Nutrient rich soil with a stable structure can produce high yields of a wide variety of agricultural crops. It enhances biodiversity above and below ground, thereby contributing to a rich flora and fauna community. It can reduce flood risk, alleviate flood damage and improve local water and air quality to the benefit of ecosystem and human health.

- 6.10.2 The issue of soil was taken in to consideration under SA Objective 9 '*Material Assets*', which seeks to protect, conserve and ensure efficient use of the village's natural resources.

- 6.10.3 Some sites have been assessed as having an adverse impact on the SA Objective 9 '*Material Assets*'. The cause of the adverse impacts is predominantly because these sites are located on some of the area's best and most versatile agricultural land, Agricultural Land Classification Grade 2. Such soil is nutrient rich and stable in structure. The proposed development would likely impact the health of the soil and reduce its ability to function, such as by increasing soil erosion, soil contamination, soil compaction and soil salinity. It would also likely result in a declining soil organic matter. Degraded soil does not provide the village with the same services healthy soil does.

Soil - in-combination effects

6.10.4 It is very difficult to conserve or replace the soil resource associated with ALC Grade 2. However, there are no perceivable in-combination effects.

Soil - mitigation

6.10.5 There are currently no policies within the NDP which include the requirement for the conservation of soil resources.

6.10.6 To help ensure the NDP is in line with the SEA directive and the NPPF, and that the village's soil resources are indeed protected, it is recommended that the following measures are also considered:

- Development should be directed to areas of previously developed land as much as is feasible;
- Careful consideration should be given during the construction phase for the risk of soil contamination; and
- Bare ground should be avoided as much as possible to minimise the risk of soil erosion. Locally sourced native vegetation can provide suitable cover whilst preserving soil health.

6.11 Water

6.11.1 Water quality and waste water treatment are expressly discussed in the CNP and are important sustainability considerations. Water supply in the Swindon and Oxfordshire water resource zone of the Thames Water Resource Management Plan indicates that there will be a deficit in supply by the year 2020 without intervention measures to increase supply or reduce demand for water (see Figure 6.1).

6.11.2 The deficit is principally driven by the impact of climate change on groundwater sources and therefore a reduction in available deployable output.

Water resource zone	2011	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
London	18.8	-59.4	-132.7	-213.1	-291.7	-361.1	-415.9
Swindon and Oxfordshire	37.34	27.08	-0.14	-12.05	-21.30	-26.70	-32.66
Slough, Wycombe and Aylesbury	21.47	11.57	7.93	4.89	0.77	-2.60	-6.09
Guildford	6.85	0.85	0.06	-1.14	-2.14	-2.85	-3.80
Henley	5.32	5.14	4.76	4.31	3.80	3.26	2.67
Kennet Valley	41.25	26.05	21.68	16.38	11.41	7.84	5.49

Note the data are in Ml/d with deficits shown in bold red.

Figure 6.1: v (reproduced from the Thames Water Final Water Resources Management Plan³⁸)

6.11.3 The recommendations in Policy CNP I3 provide strong and effective mitigation measures to address both water supply and waste water treatment issues.

Water - in-combination effects

6.11.4 Water demand and supply issues are wrapped up with potentially complex effects of climate change and biodiversity. Measures to combat this issue are essential. Policy CNP I3 seeks to achieve this.

Water - mitigation

6.11.5 Policy CNP I4 of the NDP is dedicated to managing flood risk and drainage problems. The policy states that ‘all proposals for new housing must demonstrate that they will not exacerbate surface and groundwater drainage and flooding problems. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be incorporated into development proposals where possible. Developers will be encouraged to follow recommendations from ‘The SuDS Manual’.³⁰

6.11.6 In order to help ensure that the CNP is in line with the SEA directive and Paragraph 100 of the NPPF, it is recommended that the following mitigation measures are considered:

- Take full advantage of the ability for woodland and dense vegetation growth to reduce surface run off and diminish flood risk.

³⁸ Thames Water (2014) Final Water Resources Management Plan 2015-2040

https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Thames-Water/Corporate/AboutUs/Our-strategies-and-plans/Water-resources/Our-current-plan-WRMP14/WRMP14_Section_0.ashx?la=en

Employing woodland to 'slow the flow' of water downslope can also contribute to other SEA issues, such as landscape and biodiversity.

6.11.7 The recommendations in Policy CNP I3 provide strong and effective mitigation measures to address both water supply and waste water treatment issues.

6.12 Evolution of the baseline without the CNP

6.12.1 The Scoping report identified that If uncontrolled development takes place, without a sustainable planning framework such as that offered by the CNP, the environmental baseline could evolve in the following ways:

- poor air quality in pollution hotspots caused mainly by traffic emissions could worsen;
- water quality, which is presently good, could worsen;
- stress on diminishing water resources could increase;
- habitats and species of nature conservation importance could be threatened;
- areas of valued countryside and attractive landscape could be harmed or destroyed;
- natural resources could be used imprudently;
- a fine heritage of buildings and places of architectural or historic interest and important archaeological remains could be harmed or destroyed;
- greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and transport could be marginally higher;
- development could take place where there is a dependency on the private motorcar increasing the risk of environmental degradation and discouraging walking and cycling with subsequent impacts on human health;
- people and property could be located in places at risk of flooding; and
- the amount of waste requiring disposal to land fill could be greater.

7 Monitoring and Next Steps

7.1 Monitoring

7.1.1 The SEA Directive states that ‘member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes... in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action’ (Article 10.1). In addition, the Environmental Report should provide information on a ‘description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring’ (Annex I (i)).

7.1.2 The monitoring requirements typically associated with the SA process are recognised as placing heavy demands on authorities with SA responsibilities. For this reason, the proposed monitoring framework should focus on those aspects of the environment that are likely to be negatively impacted upon, where the impact is uncertain or where particular opportunities for improvement might arise.

7.1.3 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the environmental effects of the CNP, as well as to measure success against the plan’s objectives. It is therefore beneficial if the monitoring strategy builds on monitoring systems that are already in place. It should also be noted that monitoring could provide useful information for future plans and programmes.

7.1.4 The SA process has identified residual negative or uncertain effects associated with proposals in the CNP. Monitoring of these predicted effects is recommended and is particularly useful in answering the following questions:

- Were the assessment’s predictions of sustainability effects accurate?
- Does the CNP contribute to the achievement of desired sustainability objectives?
- Are mitigation measures performing as well as expected?
- Are there any unforeseen adverse effects? Are these within acceptable limits, or is remedial action required?

7.2 Monitoring Proposals

- 7.2.1 Monitoring proposals have been set out in **Table 7.1**.
- 7.2.2 SA monitoring and reporting activities can be integrated into the regular planning cycle. As part of the monitoring process, South Oxfordshire District Council currently prepare an annual Authorities Monitoring Report. It is anticipated that the NDP Group could work with South Oxfordshire District Council to incorporate elements of the SA monitoring programme for the NDP into this process.
- 7.2.3 Details of any monitoring programme is, at this stage, preliminary and may evolve over time based on the results of consultation and the identification of additional data sources (as in some cases information will be provided by outside bodies). The monitoring of individual schemes/proposals should also be addressed at project level.

Table 7.1: Monitoring recommendations

Potential adverse effect, or area to be monitored	Indicator	Frequency of monitoring and scale	Trigger
Increased use of private cars for transportation	Traffic flows on key routes	Annually, key routes.	Traffic flows increase year on year.
Lack of use of sustainable transport	Proportion of the population using public transport or travelling by foot / bike	Annually, key routes.	Sustainable transport use decreases year on year
Needs of residents are not met locally	Accessibility and capacity of nearest necessary services and amenities	Annually, entire plan area.	No increase in accessibility and facilities are at capacity due to additional residents
Decrease in air quality due to increases in traffic	Levels of air pollution	Annually, entire plan area.	Air pollution increases year on year
Degradation and reduction of areas of s.41 priority habitat	Area and quality of s.41 priority habitat	Annually, Local to s.41 priority habitats	Area and quality of priority habitat decreases year on year
Decline in biodiversity	Species richness amongst s.41 species	Annually, entire plan area.	Decrease in species richness year-on-year
Cholsey's increasing contribution to climate change.	Carbon footprint of the village: carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide emissions	Annually, whole plan area.	When emissions increase year on year.
Degradation in sensitive landscape areas identified by Landscape Character & Capacity Assessment (2017) or valued landscapes identified through para 109 of the NPPF.	Amount of new development within proximity sensitive and/or valued landscape areas (Chilterns AONB & North Wessex Downs AONB) and number of important landscape features lost.	Annually, whole plan area.	Increasing development near sensitive and /or valued landscape areas and loss of important landscape features identified in the Landscape Character & Capacity Assessment (2017).
Loss of grade 3a and above agricultural land	Amount of new development on grade 3a or above agricultural land	Annually, local to areas of grade 3a or above agricultural land	Increasing amount of development on grade 3a or above agricultural land
Suitability of bus services	Proportion of residents who travel by bus	Annually, entire plan area	No change or year on year decrease

7.3 Next Steps

- 7.3.1 This SA Report has been published alongside the Cholsey Neighbourhood Development Plan. A period of consultation will provide an opportunity for individuals, businesses and other organisations to submit representations regarding the pre-submission CNP. These comments will be taken into account in the preparation of a revised version NDP if appropriate and accompanying SA Report.

7.4 Commenting on the SA Report

- 7.4.1 If you wish to raise any queries regarding this document or what it includes, please contact the Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Team using the details below:

Email: info@cholsey-plan.com

Phone: 01491 652255 (Cholsey Parish Council).

8 APPENDIX A: Site assessments

8.1 Site assessments

8.1.1 The following eight sites have been identified by the CNP team in their document called 'Site Assessments - May 2017'.

8.2 CHOL 1 - East End Farm

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	-	-	+/-	0	+/-	+	+	--	-	+

8.2.1 CHOL1 is currently in use as farmyard and grazing paddocks, and has been proposed for 62 dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	<p>The site is seen to be of low ecological value, being made up primarily of improved grassland, with some scattered hedgerows and areas of built form. This includes farm buildings, and possible a residential dwelling in the north of the site. It is highlighted in the CHOL1 Site Assessment³⁹ that one of the existing buildings within the site boundary contains a low status roost for common pipistrelle bats. Habitats within the farmyard area and on the site periphery are further highlighted as having a strong population of slow-worm, grass snake and common lizard.</p> <p>There is an area of traditional orchard adjacent to the north east boundary of the site. This is a priority habitat, which development has the potential to adversely impact.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Development is required to include an area of ecological compensation for reptiles. Further to this it is stressed that a mitigation and translocation strategy will be needed to ensure the reptile population is properly protected⁴⁰.</p>

³⁹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁴⁰ Ibid.

SA2 Landscape	<p>The site is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. This LCT is required to improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of built areas, and mitigate adverse impacts on the surrounding countryside the unspoilt, rural landscapes of the Wessex Downs, Sinodun Hills, floodplain pastures and parkland/estate landscapes. The site has the potential to alter views from the existing residential properties to the west and south. The Landscape Character & Capacity Study⁴¹ states that the site is visually enclosed to a large extent, which may minimize impact on views, being largely separated from the wider landscape. The site is 472m from the nearest AONB (which is North Wessex Downs), having negligible impact on this landscape feature. Rather, development would be in keeping with the surrounding development. CHOL1 would be an extension of the urban centre of Cholsey into the open landscape and may set precedent for further development to the north east of the settlement. There is potential for development to extend on Wallingford Road, to the east, losing the characteristic ribbon development which currently exists. Overall, the Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment (2017) states that the site has an overall landscape sensitivity as Medium/Low.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure - including those identified in the South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (SOGIS)⁴²: Additional tree planting on the boundaries would enhance the settlement edge.</p>
SA3 Cultural Heritage	<p>'Duxford' is a Grade II listed building located 20m north west of the site. Development has the potential to adversely impact this feature and its setting. The site is also within an area of archaeological interest. The site assessment⁴³ states that a geophysical survey 200m south of the site has recorded archaeological features including a trackway and a series of enclosures which are likely to be of a later prehistoric or Roman date. Three Bronze Age barrows have been recorded from aerial photographs 500m east of the site and medieval remains have been found to the south.</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation undertaken on the site recorded a number of Bronze Age settlement features.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>A programme of archaeological investigation will need to be undertaken ahead of any development.</p>

⁴¹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	<p>The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding. The CHOL1 site assessment⁴⁴ highlights on behalf of SODC Drainage Engineers that existing site peak groundwater levels and drainage system needs investigation.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: Detailed SuDs proposals accompanying the development based on existing site peak groundwater levels.</p>
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.1km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. This is however 460m from the southern part of the site, and therefore not within the target distance. For residents in the north of the site, the bus service would serve as an efficient sustainable transport mode to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.</p>
SA6 Environmental Quality	<p>Concerns have been raised by SODC Environmental Team⁴⁵ that the site may be exposed to noise pollution from the nearby road and railway to the east of the site. This is to be further investigated, and as such the extent of impact remains uncertain.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: Further investigations into potential noise pollution.</p>
SA7 Housing	<p>The proposed development will contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.</p>
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.1km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. This is however 460m from the southern part of the site, and therefore not within the target distance. For residents in the north of the site, the bus service would serve as an efficient sustainable transport mode to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular</p>

⁴⁴ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁴⁵ Ibid.

	<p>route. Residents to the south of the site may use the bus stop on Wallingford Road, however due to exceeding 400m in distance, may also be inclined to rely on the car as the primary mode of transport.</p>
<p>SA9 Health</p>	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 2.4km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents are expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is not a leisure centre within 2km, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club and The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows. The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows is 700m from the site, offering a range of community facilities including a pavilion and cricket pitch, allotments, and a range of clubs and societies. There is also Cholsey Pavillion, Recreational Ground and allotments in Station Road, 800m from the site. These facilities provides residents with a variety of opportunity for sport and recreation.</p> <p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>The site is located predominately on greenfield land, with some areas of previously developed land. The development of previously developed land has a positive impact on the area's natural resources. Land contamination identified at CHOL1. Recommendations have been made for further intrusive investigation prior to development.</p> <p>This site is located within Grade 2 agricultural land. This is seen to be best and most versatile, and as such development of the site is expected to lead to loss of this resource.</p> <p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre 0.4km from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house.</p> <p>Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is within 500m.</p>

	The nearest secondary school, however, is 2.6km from the site which is outside of the target distance. This is however expected to be accessed via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford.
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8.3 CHOL4 - Kentwood Farm

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	--	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	0	+

8.3.1 CHOL4 is currently under grazing use. The capacity of the site is unknown at this stage.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	<p>The site is made up of two arable and improved pasture land parcels. Hedgerows line the site along the north-eastern boundary, with some mature trees and scrub where the site joins residential development off Papist Way. These may have connectivity functions for biodiversity.</p> <p>There is also a patch of woodland on the north-eastern boundary where Honey Lane meets Paptist Way. Development has the potential to adversely impact these habitats and any associated species.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
SA2 Landscape	<p>CHOL4 is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. This LCT seeks to retain important views from chalk downland and greensand hills but encourage some replacement of hedgerows and woodland planting. The site holds these landscape characteristics, being described by the Landscape & Character Capacity Assessment⁴⁶ as <i>'semi-enclosed rolling downs of higher landscape quality'</i>. CHOL4 is located immediately south of the existing urban area, and wholly within the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>Development into the AONB would have adverse impacts on both the character of the landscape and its visual amenity⁴⁷. Development at CHOL4 would encroach upon the AONB, extending and changing the existing settlement pattern, and adversely impacting high value views from the urban area. CHOL4 has strong visual links with the wider AONB, and as such, adverse visual impacts would be expected from residential dwellings to the north, and from the footpath running</p>

⁴⁶ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

⁴⁷ Atlantic Consultants (2003) South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment: Character Area 7: Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/policy-publications/south>

	through the middle of the site.
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
SA3 Cultural Heritage	Development of CHOL4 is expected to have a negligible effect on cultural heritage.
SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 400m west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Papist Way, adjacent to the site. Services provide residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. The sustainable transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.</p>
SA6 Environmental Quality	Effects of development at CHOL4 on environmental quality is expected to be negligible.
SA7 Housing	The proposed development would contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 400m west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Papist Way, adjacent to the site. These bus services will provide residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to reduce dependency on the car and improving access to local services and facilities from the site.</p>
SA9 Health	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p>

	<p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 3.2km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is not a leisure centre within 2km of the site, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club and The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows. The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows is 1km from the site, offering a range of community facilities including a pavilion and cricket pitch, allotments, and a range of clubs and societies. This provides residents with a variety of opportunity for sport and recreation.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>Development of CHOL4 is expected to have negligible impacts on Material Assets.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre, 0.5km from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is within 700m. The nearest secondary school, however, is 3.3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. Residents may be able to access the secondary school via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. However, it is also likely that some residents may depend on the car as the primary mode of transport to access secondary schools.</p>

8.4 CHOL5 - Land north east of Church Road

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	-	-	--	0	+/-	+	+	--	+/-	+

8.4.1 CHOL5 is made up of an arable land parcel. This site has been proposed for 100+ dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	<p>The site consists of an arable field with sparse hedgerows and trees along the site boundaries. These trees/hedgerows may act as a corridor to provide and connect habitats for species⁴⁸, and should be retained where possible.</p> <p>Development should also consider parcel of woodland to the south west of the site. This is likely to be rich in biodiversity, and as such development should look to mitigate any potential adverse effects that may occur. Development has the potential to adversely impact these features, which would have a negative impact on these habitats, associated species, and possibly habitat connectivity across the village.</p> <p>There are also potential adverse impacts on biodiversity related to the watercourse to the south of the site. This is highlighted as a potential water vole habitat, in addition to having other biodiversity qualities. Survey reports and mitigation plans are required for development that could affect protected species.⁴⁹ The site assessment⁵⁰ states development should include a good buffer to the watercourse on the southern edge of the site, mitigating any potential adverse effects.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>The site assessment⁵¹ states development should include a good buffer to the watercourse on the southern edge of the site, mitigating any potential adverse effects.</p>

⁴⁸ Ignatieva, M., Stewart, G.H., and Meurk, C. (2011) Planning and Design of Ecological Networks in Urban Areas. Landscape and Ecological Engineering. 7.17-25.

⁴⁹ Gov.uk Guidance: Water Voles: Surveys and mitigation for development projects. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-voles-protection-surveys-and-licences>

⁵⁰ ⁵⁰ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁵¹ ⁵¹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

SA2 Landscape	<p>The site is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. This LCT aspires to improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of built areas⁵². CHOL5 is an arable field on the northern edge of the village, extending development on Church Road. CHOL5 is slightly disconnected from the urban centre, and would extend the built form northwest, to the North Wessex Downs AONB boundary. Consideration should be given to the impact of new development on the AONB, on both its character and on views from the village, southeast and southwest of the site. There is also a footpath 80m north of the site. Adverse visual impacts would be expected from the footpath and nearby residential dwellings, losing the characteristic, high value views.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
SA3 Cultural Heritage	<p>Causeway House Grade II listed building is located 75m south east of the site. Development has the potential to adversely impact the setting of this feature. Archaeological constraints are highlighted in the Site Assessment⁵³. These are to be further investigated, and as such the effect on cultural heritage is unknown.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	<p>Part of the site, particularly along the eastern and southern boundaries is located in Flood Zone 2, which has medium probability of flooding, and Flood Zone 3, which is of high probability of flooding. In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, residential development should not be located within Flood Zone 3b⁵⁴. Residential development within Flood Zone 3a would be subject to the Exception Test.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	<p>Cholsey train station is located 1.1km southeast of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, 460m from the furthest edge of the site. This is outside of the 400m target distance; however, residents are likely to still use the service. The 136 bus service provides residents with access to nearby</p>

⁵² Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

⁵³ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁵⁴ Planning Practice Guidance (2014) Flood Zone and Flood Risk Tables
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/flood-zone-and-flood-risk-tables/table-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-and-flood-zone-compatibility/>

	<p>villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson.</p> <p>Residents may be further inclined to use the car as the primary mode of transport due to the direct access to Church Road. Church Road runs north from the site towards neighbouring villages South Moreton and Didcot. Considering the sustainable transport options available, any resulting impacts on greenhouse gas emissions is expected to be negligible.</p>
SA6 Environment al Quality	<p>The Site Assessment⁵⁵ highlights potential impacts of noise pollution from Cholsey and Wallingford railway, located adjacent to the site.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Consider whether mitigation is required⁵⁶.</p>
SA7 Housing	<p>The proposed development will contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.</p>
SA8 Transport	<p>Cholsey train station is located 1.1km southeast of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, 460m from the furthest edge of the site. This is outside of the 400m target distance; however, residents are likely to still use the service. The 136 bus service provides residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>Whilst the sustainable transport options available are expected to provide access to local services and facilities from the site, residents may also rely on the car for transport. The site is adjacent to Church Road which runs north out of the village to nearby villages South Moreton and Didcot.</p>

⁵⁵ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁵⁶ Ibid.

<p>SA9 Health</p>	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 2.6km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is accessible open space adjacent to the site in the form of playing fields. These playing fields meet the southwestern boundary of the site, and would provide residents with excellent access to outdoor recreation. There is not a leisure centre within 2km, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club, 250m north west, of the site and the Cholsey Pavillion, Recreation Ground and allotments in Station Road are 650m south of the site. Access to open space and recreational facilities is expected to have a positive impact on human health and quality of life.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>The site is located within Grade 3 agricultural land. It is not known if this is Grade 3a or 3b. Grade 3a land is seen to be best and most versatile, and as such development may result in the loss of this resource.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre, 400m from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has excellent access to Cholsey Primary School, which is adjacent to the site to the south. The nearest secondary school, however, is 3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. Residents may be able to access the secondary school via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. However, some residents may also rely on the car to access these facilities.</p>

8.5 CHOL6 - Land north of Church Road and north west of Wallingford Road

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
-	-	-	--	+	0	+	++	--	+/-	+

8.5.1 This site is located to the north of the village, north of Church Road and north west of Wallingford Road. CHOL6 is made up of predominately pasture agricultural land parcels. The site has been proposed for 65 dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	<p>The site consists of agricultural field parcels with hedgerows and trees lining the site boundaries. These trees/hedgerows may act as a corridor to provide and connect habitats for species⁵⁷, and should be retained where possible.</p> <p>Development should also consider the patch of woodland to the north east of the site, crossing two land parcels in a linear strip. This is likely to be rich in biodiversity, possibly home to s.41 NERC Act priority species⁵⁸.</p> <p>Development has the potential to adversely affect these biodiverse features, dependent on design and layout. Fragmentation and/or loss of such habitats and/or species would have a negative effect on biodiversity across the plan area. S.41 NERC Act priority species are of principle importance for the purpose for conserving biodiversity⁵⁹.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Provide good buffer to the watercourse along the north-western boundary.</p>
SA2 Landscape	<p>The site is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. CHOL6 is made up of agricultural, predominately pasture land parcels on the north-eastern edge of the village. The site sits adjacent to Wallingford Road, where there are existing residential dwellings. There is also residential development immediately west of the site along Church Road. CHOL6 would extend this existing built form into the open landscape.</p>

⁵⁷ Ignatieva, M., Stewart, G.H., and Meurk, C. (2011) Planning and Design of Ecological Networks in Urban Areas. Landscape and Ecological Engineering. 7.17-25.

⁵⁸ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) UK BAP priority species and habitats. Available at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705>

⁵⁹ Biodiversity Planning Toolkit (2011) Primary Legislation: England. Available at: http://www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com/stylesheet.asp?file=324_england

	<p>North Wessex Downs AONB is located 250m to the west of the site, and hence the site has the potential to affect the setting of the AONB. The site joins mature trees on the site boundary which have Tree Protection Orders (TPO). Development should avoid damage to these features in line with the guidelines of the Order⁶⁰.</p> <p>CHOL6 is likely to adversely impact the character of the AONB boundary itself, disrupting its openness and scenic beauty⁶¹. Development would alter views from the enclosed village edge onto the AONB. Residential dwellings on Wallingford Road will particularly have views altered, from open rural landscape to built urban form.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA3 Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>There is a Grade II listed building 'Causeway House' located 25m southwest of the site. The southwestern edge of the site is adjacent to Cholsey conservation area. Development has the potential to adversely impact the setting of these features. It is also highlighted in the Site Assessment⁶² that archaeological constraints exist at the site. These are to be further investigated.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA4 Climate Change Adaptation</p>	<p>A small section of the site, along the western boundary is located in Flood Zone 2, which has medium probability of flooding, and Flood Zone 3, which is of high probability of flooding. In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, residential development will not be located within Flood Zone 3b⁶³. Residential development within Flood Zone 3a would be subject to the Exception Test.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA5 Climate Change Mitigation</p>	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.3km southeast of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are on Wallingford Road, adjacent to the site. The 136 bus service provides residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. The sustainable transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions</p>

⁶⁰ Gov.uk (2014) Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

⁶¹ Atlantic Consultants (2003) South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Character Area 7: Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/policy-publications/south>

⁶² Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

⁶³ Planning Practice Guidance (2014) Flood Zone and Flood Risk Tables <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/flood-zone-and-flood-risk-tables/table-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-and-flood-zone-compatibility/>

	resulting from development at the site.
SA6 Environmental Quality	Effects of development at CHOL6 on environmental quality is expected to be negligible.
SA7 Housing	The proposed development will contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.3km southeast of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are on Wallingford Road, adjacent to the site. The 136 bus service provides residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to reduce dependency on the car and improve access to local services and facilities from the site.</p>
SA9 Health	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 2.6km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is accessible open space at the playing fields to the south east of the site, which would provide residents with good access to outdoor recreation.</p> <p>There is not a leisure centre within 2km, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club, 700m west of the site, and the Cholsey Pavillion, Recreation Ground and allotments are in Station Road, 800m south of the site.</p> <p>Access to open space and recreational facilities is expected to have a positive impact on human health and quality of life.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>

SA10 Material Assets	<p>The site is located within Grade 3 and Grade 4 agricultural land. It is not known if this is Grade 3a or 3b. Grade 3a land is seen to be best and most versatile, and as such development may result in the loss of this resource.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
SA11 Economy	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre, 200m from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has excellent access to Cholsey Primary School, which is 150m from the site, to the south. The nearest secondary school, however, is 3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. Residents may be able to access the secondary school via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>However, it is also likely that some residents may also be dependent on the car as the primary mode of transport to access secondary schools.</p>

8.6 CHOL 7 – West of Wallingford Road

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
--	-	-	+/-	0	0	+	+	--	+/-	+

8.6.1 CHOL7 is a large open field used predominately for arable farming. There is a large area hedged off in the northern part of the site in use as a nature reserve and there is also a small area of scrub/pasture. The site has been proposed for 65 dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	<p>The majority of the site is made up of arable open field, which is expected to be of low ecological value. The north west of the site is in use as a nature reserve, and is likely abundant in biodiversity. It is identified as a s.41 NERC Act priority habitat and an area of natural or semi-natural greenspace in the SODC Green Infrastructure Strategy⁶⁴. The site is also expected to be species rich, and may contain s.41 NERC Act priority species. There is a pond located along the northeastern boundary of the site. This is also likely to be of high biodiversity and has also been highlighted as possibly containing the European protected Great Crested Newts (GCN)⁶⁵. It is expected that site visits will be needed to confirm the status of the site and to assess the constraints. Development has the potential to adversely impact biodiversity at CHOL7, causing habitat and species loss and/or fragmentation.</p> <p>Early mitigation considerations: None – site visit needed to confirm status of site and to assess the constraints.</p>

⁶⁴ South Oxford District Council (2009) South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/evidence-base-core-stra-3>

SA2 Landscape	<p>The site is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT open rolling downs. This LCT aspires to improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of built areas, and mitigate adverse impacts on the surrounding countryside the unspoiled, rural landscapes of the Wessex Downs, Sinodun Hills, floodplain pastures and parkland/estate landscapes. CHOL7 lies 500m from the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Area 5D Moreton Plain, and hence has the potential to affect the its character⁶⁶.</p> <p>Moreton Plain is a transitional landscape between the chalk uplands to the south and the clay Vale to the north.⁶⁷ Development may adversely impact the character of the AONB and the highly-valued views from areas of higher ground. The Chilterns AONB lies 1km to the east of CHOL7, and therefore development on the higher land to the east may impact on its setting. Development of the site would alter the existing open rural views from the residential properties to the west and south, and extend the settlement to the north. This may result in damage to the characteristic rural agricultural landscape. The descent of hills down from higher ground to the Thames (east of Cholsey) is a key feature of the Chilterns and should be maintained where possible⁶⁸.</p> <p>Overall, the Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment (2017) states that the site has an overall landscape sensitivity as Medium.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
SA3 Cultural Heritage	<p>There are three Grade II listed buildings located adjacent to the site along the site boundary. The Site Assessment for CHOL7⁶⁹ states that the buildings have principle elevations facing CHOL7 and will be more immediately affected by any development on the site. As such development of the site has the potential to have adverse impact these heritage assets and their setting.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>

⁶⁶ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

<p>SA4 Climate Change Adaptation</p>	<p>The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.</p> <p>The site is 150m from the nearest watercourse. The Site Assessment⁷⁰ states that part of CHOL7 is very wet, which suggests it is a possible run off area from the elevated land to the South East or a spring on the site. Development should look to minimize surface water run-off, and consider the implementation of SuDS.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA5 Climate Change Mitigation</p>	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.4km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, along the western boundary of the site. This is however 470m from the southern part of the site, and therefore not within the target distance. For residents in the north of the site, the bus service would serve as an efficient sustainable transport mode to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. The sustainable transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.</p>
<p>SA6 Environmental Quality</p>	<p>Effects of development at CHOL7 on environmental quality is expected to be negligible.</p>
<p>SA7 Housing</p>	<p>The proposed development will contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.</p>
<p>SA8 Transport</p>	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.4km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Wallingford Road, along the western boundary of the site. This is however, 470m from the southern part of the site, and not within the target distance. For the majority of the site, the bus service would serve as an efficient sustainable transport mode to nearby villages</p>

⁷⁰ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. Site Assessments

	<p>Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>Residents may also be reliant on the car for transport at the south of the site, due to exceeding the 400m distance threshold.</p>
<p>SA9 Health</p>	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 2km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>With regard to opportunity for recreation, there are allotments 60m south of the site, are playing fields 500m west, and Cholsey Pavillion, Recreational Ground and allotments are 800m to the south east in Station Road. There is not a leisure centre within 2km, however The Barn Fitness Club is 1km west of the site.</p> <p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>CHOL7 is within a mineral safeguarding area. Effects are currently uncertain depending on the working of minerals prior to development.</p> <p>Early mitigation considerations: None.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre 0.5km from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to</p>

Oxford and Reading.

The site also has good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is within 200m. The nearest secondary school, however, is 3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. This is however expected to be accessed via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. Some residents may also be reliant on the car to access schools outside of the village.

8.7 CHOL 8 - Part of Blackall's Farm

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
+/-	+/-	-	+	+	+/-	+	++	--	+	+

8.7.1 CHOL8 is greenfield site, currently consisting of agricultural buildings. The site has been proposed for 6 dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	The site is made up of redundant farm buildings and as such its ecological value is low. There may however be potential for bats within the farm buildings, which are European protected species. As such the buildings will need surveying prior to development. The impact on biodiversity therefore is unknown.
	Early mitigation considerations: None - buildings will need surveying for protected species.
SA2 Landscape	<p>The site is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT semi-enclosed rolling downs. This LCT aspires to improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of built areas. CHOL8 includes redundant farm buildings, with residential dwellings to the west and east off Caps Lane. The site lies 500m from the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Area 5D Moreton Plain, and hence has the potential to affect it's character. Moreton Plain is a transitional landscape between the chalk uplands to the south and the clay Vale to the north.⁷¹ Development may adversely impact the character of the AONB and the highly-valued views from areas of higher ground.</p> <p>The Chiltern AONB lies 1km to the east of CHOL8, however impact on its setting is minimised due to the built form of Cholsey separating the site from the AONB. As the site is currently in use by farm buildings, it is not expected that development would substantially alter the existing views from the residential properties, roads and tracks. However, this may depend on the design and layout of development.</p> <p>Overall, the Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment (2017) states that the site has an overall landscape sensitivity as Medium/low.</p>

⁷¹ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure - including those identified in the South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (SOGIS)⁷²: Additional tree planting on the boundaries would help integrate development.</p>
SA3 Cultural Heritage	<p>Blackalls Farmhouse Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site to the west. Development has the potential to adversely impact the setting of this historic feature.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	<p>The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.</p>
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.4km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are on Wallingford Road, adjacent to the site. The 136 bus service provides residents with access to neighboring villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. The sustainable transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.</p>
SA6 Environment al Quality	<p>Concerns have been raised by SODC Environment Team⁷³ that the site may be exposed to noise pollution from adjacent grain silos, and road and railway to west of the site. This is to be further investigated, and as such the extent of impact remains uncertain.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>Further investigations into potential noise pollution.</p>
SA7 Housing	<p>The proposed development will contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.</p>
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.4km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are at the junction of Wallingford Road and Caps Lane. The</p>

⁷² Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

⁷³ Ibid.

	<p>136 bus service provides residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to reduce dependency on the car and improve access to local services and facilities from the site.</p>
<p>SA9 Health</p>	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 2km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>About opportunity for recreation there are allotments 400m south of the site. There is not a leisure centre within 2km, however The Barn Fitness Club is 1km west of the site.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>The site is located within Grade 4 agricultural land, which is not seen to be best and most versatile.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre 0.6km from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is within 700m. The nearest secondary school, however, is 2.3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. This is however expected to be accessed via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. Some residents may also be reliant on the car to access schools outside of the village.</p>

8.8 CHOL9 - Boshers Yard corner of A329 and Papist Way

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	+	+

8.8.1 CHOL9 consists of brownfield land at Boshers Yard. The site could potentially deliver nine dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	This is a brownfield site with no ecological value. As such, impact of development on the site is expected to have negligible effects on biodiversity. Consideration, however, should be given for the woodland to the south of the site.
SA2 Landscape	CHOL9 is located within LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT open rolling downs. This LCT is characteristically open, with high intervisibility and extensive views. CHOL4 is a brownfield site, located immediately south of the existing urban area, and wholly within the North Wessex Downs AONB. Development into the AONB has the potential to have adverse impacts on both the character of the landscape and its visual amenity ⁷⁴ . However, due to CHOL9 being previously developed, impacts on the AONB are localized. Depending on the design and layout of the development, CHOL9 is expected to be in keeping with the surrounding development, having negligible impact on the landscape.
SA3 Cultural Heritage	Development of CHOL9 is expected to have a negligible effect on cultural heritage.
SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	The Cholsey train station is located 1km west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. The nearest bus stop is on Papist Way, adjacent to the site. Services provide residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. The sustainable

⁷⁴ Atlantic Consultants (2003) South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment. Character Area 7: Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes. Available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/policy-publications/south>

	transport options available are expected to minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.
SA6 Environmental Quality	Effects of development at CHOL9 on environmental quality is expected to be negligible.
SA7 Housing	The proposed development would contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1km west of the site, offering train access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stop is on Papist Way, accessed via Reading Road. These bus services will provide residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to reduce dependency on the car and improving access to local services and facilities from the site.</p>
SA9 Health	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 3.1km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is not a leisure centre within 2km of the site, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club and The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows. The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows is 350m east from the site, offering a range of community facilities including a pavilion and cricket pitch, allotments, and a range of clubs and societies. This provides residents with a variety of opportunity for sport and recreation.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
SA10 Material	Development of brownfield land is seen to be a positive use of Cholsey's natural

Assets	resources.
SA11 Economy	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre 0.5km from the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has good access to Cholsey Primary School, which is within 700m. The nearest secondary school, however, is 2.3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. Residents may be able to access the secondary school via public transport via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. However, it is also likely that some residents may also be dependent on the car as the primary mode of transport to access secondary schools.</p>

8.9 CHOL10 - Fairmile

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural Heritage	Climate change apt	Climate change mit	Pollution	Housing	Transport	Health	Material Assets	Economy
0	0	0	+	+	0	+	++	--	+	+

8.9.1 CHOL10 is a small brownfield site in an existing residential development called Fairmile. The site could potentially deliver 14 dwellings.

SA Objective	Assessment commentary
SA1 Biodiversity	CHOL10 is a brownfield site which is not considered to have any biodiversity value. The proposed development at this location would be likely to have no impact on the biodiversity objective.
	Early mitigation considerations: None.
SA2 Landscape	CHOL10 is located in LCA 7 Wessex Downs and Western Vale Fringes / LCT Semi-enclosed rolling downs. This LCT seeks to retain important views from chalk downland and greensand hills but encourage some replacement of hedgerows and woodland planting. The site holds these landscape characteristics, being described by the Landscape & Character Capacity Assessment ⁷⁵ as ' <i>semi-enclosed rolling downs of higher landscape quality</i> '.
	CHOL10 is a small brownfield site in an existing urban area. The proposed development is for 14 dwellings. This would not be anticipated to result in any adverse impacts on local natural landscapes and would be likely to be in keeping with the existing built form.
	Early mitigation considerations: None.
SA3 Cultural Heritage	Development of CHOL10 would be expected to have a negligible effect on cultural heritage.

⁷⁵ Cholsey Parish Council (2017) Cholsey Neighborhood Plan. Landscape Character and Capacity Assessment

SA4 Climate Change Adaptation	The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which is of low risk of flooding.
SA5 Climate Change Mitigation	<p>Residents at CHOL10 would be within the target distance and a short walk of Cholsey railway station. Bus stops are accessible to residents along Reading Road, where the 143 bus and the frequent 136 circular bus can be caught.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to help minimize any substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development at the site.</p>
SA6 Environmental Quality	Effects of development at CHOL10 on environmental quality would be expected to be negligible. Residents could potentially be exposed to noise, air and light pollution associated with the A329, which is in close proximity to the site. However, the A329 is not a dual carriageway and is heavily vegetated on both sides.
SA7 Housing	The proposed development would contribute positively towards meeting local housing demand, including the provision of affordable housing.
SA8 Transport	<p>The Cholsey train station is located 1.3km south-west of the site, offering sustainable access to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London Paddington. Train services run every 30 minutes, which is expected to provide sufficient sustainable transport for residents out-commuting for employment.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are those near the Papist Way / Reading Road junction. These bus services will provide residents with access to nearby villages Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, and RAF Benson. It is highlighted that the bus service is a circular route, and as such it may not be practical for residents to use the service, for example for access to and from the station. Residents may be reliant on the car to avoid long bus journeys which run the whole of the circular route.</p> <p>The sustainable transport options available are expected to reduce dependency on the car and improving access to local services and facilities from the site.</p>
SA9 Health	<p>There are no NHS hospitals located within 8km of the site. All NHS hospitals are located over 10miles from the site, and have a variety of facilities and services. Reading Hospital and the John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford provide critical care and 24-hour A&E, whilst Abingdon & Henley Community Hospital has a restricted A&E/Minor Injuries Unit.</p> <p>The closest GP surgery is Wallingford Medical Practice, 3.2km from the site. All health facilities exceed the target distance and as such residents may be expected to use the car to access these services.</p> <p>Development of the site is likely to result in loss of open space, however there are allotments adjacent to the site which may be used as alternative facilities for</p>

	<p>recreation and open space.</p> <p>There is not a leisure centre within 2km of the site, however sports facilities in the area include The Barn Fitness Club and The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows. The Great Hall Cholsey Meadows is 1km from the site, offering a range of community facilities including a pavilion and cricket pitch, allotments, and a range of clubs and societies. This provides residents with a variety of opportunity for sport and recreation.</p>
	<p>Early mitigation considerations:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>SA10 Material Assets</p>	<p>The proposed development at this brownfield location is considered to be an efficient use of land.</p>
<p>SA11 Economy</p>	<p>Access to facilities and amenities is available within Cholsey centre, 1km west of the site. Facilities include a supermarket, hairdressers, pharmacy and a public house. Residents would also have good access to potential employment opportunities within Cholsey, in addition to having sustainable transport opportunities if out-commuting for example to Oxford and Reading.</p> <p>The site also has somewhat limited access to Cholsey Primary school, which sits 1.3km west and which would require crossing the A329 to reach. The nearest secondary school is just over 3km from the site which is outside of the target distance. Residents may be able to access the secondary school via the bus network between Cholsey and Wallingford. However, it is also likely that some residents may depend on the car as the primary mode of transport to access secondary schools.</p>

	SEA Objective	Decision making criteria: Will the option/proposal...		Indicators to help inform the decision making criteria (this list is not exhaustive)
1	Biodiversity and geodiversity: Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.	Q1a	Will it conserve and enhance biodiversity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and diversity of European Protected Species; s.41 NERC Act priority species and habitats in the area. • Area and condition of BAP priority habitats • Area and condition of sites designated for biological interest.
		Q1b	Will it contribute to habitat creation and connectivity?	
		Q1c	Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their biodiversity or geodiversity interest and increase their area?	
2	Landscape and townscape: Conserve and enhance the landscape and, in particular, those areas designated for their landscape / townscape value. Ensure development is of a high quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.	Q2a	Will it safeguard and enhance the character and setting of the AONBs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment profiles • Rate of encroachment into countryside • Coalescence of settlements • Impact of development on special landscape features
		Q2b	Will it maintain and enhance visual amenity, including light and noise pollution?	
		Q2c	Will it recognise local distinctiveness and identity?	
		Q2d	Will it maintain, restore and enhance green infrastructure assets that contribute to amenity and landscape value.	
3	Cultural heritage: Conserve and enhance the historic environment, and, in particular, those areas designated for their heritage importance.	Q3a	Will it preserve features of architectural, cultural or historic interest and, where necessary, encourage their conservation and renewal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of features and areas of historic designations in the area • Statutory and non-statutory sites in the Historic Environment Record (HER) • Number and condition of archaeological features in the area
		Q3b	Will it preserve or enhance archaeological sites/remains?	
		Q3c	Will it preserve or enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets?	

4	Climate change adaptation: Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.	Q4a	Will it increase the area and connectivity of Green Infrastructure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area and connectivity of Green Infrastructure • Implementation of adaptive techniques, such as SUDS and passive heating/cooling • The risk of flooding (flood zones 2 and 3 are considered to be at high risk of flooding) • Surface water runoff rates
		Q4b	Will it promote use of technologies and techniques to adapt to the impacts of climate change?	
		Q4c	Will it minimise current flood risk and future increases in flood risk that are associated with climate change?	
5	Climate change mitigation: Reduce contributions to climate change through a) sustainable building practices and b) maximising potential for renewable energy and c) energy conservation and minimising use of fossil fuels.	Q5a	Will it encourage renewable energy generation or use of energy from renewable sources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to public transport links • Frequency of public transport services • Distance to local services and amenities • Energy efficiency of buildings and transport • Percentage of energy in the area generated from renewable sources
		Q5b	Will it help reduce the per capita carbon footprint of Cholsey?	
6	Environmental quality: Reduce air, soil and water pollution.	Q6a	Will it prevent or reduce pollution and the effects of pollution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological and chemical quality of water bodies • Number of water pollution incidents, including drainage and sewer overflows • Risk of pollution to air, water and soil
7	Housing: Ensure that existing and future residents have the opportunity to live in a decent home.	Q7a	Will it provide a mix of good-quality housing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied housing mix • Housing affordability • Percentage of dwellings delivered as affordable housing • Number of extra care homes and other specialist homes
		Q7b	Will it provide decent, affordable homes?	
8	Transport and accessibility: Improve the existing transport network, improve travel choice and connectivity, reduce the need to travel by car and reduce the negative impact of transport on the environment. Improve accessibility for everyone to local amenities, community facilities and services.	Q8a	Will it reduce the need to travel?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance to place of work • Distance to local amenities and key services • Distance to existing or proposed bus routes • Frequency of bus services • Proximity and connectivity of walking and cycling links • Distance to train station
		Q8b	Will it promote travel by a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e. walking/cycling/public transport)?	

		Q8c	Will it help to reduce congestion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of congestion
9	Health and wellbeing: Maintain and improve the health, well-being and community cohesion of the population and reduce social deprivation.	Q9a	Will it improve access for all to leisure and recreational facilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel time by public transport to nearest health centre and sports facilities Provision of and accessibility of open accessible greenspace and GI Accessibility to sports facilities e.g. football pitches, playing fields, tennis courts and leisure centres Accessibility of healthcare facilities
		Q9b	Will it improve access for all to health facilities including GP surgeries?	
10	Material Assets: Protect and conserve natural resources. Reduce waste generation and disposal, and promote the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle/compost, energy recovery and disposal.	Q10a	Will it utilise previously developed, degraded and under-used land?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use of previously developed land Area of best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development Connectivity of infrastructure Percentage of waste recycled Percentage of waste generated
		Q10b	Will it lead to the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land?	
		Q10c	Will it improve existing infrastructure, particularly gas, electricity and water infrastructure?	
		Q10d	Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources and encourage recycling of waste?	
11	Economy and employment: To assist in the development of a thriving and varied economy, including tourism, in Cholsey and the development of a skilled workforce by raising education achievement.	Q11a	Will it increase accessibility of suitable employment within Cholsey?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility of employment opportunities Levels of employment and unemployment Number of new business start-ups as a result of the development Distance to primary and secondary school Visitor numbers and patronage of visitor accommodation
		Q11b	Will it enable retention and growth of existing business and protect existing employment land that has a continued economic role?	
		Q11c	Will it help new businesses to establish in the area?	
		Q11d	Will it improve access for all to educational facilities?	

Ecological Services
Green Infrastructure
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Landscape Character Assessment
Habitats Regulations Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment
Sustainability Appraisal



© **Lepus Consulting Ltd**
1 Bath Street Cheltenham GL50 1YE
T: 01242 525222
E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com
www.lepusconsulting.com
CHELtenham



Lepus Consulting
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1YE

t: 01242 525222
w: www.lepusconsulting.com
e: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com