

Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 1.3 - Swindon Housing Market Area (HMA) - Assessment of Alternative Development Strategies (Standard Method)

Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy) - Rolling forward the core strategy includes employment land at Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett.

Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus) – Focus on Royal Wootton Bassett. Housing constrained at Marlborough to current commitments plus windfall allowance and growth in rest reflects assessed need (-16%). Nothing beyond existing commitments at West of Swindon. Balance focused at Royal Wootton Bassett (1,130 homes) including employment land at town only.

Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus) - Focus on rest of HMA - Marlborough and rest of HMA continue WCS rates, reduced at Royal Wootton Bassett and only commitments at West of Swindon.

Proposed distribution of housing and employment requirements – Swindon HMA						
Settlement	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)		Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)		Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)	
	Housing	Employment	Housing	Employment	Housing	Employment
Marlborough	515	4	435	0	615	3
Royal Wootton Bassett	810	2	1130	6	755	0
West of Swindon	680	0	435	0	435	0
Rest of HMA	930	0	930	0	1130	3
TOTAL	2935	6	2930	6	2935	6

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Avoid potential negative impacts of development on designated wildlife sites, protected species and priority species and habitats (international, national, local) and enhance these where possible?

With regards to statutory designations in Marlborough, Savernake Forest SSSI, which is an area of ancient woodland and is a habitat for Dormouse and bats, lies to the south east of the settlement boundary and the River Kennet SSSI runs through from east to west. There are also a number of non-statutory CWSs on the boundary of the settlement, including Stonebridge Meadows to the north east and Granham Hill and Chopping Knife Lane Bank to the south. Furthermore, the disused railway tunnel to the south is an important hibernation site for Natterer's bats and as a result, should be considered as designated.

In Royal Wootton Bassett, statutory designations exist including Jubilee Lake LNR to the north west and Royal Wootton Bassett Mud Spring SSSI approximately 400m from the settlement boundary to the south. Furthermore, the non-statutory designations of Jubilee Lake and Wood CWS and Morningside Farm Meadows CWS lie to the north west and south east respectively. With regards to protected species, great crested newts are associated with wet meadows and ponds in the area, as well as the Wilts & Berks Canal.

In the West of Swindon, there are some statutory designations including Restrop Farm and Brockhurst Wood SSSI which lies to the south west of Purton, and Stoke Common Meadows SSSI in the rural area west of Purton Stoke. There are also a number of CWSs dispersed around the West of Swindon area, particularly in the area around Lydiard Plain.

In the Rest of the HMA, there are some areas which are designated SSSIs or contain important habitats including ancient woodland.

DAQ 2: Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?

There are no LGSs (formerly Regional Sites of Geological Importance, or RIGs) in direct proximity to the market towns in the Swindon HMA. However, there are some small sites in the Rest of the HMA.

DAQ 3: Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?

The design of developments may incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity and contribute to networks of multifunctional green space known as green infrastructure. The preparation of a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy will help to provide a long-term vision and strategic framework to aid the delivery of GI. However, at this stage of the process, it is not possible to comment on the likelihood of GI being adopted as part of development.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Whilst Core Strategy Continued proposes moderately low growth levels for Marlborough, due to the likelihood that potential significant effects on designated sites that are habitats for protected species are more likely to be avoided, a minor adverse effect is anticipated.	This strategy proposes a very low level of growth at Marlborough, much lower than under Core Strategy Continued. As a result, it is considered likely that moderate adverse effects on biodiversity could be avoided. Subject to the precise location of development, minor adverse effects are considered likely.	While this strategy directs moderate growth levels to Marlborough – slightly higher than for Core Strategy Continued - a moderate adverse effect is anticipated owing to the potential impacts on designated sites that are habitats for protected species.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	While this strategy directs moderate growth to Royal Wootton Bassett, a minor adverse effect is considered likely owing to the presence of designated sites.	SW-B proposes moderately high levels of growth for Royal Wootton Bassett, substantially higher than under Core Strategy Continued. Therefore, a minor adverse	Whilst SW-C proposes moderate growth at Royal Wootton Bassett – commensurate with Core Strategy Continued - due to the presence of designated sites, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.

		effect is considered likely due to the presence of designated sites.	
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	At this stage, no sites have been identified so it is difficult to determine whether negative effects at West of Swindon would occur. The level of growth proposed is low and therefore, minor adverse effects on this objective are anticipated due to the presence of ecological designations.	A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. Ecological designations are apparent, and a minor adverse effect is likely as a result.	A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. Ecological designations are apparent, and a minor adverse effect is likely as a result.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Similarly, due to the broad geographical area involved, it is difficult to determine impacts upon Rest of HMA. Therefore, due to the presence of ecological designations, minor adverse effects on this objective are anticipated.	At this stage, no sites have been identified so it is difficult to determine whether negative effects in the Rest of the HMA will occur. Therefore, minor adverse effects on this objective are anticipated due to the presence of ecological designations.	At this stage, no sites have been identified so it is difficult to determine whether negative effects on Rest of HMA would be registered under this scenario. Adverse impacts are however comparatively more likely given the slightly higher growth quantum directed at more rural areas under CH-C. Therefore, due to the presence of ecological designations minor adverse effects on this objective are anticipated.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 While minor adverse effects are anticipated for all settlements and areas in the HMA in this strategy, due to Marlborough being particularly constrained with regards to ecological designations, this strategy is likely to lead to minor adverse effects.	-1.0 Adverse effects are anticipated for all settlements and areas in the HMA through this strategy due to the presence of ecological designations at all of the settlements. However, uncertainties exist regarding the location of development and/or adoption of mitigation methods. Therefore, minor adverse effects are anticipated through this strategy.	-1.25 Due to Marlborough being particularly constrained with regards to ecological designations and the higher level of growth directed towards rural areas, this strategy is likely to lead to minor adverse effects.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategies SW-A and SW-B are equally the most sustainable strategies** against this objective as likely adverse effects are fewer.
- **Strategy SW-C scores lower and is considered the least sustainable strategy** due to significant effects being attributed to Marlborough.
- Marlborough is considered the most highly constrained settlement in the Swindon HMA with regards to this objective, due to a number of ecological designations that relate to and intersect with the settlement boundary. As a result, moderate adverse effects are considered likely from the strategies that propose the higher levels of growth in Marlborough (SW-A and SW-C).
- Minor effects only are considered likely for all strategies for Royal Wootton Bassett, West of Swindon and Rest of HMA as there are few ecological issues in these areas and the growth levels are not significant. Further, more detailed assessment will be undertaken at site level when locations are known.
- Development should generally avoid areas of biodiversity sensitivity where possible, particularly important bat habitats such as woodland. Offsetting and habitat creation are likely to be key to enabling any further development where growth poses a risk to protected species and habitats.
- Development should also take the opportunity to improve habitats where necessary and achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.
- Adopting buffers around important connective habitats, such as hedgerows, railways lines and canals, would help to reduce pressure on these areas.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 2: Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Ensure efficient use of land?

The design of specific developments will involve setting appropriate housing densities for development will be part of the planning process at a later stage. At this stage of the process, it is not possible to comment on the design and density of developments.

DAQ 2: Lead to the reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate?

There is a lack of previously developed land (PDL) across the HMA. Therefore, all strategies are likely to result in the loss of greenfield land.

DAQ 3: Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?

Across Wiltshire, some 14000 sites of potential contamination exist as a result of a range of historical land uses; 225 high priority sites have been identified as part of a prioritised approach to inspection.

Currently 4 sites have been determined as contaminated land and remediated. The remediation of contaminated land will be principally addressed through the planning process where former sites change their use.

DAQ 4: Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?

At Marlborough, the majority of land surrounding the built-up area is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land (good to moderate) with some patches of Grade 2 (very good) to the east and south of the town.

In Royal Wootton Bassett, the built-up area is surrounded by Grade 3 and Grade 4 (poor) agricultural land, with the Grade 4 land surrounding the south of the town.

At the West of Swindon, the majority of land is classified as Grade 3 and Grade 4 agricultural land.

Excluding the urban areas, the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as being Grade 3 agricultural land, with a large area of Grade 2 to the east of the Marlborough Community Area and some patches of Grade 4.

DAQ 5: Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?

A Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) also covers a large proportion of the built-up area of Royal Wootton Bassett and the south western area, as well as another MSA further east of the town.

With regards to the West of Swindon, there is an MSA near Purton.

In the Rest of the HMA, there are MSAs, particularly in the Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Despite this strategy proposing a very low level of growth proportional to Marlborough, due to the limited amount of PDL and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land.	Despite this strategy proposing a very low level of growth proportional to Marlborough, due to the limited amount of PDL and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land. However, as this strategy proposes the lowest level of comparative housing growth and no	Despite this strategy proposing a low level of growth proportional to Marlborough, due to the limited amount of PDL and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land. Furthermore, as this strategy proposes the greatest level of comparative housing growth, the risk of

		employment land, the risk of negative effects occurring would be lower in this strategy compared to the roll forward (SW-A).	negative effects occurring for this objective is greater compared to the roll forward (SW-A).
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Despite proposing a low level of proportional housing growth in Royal Wootton Bassett, the lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett means that a minor adverse effect is likely due to the loss of greenfield land.	The lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett, combined with the medium level of proportional housing growth proposed in this strategy suggests that a minor adverse effect is likely. Furthermore, as this strategy proposes the greatest amount of comparative housing and employment growth in Royal Wootton Bassett, the risk of negative effects occurring is greater compared to the roll forward (SW-A).	Despite proposing a low level of proportional housing growth in this strategy, the lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett means that a minor adverse effect is likely due to the loss of greenfield land. However, as this strategy proposes the lowest level of comparative housing growth and no employment land, negative effects would be lower in this strategy compared to the roll forward (SW-A).
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon, the potential for any moderate adverse effects is dependent on where growth is located. However, due to the likely loss of greenfield land, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. Development in this area is expected to lead to the loss of greenfield land. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.	A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. Development in this area is expected to lead to the loss of greenfield land. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any major negative effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as Grade 3 land, further assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Regardless, due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely.	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any major negative effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as Grade 3 land, further assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Regardless, due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely. This strategy proposes the equivalent of the roll forward and is likely therefore to lead to a similar level of effect.	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any major negative effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as Grade 3 land, further assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Regardless, due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely. This strategy proposes a higher level of growth and is therefore more likely to lead to effects than the roll forward (SW-A).
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas in each settlement which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is	-1.0 At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas in each settlement which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is likely to be a minor	-1.0 At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas in each settlement which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is likely to be a minor

	likely to be a minor adverse effect on SA objective 2 due to the likely loss of greenfield land.	adverse effect on SA objective 2 due to the likely loss of greenfield land.	adverse effect on SA objective 2 due to the likely loss of greenfield land.
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Conclusions/Recommendations:

- At this stage, it has **not been possible to find notable sustainability differences between the three options for this objective and they all score equally**. The growth levels in each area are not particularly significant and the differences between each option for each area are not particularly significant.
- All strategies are likely to have minor adverse effects as it is likely that most new development will be built on greenfield sites. This may or may not involve Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grade 1, 2 and 3a). Marlborough is considered the most constrained with regards to this objective due to the presence of Grade 2 BMV land surrounding the built-up area.
- There is a lack of previously developed land (PDL) across the HMA. Therefore, all strategies are likely to result in the loss of greenfield land and will potentially lead to the loss of BMV. However, without knowing the exact location of growth and the extent of what BMV land is required, it is anticipated that negative impacts will occur in all strategies.
- Uncertainties also exist regarding the potential for adverse impacts on mineral resources and the potential for contaminating remediating land.
- Where possible, to reduce effects on this objective, new development should be located where loss of BMV can be minimised, PDL maximised where it exists, and development built at the highest densities relevant to the location. Development should also encourage the remediation of contaminated land where feasible.
- Further assessment will also need to be carried out to understand the potential impacts of development on Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) when allocating precise locations for growth.
- Further assessment is also likely to be needed to distinguish between Grade 3a and Grade 3b land to determine the extent of BMV agricultural land.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 3: Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Protect surface, ground and drinking water quality?

Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to a Drinking Water Safeguarding Zone (Surface Water) to the north east of the settlement beyond the settlement boundary. A Source Protection Zone 2c (Subsurface Activity) encompasses the settlement.

Marlborough is not subject to any areas of water resource protection within the settlement boundary. To the south of the settlement, Source Protection Zone Zones 1 (Inner Protection Zone), 2 (Outer Protection Zone) and 3 (Total Catchment) are apparent.

The West of Swindon is entirely covered by a Drinking Water Safeguarding Zone (Surface Water), while a Source Protection Zone 2c (Subsurface Activity) encroaches from the west.

While there are rural areas in the HMA which are within Source Protection Zones or Drinking Water Protection Areas, there are also plenty of areas in the countryside where development could occur without posing a risk to water resources.

DAQ 2: Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?

At Royal Wootton Bassett, Wessex Water identified a need to invest in the water network to increase capacity between 2025 and 2036. There is no probability that construction works would be required to accommodate development.

Wessex Water have currently no plans to invest in the water network in Marlborough.

Rural development is likely to be more dispersed which may mean that the existing drainage infrastructure can handle the additional capacity. However, there may be a cumulative effect on the rural system. Furthermore, if the rural development is not dispersed it could lead to requirements to upgrade capacity outside of the main settlements which has not yet been accounted for.

In Swindon, Thames Water outlined a water management approach to balance supply and demand, with the intention of this being able to meet needs within the settlement boundary up to 2026. It is unclear whether the West of Swindon area that is positioned within the Wiltshire Local Authority has been assessed by Wessex Water for investment.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a low level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without adverse effects occurring, as well as a high probability of overcoming any effects through mitigation. Therefore, a minor adverse effect is likely.	While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a low level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without negative effects occurring. Therefore, a minor adverse effect is likely. This strategy proposes a lower level of growth and so a lesser effect is considered likely than SW-A.	This strategy proposes a higher level of growth than the roll forward and so an increased effect is likely. While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a low level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without significant adverse effects occurring. Therefore, a minor adverse effect is likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	While Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to water quality protection zones and there is a potential need for investment in the water network, this strategy proposes a low level of growth proportional to the settlement. However, due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	This strategy proposes a moderate level of proportional housing growth at Royal Wootton Bassett. As the settlement is subject to water quality protection zones and there is an identified need for investment in the water network, a minor adverse effect is likely due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources. Furthermore, as this strategy proposes the highest level of comparative growth at Royal Wootton Bassett, the risk of adverse effects occurring is higher compared to SW-A.	While Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to water quality protection zones and there is an identified need for investment in the water network, this strategy proposes a low level of growth proportional to the settlement. However, due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources, a minor adverse effect is considered likely. This level of growth is slightly lower than the roll forward and so a lesser effect is considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	This strategy proposes a low level of growth. Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon and the uncertainties that are apparent at this stage regarding the precise location of growth and water network capacity, it is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect.	A low level of growth is proposed by this strategy. It is expected that through this level of growth there will be opportunities apparent to overcome effects resulting from new development on the existing water network. A neutral effect is therefore likely.	A low level of growth is proposed by this strategy. It is expected that through this level of growth there will be opportunities apparent to overcome effects resulting from new development on the existing water network. A neutral effect is therefore likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: neutral	Likely effects: neutral
Rest of HMA	Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	This strategy proposes the same level of growth as the roll forward. Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely. This strategy is higher than the roll forward and so an increased effect is likely.

	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. Overall it is likely that there could be a minor adverse effect on Objective 3 as a result of this strategy.	-0.75 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. As this strategy concentrates the highest number of homes at Royal Wootton Bassett it is more likely to have an adverse impact than the other strategies. Overall it is likely that this strategy could have a minor adverse impact on Objective 3.	-0.75 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. Overall it is likely that there could be a minor adverse effect on Objective 3 as a result of this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Although the three strategies score very similarly, strategies **SW-B and SW-C are more sustainable as there are less adverse effects likely overall.**
- **Strategy SW-A is the least sustainable strategy as it is likely to have greater adverse effects** than SW-B and SW-C.
- Minor adverse effects are mostly anticipated from the levels of growth proposed at Marlborough, Royal Wootton Bassett and Rest of the HMA as this is not significantly high growth. New development will require water infrastructure and will add to pressures on the water supply network, but significant effects are not thought likely.
- Levels of growth proposed for West of Swindon in strategies SW-B and SW-C are considered likely to have neutral effects overall as the number of new dwellings over the plan period is very low and the area west of Swindon, east of Purton and Lydiard Millicent, is not covered by any water quality or source protection zones.
- There are areas in the HMA which lie within Source Protection Zones and Drinking Water Safeguard Areas which would need to be considered if development was allocated in that area. Furthermore, additional development beyond what is already planned for may require further investment in infrastructure, although until sites have been allocated it is difficult to know whether capacity issues will be apparent and whether further works will be required.
- There are no areas of water protection within Marlborough. There are Drinking Water Safeguarding Zones and Source Protection Zones within West of Swindon and the rural area of the HMA, however. Royal Wootton Bassett is the subject of a Source Protection Zone and investment is outlined as being necessary in the near future.
- With further regards to investment in infrastructure, development in the rural area is most likely to require additional investment as Wessex Water's planned improvement works are focused on the towns. As a result, development in the Rest of the HMA will need further assessment to ensure capacity of the water network.
- To improve sustainability performance against this objective, development should avoid polluting groundwater and protect surface, ground and drinking water quality. It should be located in areas which have adequate water infrastructure and take account of the EA's approach to groundwater protection. Incorporation of SuDS will be important and the need for water can be reduced through water sensitive design, such as integrated water cycle management.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 4: Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?

At this high-level stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options with relation to noise, light pollution, odour and vibration. Although, any level of development is expected to have a degree of effect, it is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and therefore no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

Despite this, there is a risk that across the HMA and particularly within the Rest of the HMA, allocated growth may place development in locations where increases in pollutants such as noise and light may occur where this is not currently an issue.

DAQ 2: Minimise effects on and where possible improve air quality and locate sensitive development away from areas of poor air quality (such as AQMAs)?

Marlborough is subject to a long standing AQMA for the exceedance of nitrogen dioxide, covering the whole town. Traffic levels have been identified as increasing, there is a risk that further traffic pressures are likely to lead to an exceedance of mandatory limits.

Royal Wootton Bassett is currently subject to elevating levels of nitrogen dioxide, but it is not yet subject to any declared AQMAs. One is expected, however further monitoring and investigation is to take place. Increasing levels of traffic identified at this settlement and non-motorway traffic accessing Swindon are a risk to this objective.

West of Swindon is not subject to any AQMAs, but future increases in traffic levels is expected to have a degree of effect on air quality.

Within the Rest of HMA, the dispersed nature of facilities and a lack of public transport provision, suggests that development in these areas may lead to an increase number of private car journeys magnifying the likelihood of adverse effects from pollutants from vehicles, effecting this objective.

DAQ 3: Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?

Consultation risk zones have not been considered for this high-level stage of appraisal. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage, but are expected to be covered at lower level stages.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	This strategy proposes a low level of growth in proportion to Marlborough. This is also relatively low, but comparatively moderate. As there is a long standing AQMA, it is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect.	This strategy proposes low levels of growth at Marlborough. The settlement is facing the likelihood of adverse effects to air quality and it is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect. This strategy proposes a lower level of growth and therefore may have a more manageable impact when compared to the roll forward.	This strategy proposes low levels of growth in proportion to the existing settlement of Marlborough. This strategy proposes an increase on that proposed by the roll forward. It is likely that there would be a moderate adverse effect.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	The roll forward of the current strategy proposes low level of growth in proportion to Royal Wootton Bassett. As there are no existing AQMAs, but risk of one being declared, it is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect.	This strategy proposes an increase on the roll forward. This strategy proposes the highest level of housing and employment growth at Royal Wootton Bassett of all of the strategies, therefore leading to a bigger degree of effect. The probability of overcoming effects through mitigation remains uncertain, however. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect.	This strategy proposes low levels of growth in proportion to Royal Wootton Bassett. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect. This level of growth is slightly lower than the roll forward and is considered likely to lead to a similar effect.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Due to the broad area that West of Swindon relates to, there are uncertainties at this stage relating to the distribution of growth. There are currently no AQMAs in the area, but the rural nature of the area suggests that there would be an impact on air quality through increased traffic. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect as a result of this strategy.	This strategy proposes a low level of growth. There are currently no AQMAs in the area, but the rural nature of the area suggests that there would be an impact on air quality through increased traffic. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect as a result of this strategy.	There are currently no AQMAs in the area, but the rural nature of the area suggests that there would be an impact on air quality through increased traffic. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect as a result of this strategy.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse

Rest of HMA	There are uncertainties relating to the location of development at this stage, however the rest of the HMA is dispersed in its nature and this is a risk for this objective. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect. Strategies SW-A and SW-B propose lower levels of growth in the Rest of HMA than Strategy SW-C and is therefore, less likely to have an effect.	There are uncertainties relating to the location of development at this stage, however the rest of the HMA is dispersed in its nature and this is a risk for this objective. It is likely that there would be a minor adverse effect. This level of growth is the equivalent of SW-A and the anticipated effects are likely to be the same as the result.	There are uncertainties relating to the location of development at this stage, however the rest of the HMA is dispersed in its nature and this is a risk for this objective. This strategy proposes the highest level of growth of all of the strategies in the Rest of the HMA and is therefore most likely to have an effect. It is likely that there would be a moderate adverse effect.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there could be a minor adverse effect on Objective 4. As this strategy looks to distribute development throughout the HMA. Royal Wootton Bassett would be subject to the largest amount of growth as a result of this strategy, but this is still relatively low levels of growth in proportionate to the settlement. Royal Wootton Bassett is facing adverse effects on this objective and further development could amplify those.	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that this strategy is likely to have a minor adverse effect on Objective 4. As the focus of development is at Royal Wootton Bassett where there are many extant adverse effects to air quality and the very small number of homes is proposed at Marlborough, alongside new employment land.	-1.25 Overall, it is likely that there would be an overall minor adverse effect on Objective 4. This strategy looks to focus development in rural areas where there is a significant amount of uncertainty relating to effects of new development and the opportunity to manage and mitigate these. Despite this, the strategy looks to propose housing and employment in settlements where AQMAs are apparent or are expected to be declared.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategies SW-A and SW-B are more sustainable** as there are less adverse effects likely.
- **Strategy SW-C is the least sustainable strategy as they are likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to the likelihood of increased air quality impacts in Marlborough where there is an existing AQMA.
- As the areas of poor air quality in Wiltshire are all traffic related, new development should contribute to improved air quality through reducing the need to travel by private car, promoting policies that promote development of sustainable transport links, promote housing development in sustainable locations and increasing on site vegetation in order to provide carbon sinks.
- It is recommended that where development takes place improvements in sustainable transport options should be sought to alleviate air quality concerns. Development should consider walking and cycling friendly design that promotes and improves safety for these methods.
- With regards to noise and light pollution, these are generally the result of urban development. Specific locational policies can ensure that development is directed to the most appropriate locations where air quality, noise and light pollution will be avoided or kept to a minimum.
- Electric vehicle use can be encouraged by including charging points in new developments for both private charging at home and charging stations.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 5: Minimise impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation)

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Promote the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?

For appraisal at subsequent, more detailed / site-specific SA stages.

DAQ 2: Be located within flood zone 2? If so, are there alternative sites in the area that can be allocated in preference to developing land in flood zone 2? (To be determined through the application of the Sequential Test)

For appraisal at subsequent, more detailed / site-specific SA stages.

DAQ 3: Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?

Fluvial flood-risk, along with surface and groundwater flooding form part of the settlement-level analysis below. The cumulative impact of development was also considered in order to identify those catchments where an increase in flows as a result of development would have the greatest impact on downstream flood risk. This analysis is based on a strategic assessment of flood risk. Local knowledge will be applied when specific development locations are identified. In terms of flood-risk potential at settlements the following can be stated:

Royal Wootton Bassett is at low risk of river and surface water flooding and at moderate risk of groundwater flooding. The cumulative impact of development is assessed as moderate.

Marlborough is at high risk of river flooding, at moderate risk of surface water flooding and at low risk of groundwater flooding. The cumulative impact of development is assessed as moderate.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. The moderate quantum proposed for the town under this strategy suggests minor adverse effects.	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. Despite the moderately high quantum proposed for the town under this strategy, the level proposed is lower than SW-A. A minor adverse effect is likely as the result.	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. The moderately high quantum proposed for the town under this strategy – greater than for Core Strategy Continued - suggests minor adverse effects.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. With the moderate proposed growth quantum under Core Strategy Continued, minor adverse effects are estimated.	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. With the highest growth quantum being proposed under this strategy – double that of Core Strategy Continued – minor adverse effects are estimated.	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. With the moderate growth quantum proposed, more or less commensurate vis-à-vis Core Strategy Continued, minor adverse effects are estimated.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	The area's prospects for accommodating flood-resilient development are characterised as being reasonable under this SA objective. It exhibits zones of both high and low risk, with main issues pertaining to either surface or ground water sources. Given the risks moderate adverse effects are estimated here.	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth in the West of Swindon, suggesting that opportunities to direct development away from areas at risk will be more apparent. As similar flood risks remain apparent a minor adverse effect is likely.	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth in the West of Swindon, suggesting that opportunities to direct development away from areas at risk will be more apparent. As similar flood risks remain apparent a minor adverse effect is likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Under this strategy low levels of growth are directed to Rest of HMA. At this strategic stage whilst it is impossible to understand which lower-order settlements would be most affected by development, and what the flood-risks would therefore be, minor	Under this strategy similar levels of growth to Core Strategy Continued are directed to Rest of HMA. At this strategic stage whilst it is impossible to understand which lower-order settlements would be most affected by development, and what the flood-risks would therefore	Under this strategy moderately high levels of growth are directed to Rest of HMA – higher than for Core Strategy Continued. At this strategic stage whilst it is impossible to understand which lower-order settlements would be most affected by development, and what the flood-risks would

	adverse effects are signalled for the quantum of development proposed.	be, minor adverse effects are signalled for the quantum of development proposed.	therefore be, moderate adverse effects are signalled for the quantum of development proposed.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall for the HMA this strategy indicates minor adverse effects, at Marlborough.	-1.0 Overall for the HMA this strategy indicates minor adverse effects, at Royal Wootton Bassett, this is because the growth quantum proposed is considerably higher than under the other two development strategies.	-1.0 Overall for the HMA this strategy indicates minor adverse effects, at Marlborough.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategies SW-B and SW-C are the more sustainable options as there are less adverse effects likely.**
- **Strategy SW-A is the least sustainable strategy as it is likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to the likelihood of increased flood risk at West of Swindon.
- Whilst all areas across Swindon (in Wiltshire) HMA demonstrate some areas at risk of flooding, some places are more constrained than others. Of all the localities under discussion in this area, Royal Wootton Bassett and the Rest of HMA are likely to offer the best opportunities for flood resilience.
- West of Swindon and Marlborough present more flood risk constraints, given areas of flood zones associated with the rivers Ray and Kennet respectively.
- For all new development, in order to provide climate change adaptation and mitigation and improve flood resilience, drainage solutions must incorporate green infrastructure and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems. The Wiltshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment informs as regards the sequential test and, if needed, the exception test, and should be consulted in further, more detailed assessment of potential development locations.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 6: Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?

Whilst this level of analysis makes reference to designated and non-designated heritage assets, these will be appraised in more detail at site-specific stage. At this stage, in/around the settlements the following can be stated.

Royal Wootton Bassett: The chief challenge is the town's setting: urban extension in lower-lying areas would obscure open views of the town's escarpment edges. Designated assets / settings include the conservation area and setting, with numerous listed buildings; road bridges across the railway; and isolated designated farmsteads surrounding the town.

Marlborough: Designated assets / settings include the Castle mound scheduled monument and registered park and garden at Marlborough College; the town conservation area; Tottenham House registered park & garden (south-east) and associated Savernake Forest. The scheduled Roman settlement of Cunetio (east) and scheduled Forest Hill Camp (south-east) are also of note.

DAQ 2: Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account the management objectives of Conservation Areas?

Whilst this level of analysis makes some reference to historic landscape character and townscape quality, design and conservation areas will feature more strongly in subsequent, more detailed / site-specific, appraisal.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Under Core Strategy Continued, a fairly high quantum is directed towards Marlborough, where such levels	Under this development strategy, the amount of growth directed in/around Marlborough is the lowest, lower than	Under this development strategy, the amount of development directed towards Marlborough is the highest –

	would be moderately challenging to accommodate. In addition to heritage highlighted above assets and their settings include Marlborough College buildings and wooded strips that denote the old railway line. It is considered that moderate adverse effects are likely.	for Core Strategy Continued. In addition to heritage highlighted above, assets and their settings include Marlborough College buildings as well as strips of woodland that mark the course of the old railway line. Whilst it is considered that growth levels for this strategy may be more sustainable in heritage terms, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects.	and higher than for Core Strategy Continued. Such levels under this objective would be moderately challenging to accommodate. In addition to heritage mentioned above, assets and their settings include Marlborough College buildings as well as strips of woodland that delineate the old railway line. It is considered that moderate adverse effects accrue to Marlborough at this stage under SW-C.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Quanta proposed in/around Royal Wootton Bassett are moderately high; such levels may nevertheless be sustained. In addition to heritage already highlighted assets and their settings include isolated non-designated farmsteads. It is considered that minor adverse effects would accrue to Royal Wootton Bassett.	Under this development strategy the quantum proposed in/around Royal Wootton Bassett is the highest of all of the strategies. It includes a moderate quantum for business growth. In addition to the town's setting there are medieval fields to the south-east of the settlement, and small blocks of ancient woodland surrounding the town are legible historical markers in the landscape. This level of growth is likely to lead to a minor adverse effect.	Under this strategy development quanta proposed in/around Royal Wootton Bassett are similar to Core Strategy Continued. In addition to the town's setting there are medieval fields to the south-east of the settlement, and small blocks of ancient woodland surrounding the town are legible historical markers in the landscape. Additional assets and their settings include isolated non-designated farmsteads. Minor adverse effects are likely at the settlement.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	This strategy – Core Strategy Continued - is the only one that directs development to West of Swindon. It is considered that growth here would be moderately challenging. A key asset is the grade II registered and listed Lydiard Park that lies to the south of the Common Platt area. Its setting - which includes the post-medieval fields that survive to its north, south and west - has already been affected by development to the east. The primary need here is to avoid compromising the separate character of Lydiard Millicent and Purton, including the Church and Purton House (the latter being listed). To the east of Purton House, Milk House is a listed building. The need to respect and preserve this and the settings of Purton and Lydiard Millicent Conservation Areas may be a constraint to development. The non-designated Purton corn mill (now Fox Mill) also needs noting, and particularly this area in general has high archaeological potential. Given the above it is considered that likely moderate adverse effects are expected at West of Swindon, which is a more specific location and can be accurately assessed.	This strategy proposes a low level of growth. As growth in this area is considered challenging, a minor adverse effect is likely.	This strategy proposes a low level of growth. As growth in this area is considered challenging, a minor adverse effect is likely.

	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	In Rest of HMA the strategy could generate minor adverse effects against heritage assets. These however are likely to be localised, and easier to assess once site-specific proposals emerge.	Some growth is also directed towards Rest of HMA – similar levels to those for Core Strategy Continued. Whilst growth locations in Rest of HMA are unknown, the nature of heritage assets means that they would be present in multiple localities across rural areas, and due care would need to be exercised in avoiding harm. Minor adverse effects are therefore signalled.	Under this development strategy growth in Rest of HMA is higher than under any other – greater than for Core Strategy Continued. Whilst growth locations are not specified the localised nature of heritage assets means that they are present in multiple localities across rural areas, and care would need to be exercised in order to avoid harm. Moderate adverse effects are therefore indicated at this stage.
Overall HMA score	Likely effects: minor adverse -1.5 Moderate adverse effects are indicated overall in this HMA for Marlborough under the heritage objective.	Likely effects: minor adverse -1.0 Minor adverse effects are indicated overall for this strategy.	Likely effects: moderate adverse -1.5 Overall moderate adverse effects are suggested for Marlborough and Rest of HMA under this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is considered to be the more sustainable option as there are less adverse effects likely.** This option increases the amount of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett which is better able to accommodate this growth without causing significant harm to heritage assets and reduces growth at the other settlements/areas which are more constrained in heritage terms.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score equally and are considered the least sustainable strategies as they are likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to higher proposed levels of growth at Marlborough, West of Swindon and in the Rest of the HMA.
- The three development strategies seek to direct the most substantial amounts of development to Royal Wootton Bassett. In each strategy Marlborough, meanwhile, is selected to take a relatively lower quantum of growth which would appear to be a more sustainable approach given numerous urban and rural designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings around the town.
- Heritage evidence indicates that only minimal growth could be accommodated at West of Swindon, whilst any future locations identified for development across the Rest of the HMA would need to be mindful of localised impact upon the historic environment.
- For strategy SW-A that focuses growth on Royal Wootton Bassett, the potential for development on previously developed land is restricted and it will be necessary for all new development to consider the town's elevated historical setting and central conservation area, isolated designated farmsteads surrounding the town, as well as the blurring of separate identity and rural character of neighbouring settlements, including Vastern, Ballard's Ash and Hook. The line of the Wilts and Berks Canal should be protected but may provide an opportunity for environmental enhancement as part of sensitive development.
- At West of Swindon, whilst the existence and setting of designated and non-designated assets at/around Purton, Lydiard Millicent and Lydiard Park need careful consideration, small housing numbers might be carefully accommodated. High archaeological potential exists across the general area, especially for Roman and Medieval artefacts. Evaluation and assessment would be required once individual sites were identified.
- At Marlborough, small-scale growth could be judiciously located around the town. However, high-quality designated and non-designated assets exist in many parts of the town and in surrounding areas. Development locations would need careful selection
- There is likely to be scope for development to conserve and/or enhance some heritage assets and their settings. Re-using previously-developed land would be helpful, where possible, at all settlements. This however is unlikely to yield as much land in the Swindon HMA as it may do in other areas. Local impact assessments at site stage, including for archaeology, would be required to test assertions.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance nationally designated landscapes and their settings and locally valued landscapes?

Whilst this strategic-level analysis appraises designated as well as locally-valued landscape assets, local ones will become even more prominent during detailed / site-specific SA.

Royal Wootton Bassett: In landscape terms the town is already visible from lower-lying countryside. Important features include distant views to the North Wessex Downs AONB, as well as Brynards Hill country park (south).

Marlborough: Main constraints to development would be North Wessex Downs AONB and Tottenham House registered park & garden (higher plateau to the south-east). The Kennet and Og chalk rivers and valley floor meadows are scarce and sensitive landscapes. Development meanwhile to the east and south-east would impact Savernake Forest ancient woodland.

DAQ 2: Protect rights of way, public open space and common land?

These features will be assessed in greater detail in successive rounds of sustainability appraisal when the analysis becomes more detailed.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Under Core Strategy Continued development directed at Marlborough is fairly high. As a prospective development location the town is considered moderately challenging, and any strategy would need to avoid sensitive skylines and locations visible from the wider AONB, particularly the open Marlborough Downs land to the north. It is estimated that moderate adverse effects accrue to Marlborough at this stage under SW-A.	The proposed strategy directs a relatively low amount of development to Marlborough; considerably lower compared to Core Strategy Continued. As a prospective development location the town is considered moderately challenging. There are more opportunities to avoid effects through this strategy when compared to SW-A. It is considered that minor adverse effects accrue to Marlborough at this stage.	This strategy directs the highest amount of development to Marlborough, marginally more than for Core Strategy Continued. As a prospective development location the town is considered moderately challenging under this objective. It is considered that moderate adverse effects accrue at this stage.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Under this development strategy Royal Wootton Bassett takes moderate development. This strategy would create new urban extensions in lower-lying areas obscuring open views of the town's characteristic western slopes. It is considered that minor adverse effects are likely to accrue here.	Royal Wootton Bassett, under this strategy would take most growth. This would include a moderate quantum for business development. The town extends along an elevated scarp slope and is visible from lower surrounding countryside. Such a strategy could alter the traditional setting of the town, with new urban extensions in lower-lying clay vale areas obscuring open views of the town's characteristic western green escarpment slopes. Growth needs to be carefully planned since too much development to the east could result in coalescence with Swindon and loss of the town's separate identity; development south of the railway would meanwhile urbanise the lower rolling farmland character which provides a rural setting to the	The quantum at Royal Wootton Bassett, which is similar to levels for Core Strategy Continued, should be feasible under this development strategy. The town extends along an elevated scarp slope, visible from lower surrounding countryside. Such a strategy could alter the traditional setting of the town, with new urban extensions in lower-lying clay vale areas obscuring open views of the town's characteristic western green escarpment slopes. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.

		AONB, and the area associated with Brynard's Hill and canal. A minor adverse effect is likely.	
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Only under this development strategy – Core Strategy Continued - does West of Swindon take a quantum of development. Rural separation between the current western edge of Swindon and the smaller settlements of Lydiard Millicent and Purton needs to be maintained. If development occurred anywhere other than in least sensitive areas the separate character and identity of settlements would be considered at critical risk. Lydiard House (Grade I) & associated Park (Grade II) are located on a ridge, with a very narrow remaining spur of separating open countryside between the Park and creeping urbanisation. A minor adverse effect is anticipated.	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth when compared to the roll forward. As there is a risk of loss of the rural separation between West of Swindon and the edge of Swindon, a minor adverse effect is likely.	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth than the roll forward. As there is a risk of loss of the rural separation between West of Swindon and the edge of Swindon, a minor adverse effect is likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Across Rest of HMA meanwhile, whilst the quantum is fairly low growth locations are as yet unclear and localised impact for example on AONB could occur. Therefore, minor adverse effects are indicated.	Proposed development quanta across Rest of HMA – the same as Core Strategy Continued - ought meanwhile prove possible to accommodate. However, since growth locations are not identified, and the southern section of the HMA consists of AONB, minor adverse effects exist at this strategic level of assessment.	It is Rest of HMA under this development strategy that would be faced with, comparatively, greatest growth quanta, slightly more than for Core Strategy Continued. At this, strategic level the main issue would be for such scattered development to consider the fact that the southern section of the HMA consists of AONB, where any development would need to be planned very carefully. Locally-valued landscapes would also need to be considered at the point of site-specific plan-making. For these reasons minor adverse effects exist at this stage.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall the strategy for this HMA indicates that minor adverse effects are likely at Marlborough under this objective.	-1.0 Overall the strategy suggests minor adverse effects.	-1.25 Overall the strategy indicates that minor adverse effects are likely to accrue to Marlborough and Rest of HMA.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is considered to be the more sustainable option as there are less adverse effects likely.** This option increases the amount of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett which is better able to accommodate this growth without causing significant landscape impacts and reduces growth, in particular at Marlborough, which is fully within the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score the same and are considered the least sustainable strategies as they are likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to higher proposed levels of growth at Marlborough.
- Strategy SW-B seeks to direct the highest amount of development to Royal Wootton Bassett and the lowest amount to all other settlements/areas. In landscape terms, Marlborough is the most constrained given its setting within a national landscape asset (North Wessex Downs AONB). The Rest of the HMA also lies, in part, within North Wessex Downs and the *majority* of growth would need to be directed towards localities outside of the designated landscape.
- In landscape terms, it would seem possible to direct the levels of growth in SW-B to West of Swindon and Rest of the HMA as there are no national landscape designations affecting West of Swindon and only the southern part of the HMA is affected by the AONB.
- At Royal Wootton Bassett, any new development would need to consider the town's position on an escarpment, overlooked by the AONB from the south, inclusion within the Great Western Community Forest (GWCF), and coalescence with neighbouring settlements, including Swindon, Vastern, Ballard's Ash and Hook.
- With regards mitigation, the GWCF plan, which aims to maintain countryside separation between Swindon and Royal Wootton Bassett, seeks *inter alia* to improve and enhance: nature conservation; transition with, and repair of, countryside around the south of Swindon through woodland planting; and landscape character alongside opportunities for access / recreation / education / health.
- Further mitigation opportunities can be linked to green infrastructure enhancement and restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal corridor; both opportunities would lead to positive effects.
- At the West of Swindon, small housing numbers might be accommodated with careful site selection, accompanied by a requirement for a strong new landscape structure and countryside transitions in the form of tree and woodland planting. This area also partly lies (wholly or substantially) within the GWCF plan area. A key consideration is to maintain and improve an effective buffer between Swindon and the distinct setting and rural character around Purton and Lydiard Millicent, and improvement to the quality of the countryside transition / urban fringe with Swindon and to support GWCF objectives.
- At Marlborough, scattered, smaller-scale growth may be judiciously located around the town. However, the town is fully within the AONB, and development locations would need very careful selection and to take account of river corridors, valley sides and sensitive skylines, and conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 8: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing?

Delivery of homes in Marlborough has been broadly at planned rates. The ratio of house price to earnings has risen to 15.97 substantially higher than the average for Wiltshire. Only 10.4% of housing delivered at Marlborough during the period 1/4/09 – 31/3/18 was affordable. Housing delivery has been above planned rates at Melksham, 34% of which has been affordable housing, above the minimum requirement for the area. The ratio of house price to earnings for the town is 8.3 which is below the Wiltshire average but higher than in 2008 following the trend seen nationally.

At Royal Wootton Bassett the ratio of house price to earnings has also risen slightly to 9.32 but remains below the Wiltshire average. Only 22% of all housing delivered in the area in recent years has been affordable housing. Historic delivery of homes at the town has been substantially higher than planned levels.

At the West of Swindon, homes have been delivered at planned rates. The house price to earnings ratio for Swindon has risen marginally to 7.58 which is below the average for Wiltshire.

For the rest of the housing market area (the rural area) homes have been delivered at or above expected levels. Affordability ratios are, however, higher in rural areas, which reflects the limited supply of homes at large and small villages in recent years, relative to higher tier settlements.

The updated housing requirement means that growth for the HMA will be lower (by approximately 600 homes) than the number of homes allocated for 2006 – 2026 under the WCS. Approximately 44% of this proposed housing requirement for the Wiltshire part of the Swindon HMA is already committed. However, the provision of a significant number of new homes could potentially make a contribution to the provision of affordable homes in the HMA.

SA Conclusions relate to the ability of the strategy to deliver affordable homes where they are needed.

DAQ 2: Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?

Developments providing a mix of house types and sizes can be delivered on small or large sites. For this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 3: Deliver high quality residential development?

High quality developments providing a mix of tenures can be delivered on small or large sites. For this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options in relation to the quality of housing or mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Under Strategy A, existing commitments would deliver the majority of the housing requirement for Marlborough, leaving a residual requirement of 80 dwellings. It is considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that this strategy would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough.	Under Strategy B, existing commitments would deliver all of the housing requirement for Marlborough, leaving no residual requirement. It is considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that Strategy SW-B would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough.	Under Strategy C, the housing requirement is higher, but existing commitments would still deliver the majority of the housing requirement for the town, leaving a residual requirement of 180 dwellings. It is considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that Strategy C would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough, although this would be more positive compared to strategies SW-A and SW-B.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Rolling forward the pro-rata requirement for the town means that Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 900 dwellings from 2016-2036. Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 580 dwellings. It is considered that the relatively modest scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.	Under Strategy B, Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 1,255 dwellings from 2016-2036 (an increase of just under 200 dwellings compared to the current WCS). Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 900 dwellings. It is considered that the higher level of growth under this strategy would be likely to have moderate positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.	Under Strategy C, Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 835 dwellings from 2016-2036. Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 525 dwellings, comparable to Strategy A. It is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: moderate positive	Likely effects: minor positive

West of Swindon	Rolling forward the housing requirement for the HMA against current strategy would mean a reduction in housing provision of approximately 150 dwellings for the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 196 dwellings. Given the relative size of Swindon, it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon but could result in the delivery of fewer homes at the other settlements in Wiltshire.	Strategy B would mean a reduction in housing provision of just over 400 dwellings for the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period, the same as Strategy C but lower than Strategy A. Taking into account commitments there would be no residual requirement. Given the relative size of Swindon, it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have a neutral effect on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon.	Strategy C would mean a reduction in housing provision of just over 400 dwellings at the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period, the same as Strategy B but lower than Strategy A. Taking into account commitments there would be no residual requirement. There is, therefore a risk given the relative size of Swindon, and it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have a neutral effect on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: neutral	Likely effects: neutral
Rest of HMA	A continuation of relatively low levels of housing growth at small and large villages is likely to exacerbate affordability issues in these parts of the Rest of the HMA. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 258 dwellings. The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in a minor positive effect on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.	Under Strategy B, the housing requirements for 2016 – 2036, to be met at small and large villages, would be comparable to the current WCS requirement. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 258 dwellings. The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.	Under Strategy C a greater proportion of the housing requirements for 2016 – 2036 would be directed to the rest of the HMA but not significantly more than A and B. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 458 dwellings. The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Overall HMA score	0.5 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective.	0.5 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective.	0.25 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective, but the benefits will be less than for A and B.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, **Strategies SW-A and SW-B score equally and are considered the most sustainable strategies** against this objective. Both strategies are likely to have minor positive effects on this objective.
- **Strategy SW-C also is likely to have minor positive effects but the benefits are likely to be less than SW-A and SW-B and this is the least sustainable strategy.**
- None of the strategies under consideration are likely to have significant benefits against this objective. The only settlement to score moderate positive is Royal Wootton Bassett under strategy B which proposes an increase in the housing requirement. But overall, these strategies propose a housing requirement for the Swindon HMA much lower (by approx. 600 dwellings) than for the current plan period. Existing commitments in many cases have led to a zero or small residual requirement which would not provide a consistent supply up to 2036. To increase the benefits for affordable and market housing provision in this HMA, the overall requirement would need to be significantly higher.
- SW-B allocates the least amount of development to Marlborough but the level of growth in each strategy for Marlborough is not significantly different. The ratio of house price to earnings in Marlborough has risen to 15.97, substantially higher than the average for Wiltshire. The provision of affordable housing at Marlborough should be prioritised to meet identified needs,

perhaps through application of a specific affordable housing policy requirement for the town that is higher than for other parts of Wiltshire, subject to viability testing. Increasing the overall housing requirement considerably at Marlborough would have some benefits for affordable provision but would still be unlikely to significantly bring down the ratio.

- SW-B, however, allocates the highest amount of housing to Royal Wootton Bassett, which is considered better located to meet affordable housing needs.
- For West of Swindon, strategies SW-B and SW-C when considering commitments would have neutral effects because there would effectively be a zero requirement. However, Swindon Borough Council are proposing to meet the needs for Swindon within the Borough and so allocation of homes at West of Swindon, in Wiltshire, would be unlikely to be of benefit to the town but the reduction in the number of homes being allocated to the other Wiltshire settlements within the HMA could have a negative effect on the supply of affordable homes for these settlements.
- For the Rest of the HMA (the rural area) homes have been delivered at or above expected levels but affordability ratios are, however, higher in rural areas, which reflects the limited supply of homes at large and small villages in recent years, relative to higher tier settlements. Across all strategies, the proposed requirements are only likely to have minor benefits and provision would need to be significantly higher to make any real difference to affordability. A rural facilities survey should be undertaken to identify where the provision of homes could be targeted to help support the vitality of rural settlements in the HMA.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 9: Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Maximise opportunities within the most deprived areas?

There are no areas within the Swindon HMA that have been identified as being subject to deprivation.

Older people within Royal Wootton Bassett are more vulnerable and at risk of social isolation than across Wiltshire as a whole.

DAQ 2: Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?

At Royal Wootton Bassett there is an existing gap in GP provision (-409m²). This is expected to increase to -533m² by 2026. There is an opportunity to refurbish New Court Surgery. There is a planned expansion to Royal Wootton Bassett Academy, which will enable the school to meet identified needs. Complexities are considered in expanding this school further, due to PFI and as this would create a very large school and larger scales of growth are considered to be able to support new secondary school provision. New primary provision is expected to be required, as St Bartholomew's is currently undergoing expansion and there are only a small number of surplus places across the town.

At Marlborough there is a community hospital situated in the settlement. Marlborough Medical Practice is experiencing a provision gap of -379m² and Ramsbury and Wanborough Surgery faces a gap of -318m². These gaps are expected to stagnate in the period up to 2026. There is scope to expand the existing secondary school, but expansion is currently considered to be required with St John's in Marlborough currently operating over-capacity. A large scale of growth is considered to be capable of enabling a new school. Primary schools within the settlement have no scope for further expansion and new provision would have to be secure to meet demand from new housing. Issues are apparent in securing land for new school provision, however.

West of Swindon has one secondary school, which is positioned in Purton. This school currently has some capacity with demand for places reducing following the opening of a new school in Swindon, but is expected to be full by 2020. Additional land would need to be acquired to enable any future expansion. While there is some existing surplus of primary school places, none of the schools in the area are capable of expansion. Modest levels of housing growth could be accommodated as a result.

DAQ 3: Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that might support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?

For this high-level stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options in relation to public spaces and community facilities. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 4: Reduce rural isolation, including access to affordable services for those without a car in rural areas?

<p>Within the Rest of the HMA, rural areas suffer from lack of access to services and facilities, so focusing development in these areas without promoting services alongside could lead to more isolation. There is an opportunity for development to support services and facilities in rural areas. House price to income ratios in rural areas are higher than the Wiltshire average and house prices are above the Wiltshire average. Further, there is a risk of isolation among the over 65s. Housing development could potentially help to overcome these issues.</p>			
Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	<p>The level of growth proposed at Marlborough through this strategy would be unlikely to sufficiently help overcome the constraints identified, but opportunities to mitigate effects may be apparent. Due to identified constraints and the level of growth, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9.</p>	<p>This strategy proposes lower levels of growth at Marlborough. Strategy SW-B is more likely to lead to an effect at Marlborough, as it proposes the smallest level of growth at the settlement. Despite constraints at Marlborough with relation to healthy communities, a lower level of growth is unlikely to lead to adverse effects on these services at the settlement. However, the need for and potential for mitigation opportunities to help overcome effects remain unclear at this stage. Therefore, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9.</p>	<p>This strategy proposes low levels of growth in proportion to the existing settlement of Marlborough. This strategy proposes an increased level of growth when compared to SW-A. Probabilities of overcoming effects through mitigation are increased through higher levels of growth. This is a moderate level in relative terms and high level in comparative terms. It is likely that there could be a minor positive effect as a result of this strategy on objective 9.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	<p>Rolling forward the current strategy at Royal Wootton Bassett proposes a low level of growth proportionately to the existing settlement. There are opportunities for this strategy to direct development in areas where older people are at risk of isolation, but due to existing issues relating to GP capacity and schooling provision, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9.</p>	<p>This strategy proposes proportionately moderate levels of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett. There are more opportunities through this strategy to help overcome the risk of isolation among older people, additionally there is an increased probability of investing in health and education through this level of growth for Royal Wootton Bassett. This strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect. This strategy proposes a higher level of growth when compared to the roll forward and is therefore considered to have the biggest degree of effect on objective 9.</p>	<p>At Royal Wootton Bassett this strategy proposes a low level of growth, proportionately. This is a similar, but lower quantum than rolling forward the current strategy. There are opportunities for this strategy to direct development in areas where older people are at risk of isolation, but due to existing issues relating to GP capacity and schooling provision, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9. Similar effects are considered likely when compared to SW-A.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	<p>When taking account of uncertainties at this stage, as well as school capacity issues. This level of growth is unlikely to be able to support new schooling provision. Strategy SW-A is likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9.</p>	<p>A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. There are school capacity issues in the area and a low level of growth is expected to have a minor positive effect at this location.</p>	<p>A low level of growth is proposed through this strategy. There are school capacity issues in the area and a low level of growth is expected to have a minor positive effect at this location.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Rest of HMA	<p>This strategy proposes relatively and comparatively moderate levels of growth in the Rest of the HMA. It is</p>	<p>This strategy proposes a moderate level of growth in relative and comparative terms for the Rest of the HMA. This is equivalent to rolling forward the current strategy. It</p>	<p>This strategy proposes high levels of growth in relative and comparative terms in the Rest of the HMA. Due to the level of growth proposed and a lack of certainty at this stage, it is</p>

	likely that there could be a minor positive effect as a result of this strategy.	is likely that there could be a minor positive effect as a result of this strategy on objective 9.	likely to have a minor positive effect on objective 9. As this strategy proposes a higher scale of growth for the Rest of the HMA a bigger effect is considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Overall HMA score	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there could be a neutral effect on Objective 9. This is despite opportunities for positive effects through investment into identified areas at risk of deprivation, education services and health services and considering the potential impact on existing services where the level of growth for each settlement is unlikely to support these.	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there could be a neutral effect on Objective 9. This is due to are opportunities to overcome some of the pressures on schooling and healthcare across the HMA although these remain unclear at this stage.	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there would be a neutral effect on Objective 9. This is as the extent of effects and opportunities for mitigation remain unclear.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, it has been difficult to differentiate between the different strategies and **there is no one strategy considered to be more or less sustainable against this objective**. Strategies that distribute higher levels of growth to different areas e.g. SW-A to West of Swindon, SW-B to Royal Wootton Bassett and SW-C to Marlborough and Rest of the HMA are likely to have greater benefits. However, these levels of higher growth are distributed between all of the strategies which is why they score so similarly, and growth is not of a scale where significant changes are likely to occur in the area.
- Increasing levels of growth in all settlements/areas, providing there is commensurate investment in infrastructure, services and facilities, is likely to have a positive effect in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities.
- New development in different parts of the HMA is considered to be positive overall, through provision of affordable housing and new or expanded health, education, cultural and recreational facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise.
New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities.
- New development can cause pressure on existing services and facilities in the short-term and needs to be accompanied by adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new residents. This is especially the case regarding transport, healthcare and education where services are under pressure across much of the area. All of the settlements in the Swindon HMA, including the West of Swindon, have existing issues with secondary school capacity which could be worsened by further development. Additional school capacity would need to be found at all of the settlements. Strategies should also take the opportunity to invest in health services and facilities. This is particularly pertinent in Royal Wootton Bassett and Marlborough which have significant capacity issues and would need additional investment in GP surgeries to address the existing GP capacity gap. Increasing the levels of growth proposed could enable new educational facility supply, but could lead to pressure on other services.
- For new development to be effective in reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities, it will be very important that all new housing development includes a range of house types/tenures and a level of affordable housing that will actually help reduce the affordability ratio, which is high in this area, and that all new development provides the essential services and facilities that are needed to avoid increasing pressure on existing services and also reduces the need to travel and reduces out-commuting.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 10: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Promote mixed use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car?

Limited notable observations are possible at this stage in relation to this DAQ. Further consideration will be given to these matters at a later, more site specific, stage where more precise accessibility, development mix and travel options become clearer. Where observations can be made at this strategic stage, they have been made below.

None of the main settlements within this HMA possess a rail link with public transport services being provided by the bus travel options present to act as alternatives to private car travel. When looking at the rest of the HMA, along with development to the west of Swindon, many of these locations are positioned in less accessible locations than the market towns and principle settlements and may increase the reliance on the private car, often being positioned further away from many amenities or public transport services.

DAQ 2: Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity (unless there is evidence that such impacts can be mitigated)?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of certain key strategic constraints at each location. At this stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise suitability of access along with the impacts on local transport capacity. More detailed assessment may be possible at the site assessment stage where impacts along with mitigation/improvement measures may become clearer.

Marlborough lies on the intersection of the A4 and A346 providing key links in each direction. These links are well used by transport from several locations and Marlborough acts as a pinch point for this traffic which can cause AM and PM peak hour delays, impacting travel times. This congestion also needs to be considered when trying to mitigate any further deterioration of the Air Quality in Marlborough, a location with an existing AQMA.

Royal Wootton Bassett's proximity to Junction 16 of the M4 influences patterns of travel in the area and can create additional volumes of traffic in the town. While other routes radiate from the surroundings into the town, the A3102 acts as the main route running through the town which suffers congestion at peak periods as a result.

Within the rest of HMA and locations west of Swindon, links to the highway network vary as do the levels of existing transport capacity. That being said, the majority of settlements in the rest of HMA will likely be less accessible to services and increase the likelihood of increasing usage of transport corridors with lower levels of capacity.

DAQ 3: Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of certain elements of the existing transport infrastructure in each broad location that could be utilised sustainably if growth were to take place. At this stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise potential efficient use or impacts upon the existing transport infrastructure. More detailed assessment may be possible at the site assessment stage where the potential for utilisation or improvements to the existing transport infrastructure may become clearer.

In highway terms, Marlborough is well connected, acting as a central point at the intersection of the A4 and A346, with A345 also offering links to the south. Bus services utilise these links offering services to locations such as Swindon, Salisbury and Pewsey, which offer the locations for rail provision in the absence of a station within Marlborough, Great Bedwyn offers another option for rail travel, 6 miles away.

Royal Wootton Bassett is located in close proximity to Junction 16 of M4, also offering A routes to settlements such as Swindon and. These A routes are utilised by bus services offering links to locations such as Calne, Chippenham, Malmesbury and Swindon. The nearest station being within Swindon.

The often rural nature of the rest of the HMA and areas to the west of Swindon leads to a large variance in the nature and availability of transport infrastructure, both in public transport and highway terms. Existing sustainable transport infrastructure in the rest of the housing market area is often limited due to the remote location of certain areas with in-frequent public transport services and accessibility. Efficient use of existing transport systems in these locations is consequently more likely to be constrained by the lack of current infrastructure.

DAQ 4: Provide the opportunity to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure including safe active travel?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of the existing sustainable transport provision and pedestrian environment in each broad location that provide opportunity for enhancement moving forward. At this stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise opportunities to enhance safe active travel without knowing the spatial distribution of growth within each location. More detailed assessment should be possible at the site assessment stage where the opportunities to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure may become clearer.

Within Marlborough, in the absence of a rail link within the town, the enhancement of the public transport offer is likely to be in the shape of enhanced bus service provision, utilising the road network present within the town, namely the A4, A345 and A346. Active travel is characterised by National Cycle Network 254, 403 and 482 along with section 10 and 11 of the Wiltshire Cycleway passing through the area. The Marlborough town cycle network plan outlines further provision and opportunities.

The highway links provided by the A3102 and radial B routes provide the basis for the sustainable transport services present within Royal Wootton Bassett and the basis from which they are likely to be enhanced in the future, given no rail link is provided for in the town itself. The active travel present includes National Cycle network 24 and 254 lying just to the north and west of the settlement. A Royal Wootton Bassett town cycle network plan has been developed outlining provision and opportunities.

When looking at the rest of the housing market area, along with locations to the west of Swindon, it is acknowledged there is relatively poor cycle network provision in the rural hinterland and while settlements are connected by Public Rights of Way, the quality and visibility of these routes vary. The bus services are often limited or in-frequent, particularly in more sparsely populated rural areas, though it is acknowledged that growth of towns and villages in these areas may offer the opportunity to make some public transport services more viable to these areas.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Marlborough is identified for a relatively low level of growth in this option, though a slightly larger level of employment growth is proposed. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, this is currently assessed as having a likely minor adverse effect against this objective.	Marlborough is identified for a low level of growth in this option, though a slightly larger level of employment growth is proposed in line with the roll forward option. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, this is currently assessed as having a likely minor adverse effect against this objective.	Marlborough is identified for a larger level of housing growth in this option compared to the roll forward. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, and the figure remaining modest, this is currently assessed as having a likely minor adverse effect against this objective.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Strategy SW-A identifies a relatively larger level of growth, mainly housing with a small level of employment growth, in Royal Wootton Bassett compared to the other settlements, although this figure is not signifying a significant focus for growth in this location. Currently this is assessed as having a minor adverse effect.	Strategy SW-B focuses more growth at Royal Wootton Bassett, the figure being slightly higher than the roll forward of the WCS option. Currently this is assessed as having a minor adverse effect in this location given the level of growth remains moderate. The level to which mitigation measures can be established to accommodate this level of growth are currently unclear.	Strategy SW-C identifies a similar level of housing growth to the roll forward of the current strategy at Royal Wootton Bassett to SW-A. This figure is not signifying a significant focus for growth in this location. Currently this is assessed as having a minor adverse effect.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	This strategy proposes a larger level of growth in the west of Swindon and may lead to development in areas with reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. Given the extent to which this is possible remains unclear at this stage, this level of growth in these locations is assessed as having a minor adverse effect against this objective.	Strategy SW-B proposes a lower level of growth when compared to SW-A. There remains the risk that development will be directed in areas with reduced access to modes of sustainable transport, while mitigation opportunities remain uncertain. A minor adverse effect is likely.	Strategy SW-C proposes a lower level of growth when compared to SW-A. There remains the risk that development will be directed in areas with reduced access to modes of sustainable transport, while mitigation opportunities remain uncertain. A minor adverse effect is likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse

Rest of HMA	A continuation of the current levels of growth in the rest of HMA, may place comparatively larger levels of growth in locations with reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. Given the extent to which this is possible remains unclear at this stage, this level of growth in these locations is assessed as having a minor adverse effect against this objective.	SW-B proposes the same level of growth as SW-A. Development in rural areas is likely to have reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. The uncertainty over the geographical location of growth and the level to which sustainability may be achieved means this is likely to have minor adverse effects against this objective.	Focusing a higher level of housing growth in rest of HMA may place development in locations with reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. This level of growth in combination with the uncertainty over the geographical location of growth and the level to which sustainability may be achieved is assessed as having a minor adverse effect against this objective.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective.	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective.	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective, although effects will be greater due to likely significant effects at Marlborough under this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, it has been difficult to differentiate between the different strategies, they all score equally and **there is no one strategy considered to be more or less sustainable against this objective.**
- Transport issues within the Swindon HMA are largely focussed on trying to maximise the use and availability of sustainable modes of transport along with managing levels of congestion on strategic routes and in town centres, namely in Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett. This congestion can impact upon private and public transport, as well as impacting the strategic role of key routes running through each location. Overall, the level of growth proposed across the strategies is considered likely to increase traffic levels generally, and the impact of this must be taken into consideration when considering options moving forward.
- Marlborough has comparatively less growth identified for the town across all options, but the largest level of growth is proposed in strategy SW-C which is the reason for likely moderate adverse effects. Growth at this settlement through all strategies will need to be sensitive to further impacts on the highway routes that intersect at Marlborough, including current congestion and air quality issues with a designated AQMA in the town centre.
- Royal Wootton Bassett is identified for similar levels of growth in strategies SW-A and SW-C, with strategy SW-B focusing the largest level of growth on the town which puts the settlement forward as a focus for growth. Royal Wootton Bassett has its travel patterns influenced by its proximity to the M4, junction 16. This generates increases in traffic volumes using the road routes through the town with the A3102 acting as the main route through the town. The A3102 also offers a key link to surrounding settlements and is utilised by public transport services to offer links further afield, in combination to the other radial B routes from the town. With this in mind, future development must consider the impact and mitigation measures possible to maintain the efficient functioning of this road network, hence the negative effects for all strategies in relation to this settlement. The uncertainty reflects that the assessment is likely to change once further detail emerges around the sustainability of development in transport terms and the mitigation possible that can vary in different locations with differing levels of development.
- Growth in the Rest of the HMA, in rural areas, and at West of Swindon, may place development away from established sustainable transport provision. It should however be acknowledged that development here may facilitate and improve the viability of new sustainable transport options reaching more rural communities. At this stage, development in these locations has been assessed negatively against this objective mainly due to the likelihood that it will not make efficient use of existing sustainable transport infrastructure and may increase private car usage. However further work establishing the level of development required in certain locations to facilitate investment and improvements in sustainable transport options may change this assessment and clarify the sustainability of the rest of HMA, hence the uncertainty being placed against the assessments at this stage.
- It is considered key to locate development at locations that make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and can facilitate advancements in the use of sustainable transport. Therefore, favourable locations should be in well-connected areas that benefit from good accessibility to a wide range of sustainable transport options, or in locations that can facilitate improvements in such factors. Development should contribute to improving sustainable transport networks; this includes linking town centres with development sites as well as linking settlements together.

- Any future development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. Strong investment may be required to improve public transport services and safe walking/cycling links, particularly within and to/from town centres.
- Mixed-use development proposals or sites that have good transport links to existing employment areas within the settlement are recommended as this will help increase self-containment and reduce need to travel.
- Significant new highway infrastructure may be necessary to enable higher levels of growth to take place in the identified settlements, depending on the exact scale and location of growth.
- More detailed transport assessments may be necessary to understand in detail the impact of certain levels of development on settlements and communities to understand the impacts and possible mitigation measures that can be put in place to improve congestion hot spots and sustainable transport provision.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 11: Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?

The relationship with the town centre, and its immediate and wider rural context is complex and will also rely on trade from staff and other retail and non-retail businesses. Additional growth will inevitably contribute, to some extent, to the vitality and viability of town centres. At this stage, in the absence of specific site options to consider, the proximity of future housing and employment development to the town centres cannot be determined and therefore will not be considered as part of this high-level assessment but will be assessed at later stages.

DAQ 2: Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport?

The Local Plan Review is at an early stage of preparation and, consequently, details of the distribution and range of employment uses that will be provided is not known. Therefore, for this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options against this objective. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of employment land and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 3: Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth?

The provision of housing and employment will require sufficient infrastructure to be in place to ensure that it is acceptable. This will largely be achieved through s106 contributions for those directly related to the development. CIL funds and grant funding will ensure the provision of strategic infrastructure. The quantum of homes and employment land to be delivered is the same for each of the strategies and therefore should result in the contributions towards infrastructure on a similar scale, albeit applicable to specific areas. The provision of infrastructure will need to be considered and tested further at the site options stage.

DAQ 4: Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel distances to work?

Wiltshire has large flows of commuters into and out of the county, with an overall net outflow of commuters. The majority of movement is to and from Swindon and Bath & North-East Somerset. 56% of people travel to work by car, 13% by foot and 5% by public transport. Self-containment in Wiltshire is 63%, compared to 74% in Swindon.

The extent that strategies can promote a balance between residential and employment development will, in part, depend on the existing provision in terms of housing stock and employment uses, the relationship between them, and the relationship/connectivity of a settlement with other parts of the HMA/FEMA (which themselves are strongly influenced by travel to work areas) and adjacent areas. The provision of employment development in isolation could, for example, be more likely to lead to an increase in travel distances but not necessarily if it was located in an area of relatively higher rates of unemployment. The same might apply in areas where employment vacancies are high, or jobs are expected to increase. This will, however, depend on the extent that the skills base of the unemployed in the local area match that provided by any new employers.

Of the total need of 182ha of employment land identified in the FEMA, a substantial proportion can be met from existing operational employment sites and site allocations leaving 26ha to be met from additional allocations across the county. The residual requirement for employment land for the Swindon HMA is 6ha. Due to the extent of existing employment provision, none of the three strategies would be likely to result in major positive or negative effects, as the vast majority is already being met by current employment sites or existing commitments.

At Marlborough total employment has grown very slightly since 2009, with low levels of unemployment at the town. There is a high concentration of jobs in the Education sector. This is reflected in the JSF profile. Marlborough Business Park has provided an important new location for employment growth and new business but is practically fully let/sold, and workspace and land shortages have been identified. Below average town centre shop vacancy rates.

At Royal Wootton Bassett total employment has stagnated since 2009. No sector stands out as having a particularly high concentration. The small employment base is reflected in the JSF profile. Occupancy at Interface Park remains strong; there has been much MoD

property investment at Lyneham to support its training facilities there. There is a low level of unemployment at the town and below average shop vacancy rates.

At Swindon the Borough supports a relatively productive economy with high levels of GVA per job, although productivity gains in the economy has slowed during recent periods. The diverse business base and strong representation of sectors in Swindon provides a diversity of employment opportunities for local workers, with a number of large international companies and headquarters across a number of sectors. The range of employment sites in Swindon generally comprise good quality, well-maintained stock with relatively low vacancy ¹. Total employment has steadily increased in recent years and is now at pre-recession levels. Unemployment at Swindon is low.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Under this strategy 4ha additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and 570 dwellings. The scale of employment growth allocated would be unlikely to be matched by the scale of housing to be provided under this strategy. The high affordability ratio for housing at Marlborough is likely to be a strong factor in commuting patterns, meaning that employees are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there. Provision of 4ha of employment land is therefore unlikely to redress any imbalance but will still be positive in providing sites for local business expansion and inward investment, encouraging a vibrant and diversified economy. The housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Overall, minor positive effects are likely.	Under this strategy no additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and there would only be 485 new homes over the plan period. It is therefore predicted that this strategy would have a neutral effect on travel to work distances. The housing proposed will help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects are predicted when comparing with strategies TR-B and TR-C.	Under this strategy 3ha additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and 680 dwellings. As with, SW-A, the scale of employment growth allocated would be unlikely to be matched by scale of housing to be provided under this strategy, although there would be a slightly better balance with the additional homes proposed. The high affordability ratio for housing at Marlborough is still likely to be a strong factor in relation to commuting patterns, meaning that employees based at the new employment locations, are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there. Provision of 3ha of employment land is therefore unlikely to redress any travel to work imbalance but will still be positive in providing sites for local business expansion and inward investment, encouraging a vibrant and diversified economy. The housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Similar to the other strategies, overall, minor positive effects are likely.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
	Under this strategy 2ha of additional employment land would be allocated at Royal Wotton Bassett and 900 dwellings. Employment has stagnated at the	Employment has stagnated at Royal Wootton Bassett and therefore additional employment provision of 6ha would be	No additional employment provision at Royal Wootton Bassett is predicted to have negative effects.

Royal Wootton Bassett	town and therefore additional employment provision would be a benefit. The level of housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Consequently, this strategy is predicted to result in minor positive effects overall.	of substantial benefit, plus the higher number of homes proposed. This much higher level of housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide a significantly increased supply of local labour. Consequently, this strategy is predicted to result in moderate positive effects on this objective.	However, 835 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, the town centre and providing an increased supply of local labour.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: moderate positive	Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon. It is assumed that the wider employment allocation in the borough would continue to meet the employment needs of the town. The 755 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon, the same as for strategies SW-A and SW-C. Because of the close relationship of the location with Swindon it is assumed that the employment needs would continue be met within the borough. The 485 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon, the same as for strategies SW-A and SW-B. Because of the close relationship of the location with Swindon it is assumed that the employment needs would continue be met within the borough. The 485 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Rest of HMA	Under this strategy no employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean a continuation of the existing approach to the provision of employment land to meet local needs. The 1030 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy no employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean a continuation of the existing approach to the provision of employment land to meet local needs. The 1030 dwellings proposed under this strategy, same as SW-A, is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy 3ha of employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean an increase in the existing provision of employment land to balance the allocation of additional homes under this strategy. The 1255 dwellings proposed under this strategy is also likely to have positive effects overall through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Taken together in the rural part of the HMA, the combination of housing and employment is considered likely to have moderate positive effects overall.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: moderate positive
Overall HMA score	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.	1.25 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.	1.25 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

Overall, **Strategies SW-B and SW-C score equally and are the most sustainable strategies** as they are likely to have the highest level of benefits across all areas.

Strategy SW-A is considered the least sustainable option as it is likely to have fewer benefits across all areas.

Strategy SW-A is likely to have benefits in every settlement/area but is unlikely to result in any significant benefits for a particular place. Whereas, the distributions proposed in SW-B and SW-C are likely to have significant benefits for Royal Wootton Bassett and the Rest of the HMA respectively.

Settlements/areas in these strategies that combine a higher level of both employment and housing are considered likely to give greater benefits against this objective as both elements help to improve self-containment of settlements and encourage vibrant and diversified places.

Outstanding commitments in the Swindon HMA (within Wiltshire) are capable of meeting a significant proportion of the need for additional employment land to 2036. Consequently, the differences in the effects of the three strategic options for the distribution of the employment land requirement are limited by the relatively small scale of development under consideration. A key consideration has been the aspiration to reduce travel to work distances and achieving a balance between employment and housing growth. An imbalance of housing and employment e.g. at Marlborough through strategy SW-A, may have benefits overall for the local economy, but will mean employees are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there.

SA Annex 1.3 - Swindon Housing Market Area (HMA) - SA of Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment)

Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy) - Rolling forward the Core Strategy includes employment land at Royal Wootton Bassett and Marlborough.

Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus) – Focus on Royal Wootton Bassett. Housing constrained at Marlborough to current commitments plus windfall allowance and growth in rest reflects assessed need (-16%). Nothing beyond existing commitments at West of Swindon. Balance focused at Royal Wootton Bassett (1,255 homes) including employment land at the town only.

Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus) - Focus on rest of HMA - Marlborough and rest of HMA continue WCS rates, reduced at Royal Wootton Bassett and only commitments at West of Swindon.

Proposed distribution of housing and employment requirements – Swindon HMA						
Settlement	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)		Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)		Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)	
	Housing	Employment	Housing	Employment	Housing	Employment
Marlborough	570	4	485	0	680	3
Royal Wootton Bassett	900	2	1255	6	835	0
West of Swindon	755	0	485	0	485	0
Rest of HMA	1030	0	1030	0	1255	3
TOTAL	3255	6	3255	6	3255	6

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Avoid potential negative impacts of development on designated wildlife sites, protected species and priority species and habitats (international, national, local) and enhance these where possible?

With regards to statutory designations in **Marlborough**, Savernake Forest SSSI, which is an area of ancient woodland and is a habitat for Dormouse and bats, lies to the south east of the settlement boundary and the River Kennet SSSI runs through from east to west. There are also a number of non-statutory CWSs on the boundary of the settlement, including Stonebridge Meadows to the north east and Granham Hill and Chopping Knife Lane Bank to the south. Furthermore, the disused railway tunnel to the south is an important hibernation site for Natterer's bats and as a result, should be considered as designated.

In **Royal Wootton Bassett**, statutory designations exist including Jubilee Lake LNR to the north west and Royal Wootton Bassett Mud Spring SSSI approximately 400m from the settlement boundary to the south. Furthermore, the non-statutory designations of Jubilee Lake and Wood CWS and Morningside Farm Meadows CWS lie to the north west and south east respectively. With regards to protected species, great crested newts are associated with wet meadows and ponds in the area, as well as the Wilts & Berks Canal.

In the **West of Swindon**, there are some statutory designations including Restrop Farm and Brockhurst Wood SSSI which lies to the south west of Purton, and Stoke Common Meadows SSSI in the rural area west of Purton Stoke. There are also a number of CWSs dispersed around the West of Swindon area, particularly in the area around Lydiard Plain.

In the **Rest of the HMA**, there are some areas which are designated SSSIs or contain important habitats including ancient woodland.

DAQ 2: Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?

There are no LGSs (formerly Regional Sites of Geological Importance, or RIGs) in direct proximity to the market towns in the Swindon HMA. However, there are some small sites in the Rest of the HMA.

DAQ 3: Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?

The design of developments may incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity and contribute to networks of multifunctional green space known as green infrastructure. The preparation of a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy will help to provide a long-term vision and strategic framework to aid the delivery of GI. However, at this stage of the process, it is not possible to comment on the likelihood of GI being adopted as part of development.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	SW-A proposes a moderate level of growth for Marlborough. Significant adverse effects more likely from this higher level of growth as there are a number of ecologically sensitive areas around the town. Development could also have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term. Overall, moderate adverse effects likely.	SW-B proposes the lowest level of growth for Marlborough. Significant adverse effects likely to be avoided as a lower level of growth. Overall, minor adverse effects likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	SW-C proposes the highest level of growth for Marlborough. Significant adverse effects more likely from this higher level of growth as there are a number of ecologically sensitive areas around the town. Development could also have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term. Overall, moderate adverse effects likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	No significant effects likely from this scale of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett. No significant issues. Minor adverse effects considered likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	No significant effects likely from this scale of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett. No significant issues. Minor adverse effects considered likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	No significant effects likely from this scale of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett. No significant issues. Minor adverse effects considered likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	No sites identified at this stage. Development at West of Swindon likely to be possible without significant effects. No significant issues if development respects local designations. Overall, minor adverse effects likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	No sites identified at this stage. Development at West of Swindon likely to be possible without significant effects. No significant issues if development respects local designations. Overall, minor adverse effects likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	No sites identified at this stage. Development at West of Swindon likely to be possible without significant effects. No significant issues if development respects local designations. Overall, minor adverse effects likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Due to the broad geographical area involved, it is difficult to determine impacts upon Rest of HMA.	Due to the broad geographical area involved, it is difficult to determine impacts upon Rest of HMA. Therefore, due	Due to the broad geographical area involved, it is difficult to determine impacts upon Rest of HMA. Therefore, due to

	Therefore, due to the presence of ecological designations in some areas, minor adverse effects are likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	to the presence of ecological designations in some areas, minor adverse effects are likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.	the presence of ecological designations in some areas, minor adverse effects are likely as development could have some localised impacts on habitats in the short-term.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor adverse effect on this objective.	-1.0 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor adverse effect on this objective.	-1.25 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor adverse effect on this objective.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is considered the most sustainable strategy** against this objective as likely adverse effects are fewer.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score equally and are considered the least sustainable strategies** due to significant effects being attributed to Marlborough.
- Marlborough is considered the most highly constrained settlement in the Swindon HMA with regards to this objective, due to a number of ecological designations that relate to and intersect with the settlement boundary. As a result, moderate adverse effects are considered likely from the strategies that propose the higher levels of growth in Marlborough (SW-A and SW-C).
- Minor effects only are considered likely for all strategies for Royal Wootton Bassett, West of Swindon and Rest of HMA as there are few ecological issues in these areas and the growth levels are not significant. Further, more detailed assessment will be undertaken at site level when locations are known.
- Development should generally avoid areas of biodiversity sensitivity where possible, particularly important bat habitats such as woodland. Offsetting and habitat creation are likely to be key to enabling any further development where growth poses a risk to protected species and habitats.
- Development should also take the opportunity to improve habitats where necessary and achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.
- Adopting buffers around important connective habitats, such as hedgerows, railways lines and canals, would help to reduce pressure on these areas.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 2: Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Ensure efficient use of land?

The design of specific developments will involve setting appropriate housing densities for development will be part of the planning process at a later stage. At this stage of the process, it is not possible to comment on the design and density of developments.

DAQ 2: Lead to the reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate?

There is a lack of previously developed land (PDL) across the HMA. Therefore, all strategies are likely to result in the loss of greenfield land.

DAQ 3: Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?

Across Wiltshire, some 14000 sites of potential contamination exist as a result of a range of historical land uses; 225 high priority sites have been identified as part of a prioritised approach to inspection. Currently four sites have been determined as contaminated land and remediated. The remediation of contaminated land will be principally addressed through the planning process where former sites change their use.

DAQ 4: Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?

At **Marlborough**, the majority of land surrounding the built-up area is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land (good to moderate) with some areas of Grade 2 (very good) to the east and south of the town.

In **Royal Wootton Bassett**, the built-up area is surrounded by Grade 3 and Grade 4 (poor) agricultural land, with the Grade 4 land surrounding the south of the town.

At the **West of Swindon**, the majority of land is classified as Grade 3 and Grade 4 agricultural land.

Excluding the urban areas, the majority of the **Rest of the HMA** is classified as being Grade 3 agricultural land, with a large area of Grade 2 to the east of the Marlborough Community Area and some areas of Grade 4.

DAQ 5: Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?

A Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) covers a large proportion of the built-up area of **Royal Wootton Bassett** and the south western area, as well as another MSA further east of the town.

With regards to the **West of Swindon**, there is an MSA to the north of Purton.

In the **Rest of the HMA**, there are MSAs, particularly in the Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Due to the limited amount of PDL in the town and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land.	Despite this strategy proposing a very low level of growth proportional to Marlborough, due to the limited amount of PDL and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land. However, as this strategy proposes the lowest level of comparative housing growth and no employment land, the risk of negative effects occurring would be lower in this strategy compared to SW-A.	Due to the limited amount of PDL and the risk of loss of BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is anticipated due to the likely loss of greenfield land. Furthermore, as this strategy proposes the greatest level of comparative housing growth, the risk of negative effects occurring for this objective is greater compared to SW-A.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	The lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett and likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land means that a minor adverse effect is likely against this objective.	The lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett and likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land means that a minor adverse effect is likely against this objective. Furthermore, as this strategy proposes the greatest amount of comparative housing and employment growth in Royal Wootton Bassett, the risk of negative effects occurring is greater compared to SW-A.	The lack of PDL in Royal Wootton Bassett and likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land means that a minor adverse effect is likely against this objective. However, as this strategy proposes the lowest level of comparative housing growth and no employment land, negative effects would be lower in this strategy compared to SW-A.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon, the potential for any significant adverse effects is dependent on where growth is located. However, due to the likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is considered likely at this stage.	Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon, the potential for any significant adverse effects is dependent on where growth is located. However, due to the likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is considered likely at this stage.	Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon, the potential for any significant adverse effects is dependent on where growth is located. However, due to the likely loss of greenfield and BMV agricultural land, a minor adverse effect is considered likely at this stage.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any significant effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any significant effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as Grade 3 land, further	Due to the presence of MSAs and BMV land in the Rest of the HMA, the potential for any significant effects is dependent on where growth is located. Furthermore, as the majority of the Rest of the HMA is classified as Grade 3

	is classified as Grade 3 land, further assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely overall until further information is available on specific locations.	assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely overall until further information is available on specific locations.	land, further assessment would be needed to distinguish the areas of Grade 3a and Grade 3b to understand the extent of BMV land. Due to the likely loss of greenfield land, minor adverse effects are likely overall until further information is available on specific locations.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Minor adverse. At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is likely to be a minor adverse effect on this objective due to the likely loss of greenfield land. The proposed growth levels in each location are not considered to be significant.	-1.0 Minor adverse. At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas in each settlement which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is likely to be a minor adverse effect on this objective due to the likely loss of greenfield land. The proposed growth levels in each location are not considered to be significant.	-1.0 Minor adverse. At this stage no sites have been allocated which makes it difficult to advise how a particular development strategy will affect this objective. While there may be developable areas in each settlement which are able to avoid BMV land, overall, there is likely to be a minor adverse effect on this objective due to the likely loss of greenfield land. The proposed growth levels in each location are not considered to be significant.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- At this stage, it has **not been possible to find notable sustainability differences between the three options for this objective and they all score equally**. The growth levels in each area are not particularly significant and the differences between each option for each area are not particularly significant.
- All strategies are likely to have minor adverse effects as it is likely that most new development will be built on greenfield sites. This may or may not involve Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grade 1, 2 and 3a). Marlborough is considered the most constrained with regards to this objective due to the presence of Grade 2 BMV land surrounding the built-up area.
- There is a lack of previously developed land (PDL) across the HMA. Therefore, all strategies are likely to result in the loss of greenfield land and will potentially lead to the loss of BMV. However, without knowing the exact location of growth and the extent of what BMV land is required, it is anticipated that negative impacts will occur in all strategies.
- Uncertainties also exist regarding the potential for adverse impacts on mineral resources and the potential for contaminating remediating land.
- Where possible, to reduce effects on this objective, new development should be located where loss of BMV can be minimised, PDL maximised where it exists, and development built at the highest densities relevant to the location. Development should also encourage the remediation of contaminated land where feasible.
- Further assessment will also need to be carried out to understand the potential impacts of development on Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) when allocating precise locations for growth.
- Further assessment is also likely to be needed to distinguish between Grade 3a and Grade 3b land to determine the extent of BMV agricultural land.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 3: Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Protect surface, ground and drinking water quality?

Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to a Drinking Water Safeguarding Zone (Surface Water) to the north east of the settlement beyond the settlement boundary. A Source Protection Zone 2c (Subsurface Activity) encompasses the whole settlement.

Marlborough is not subject to any areas of water resource protection within the settlement boundary. To the south of the settlement, Source Protection Zone Zones 1 (Inner Protection Zone), 2 (Outer Protection Zone) and 3 (Total Catchment) are apparent.

The **West of Swindon** is entirely covered by a Drinking Water Safeguarding Zone (Surface Water), while a Source Protection Zone 2c (Subsurface Activity) encroaches from the west.

Rest of the HMA - while there are rural areas in the HMA which are within Source Protection Zones or Drinking Water Protection Areas, there are also plenty of areas in the countryside where development could occur without posing a risk to water resources.

DAQ 2: Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?

At **Royal Wootton Bassett**, Wessex Water identified a need to invest in the water network to increase capacity between 2025 and 2036. There is no probability that construction works would be required to accommodate development.

Wessex Water have currently no plans to invest in the water network in **Marlborough**.

Rest of the HMA - rural development is likely to be more dispersed which may mean that the existing drainage infrastructure can handle the additional capacity. However, there may be a cumulative effect on the rural system. Furthermore, if the rural development is not dispersed it could lead to requirements to upgrade capacity outside of the main settlements which has not yet been accounted for.

In **Swindon**, Thames Water outlined a water management approach to balance supply and demand, with the intention of this being able to meet needs within the settlement boundary up to 2026. It is unclear whether the **West of Swindon** area that is positioned within the Wiltshire Local Authority has been assessed by Wessex Water for investment.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a modest level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without significant adverse effects occurring. New development will require water infrastructure and additional water supply will be required. Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.	While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a modest level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without significant adverse effects occurring. New development will require water infrastructure and additional water supply will be required. Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.	While Marlborough is not subject to any water protection zones, there are no current plans to invest in the water network. However, as this strategy proposes a modest level of growth in Marlborough it is anticipated that the capacity of the existing network at Marlborough would be able to take the additional growth without significant adverse effects occurring. New development will require water infrastructure and additional water supply will be required. Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	While Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to water quality protection zones and there is a potential need for investment in the water network, this strategy proposes a lower level of growth proportional to the settlement so significant effects are not likely. However, due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	This strategy proposes the highest level of proportional housing growth at Royal Wootton Bassett, but significant effects are not likely. As the settlement is subject to water quality protection zones and there is an identified need for investment in the water network, a minor adverse effect is likely due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources.	While Royal Wootton Bassett is subject to water quality protection zones and there is an identified need for investment in the water network, this strategy proposes a lower level of growth proportional to the settlement. However, due to uncertainties regarding the delivery of improvements in the water network and the potential impact on water resources, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Due to the broad area at the West of Swindon and the uncertainties that are apparent at this stage regarding the precise location of growth and water	This level of growth is significantly lower than SW-A and the effects are likely to be negligible. The area west of Swindon, east of Purton and Lydiard Millicent, is not	This level of growth is significantly lower than SW-A and the effects are likely to be negligible. The area west of Swindon, east of Purton and Lydiard Millicent, is not

	network capacity, it is likely that there would be minor adverse effects from this level of growth.	covered by any water quality or source protection zones. Neutral effects are likely.	covered by any water quality or source protection zones. Neutral effects are likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: neutral	Likely effects: neutral
Rest of HMA	Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely. This strategy proposes a level of growth equal to SW-A and so a similar effect is likely.	Due to the potential impact on the rural drainage system and water protection zones in the Rest of the HMA, a minor adverse effect is considered likely. This strategy is higher than the roll forward and so an increased effect is likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. Overall it is likely that there could be a minor adverse effect on Objective 3 as a result of this strategy.	-0.75 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. Overall it is likely that this strategy could have a minor adverse impact on Objective 3.	-0.75 Due to uncertainties regarding the location of development, it is uncertain what kind of effect will be apparent on the local water network for the settlements in the Swindon HMA. Overall it is likely that there could be a minor adverse effect on Objective 3 as a result of this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Although the three strategies score very similarly, strategies **SW-B and SW-C are more sustainable as there are less adverse effects likely** overall.
- **Strategy SW-A is the least sustainable strategy as it is likely to have greater adverse effects** than SW-B and SW-C.
- Minor adverse effects are mostly anticipated from the levels of growth proposed at Marlborough, Royal Wootton Bassett and Rest of the HMA as this is not significantly high growth. New development will require water infrastructure and will add to pressures on the water supply network, but significant effects are not thought likely.
- Levels of growth proposed for West of Swindon in strategies SW-B and SW-C are considered likely to have neutral effects overall as the number of new dwellings over the plan period is very low and the area west of Swindon, east of Purton and Lydiard Millicent, is not covered by any water quality or source protection zones.
- There are areas in the HMA which lie within Source Protection Zones and Drinking Water Safeguard Areas which would need to be considered if development was allocated in that area. Furthermore, additional development beyond what is already planned for may require further investment in infrastructure, although until sites have been allocated it is difficult to know whether capacity issues will be apparent and whether further works will be required.
- There are no areas of water protection within Marlborough. There are Drinking Water Safeguarding Zones and Source Protection Zones within West of Swindon and the rural area of the HMA, however. Royal Wootton Bassett is the subject of a Source Protection Zone and investment is outlined as being necessary in the near future.
- With further regards to investment in infrastructure, development in the rural area is most likely to require additional investment as Wessex Water's planned improvement works are focused on the towns. As a result, development in the Rest of the HMA will need further assessment to ensure capacity of the water network.
- To improve sustainability performance against this objective, development should avoid polluting groundwater and protect surface, ground and drinking water quality. It should be located in areas which have adequate water infrastructure and take account of the EA's approach to groundwater protection. Incorporation of SuDS will be important and the need for water can be reduced through water sensitive design, such as integrated water cycle management.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 4: Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?

At this high-level stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options with relation to noise, light pollution, odour and vibration. Although, any level of development is expected to have a degree of effect, it is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and therefore no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

Despite this, there is a risk that across the HMA and particularly within the Rest of the HMA, allocated growth may place development in locations where increases in pollutants such as noise and light may occur where this is not currently an issue.

DAQ 2: Minimise effects on and where possible improve air quality and locate sensitive development away from areas of poor air quality (such as AQMAs)?

Marlborough is subject to a long standing AQMA for the exceedance of nitrogen dioxide, covering the whole town. Traffic levels have been identified as increasing, there is a risk that further traffic pressures are likely to lead to an exceedance of mandatory limits.

Royal Wootton Bassett is currently subject to elevating levels of nitrogen dioxide, but it is not yet subject to any declared AQMAs. One is expected, however further monitoring and investigation is to take place. Increasing levels of traffic identified at this settlement and non-motorway traffic accessing Swindon are a risk to this objective.

West of Swindon is not subject to any AQMAs, but future increases in traffic levels are expected to have a degree of effect on air quality.

Within the **Rest of the HMA**, the dispersed nature of facilities and a lack of public transport provision, suggests that development in these areas may lead to an increased number of private car journeys magnifying the likelihood of pollutants from vehicles, effecting this objective.

DAQ 3: Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?

Consultation risk zones have not been considered for this high-level stage of appraisal. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage, but are expected to be covered at lower level stages.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	This strategy proposes a modest level of housing and employment growth in Marlborough. As there is a longstanding AQMA and traffic levels have been identified as increasing, there is a risk that further traffic pressures will lead to an exceedance of mandatory limits. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. Moderate adverse effects are therefore considered likely.	This strategy proposes a much lower level of housing and no employment. Impacts are therefore likely to be less than the other two strategies. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. The settlement has air quality issues and an established AQMA and this level of growth is likely to have minor adverse effects.	This strategy proposes a modest level of housing and employment growth in Marlborough. As there is a longstanding AQMA and traffic levels have been identified as increasing, there is a risk that further traffic pressures will lead to an exceedance of mandatory limits. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. Moderate adverse effects are therefore considered likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	This strategy proposes lower levels of growth in Royal Wootton Bassett. The town is currently subject to elevating levels of nitrogen dioxide but is not yet subject to any AQMAs. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. As there are no existing AQMAs, this level of growth is considered likely to have minor adverse effects.	This strategy proposes higher levels of growth in Royal Wootton Bassett. However, the increase compared to SW-A and SW-C is not considered so significant that it would lead to significant effects against this objective. The town is currently subject to elevating levels of nitrogen dioxide but is not yet subject to any AQMAs. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. As there are no existing AQMAs, this level of growth is considered likely to have minor adverse effects.	This strategy proposes a similar level of growth in Royal Wootton Bassett to SW-A. The town is currently subject to elevating levels of nitrogen dioxide but is not yet subject to any AQMAs. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. As there are no existing AQMAs, this level of growth is considered likely to have minor adverse effects.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
	This strategy proposes a modest level of growth for the West of Swindon. This area is not subject to any	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth for the West of Swindon. This area is not subject to any AQMAs, but	This strategy proposes a lower level of growth for the West of Swindon. This area is not subject to any AQMAs, but

West of Swindon	AQMAs, but future increases in traffic levels are expected to have a degree of effect on air quality. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. It is likely that there would be minor adverse effects as a result of this strategy.	future increases in traffic levels are expected to have a degree of effect on air quality. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. It is likely that there would be minor adverse effects as a result of this strategy.	future increases in traffic levels are expected to have a degree of effect on air quality. All new development is likely to have some impacts re noise and light pollution. It is likely that there would be minor adverse effects as a result of this strategy.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	This relatively modest level of growth in the Rest of the HMA is likely to have minor adverse effects. The rural parts of the HMA have less air quality issues than the towns but also reduced public transport services and any development is likely to increase private car use. Development can also increase issues of light and noise pollution.	This relatively modest level of growth in the Rest of the HMA is likely to have minor adverse effects. The rural parts of the HMA have less air quality issues than the towns but also reduced public transport services and any development is likely to increase private car use. Development can also increase issues of light and noise pollution.	This relatively modest level of growth in the Rest of the HMA is likely to have minor adverse effects. The rural parts of the HMA have less air quality issues than the towns but also reduced public transport services and any development is likely to increase private car use. Development can also increase issues of light and noise pollution.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall, minor adverse effects are likely. However, significant effects are likely to occur at Marlborough.	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that this strategy will have minor adverse effects on this objective.	-1.25 Overall, minor adverse effects are likely. However, significant effects are likely to occur at Marlborough.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is more sustainable** as there are less adverse effects likely overall.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score equally and are the least sustainable strategies** as they are likely to have greater adverse effects overall. This is primarily due to the likelihood of increased air quality impacts in Marlborough where there is an existing AQMA.
- As the areas of poor air quality in Wiltshire are all traffic related, new development should contribute to improved air quality through reducing the need to travel by private car, promoting policies that promote development of sustainable transport links, promote housing development in sustainable locations and increasing on site vegetation in order to provide carbon sinks.
- It is recommended that where development takes place improvements in sustainable transport options should be sought to alleviate air quality concerns. Development should consider walking and cycling friendly design that promotes and improves safety for these methods.
- With regards to noise and light pollution, these are generally the result of urban development. Specific locational policies can ensure that development is directed to the most appropriate locations where air quality, noise and light pollution will be avoided or kept to a minimum.
- Electric vehicle use can be encouraged by including charging points in new developments for both private charging at home and charging stations.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 5: Minimise impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation)

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Promote the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?

For appraisal at subsequent, more detailed / site-specific SA stages.

DAQ 2: Be located within flood zone 2? If so, are there alternative sites in the area that can be allocated in preference to developing land in flood zone 2? (To be determined through the application of the Sequential Test)

For appraisal at subsequent, more detailed / site-specific SA stages.

DAQ 3: Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?

Fluvial flood-risk, along with surface and groundwater flooding form part of the settlement-level analysis below. The cumulative impact of development was also considered in order to identify those catchments where an increase in flows as a result of development would have the greatest impact on downstream flood risk. This analysis is based on a strategic assessment of flood risk. Local knowledge will be applied when specific development locations are identified. In terms of flood-risk potential at settlements the following can be stated:

Royal Wootton Bassett is at low risk of river and surface water flooding and at moderate risk of groundwater flooding. The cumulative impact of development is assessed as moderate.

Marlborough is at high risk of river flooding, at moderate risk of surface water flooding and at low risk of groundwater flooding. The cumulative impact of development is assessed as moderate.

West of Swindon – the main areas of flood risk in this area are associated with the River Ray.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. There is also a moderate risk of surface water flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and therefore minor adverse effects likely.	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. There is also a moderate risk of surface water flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and therefore minor adverse effects likely.	At Marlborough, development under this objective may be challenging owing principally to fluvial risks associated with the River Kennet. There is also a moderate risk of surface water flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and therefore minor adverse effects likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and minor adverse effects are considered likely from this level of growth.	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and minor adverse effects are considered likely from this level of growth.	Royal Wootton Bassett is mostly at risk from groundwater flooding. It is considered that development sites could be found that would avoid areas of flood risk and minor adverse effects are considered likely from this level of growth.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	This strategy proposes a significantly higher level of housing growth than the other two strategies. Much of the area is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with the River Ray which restricts developable areas and therefore moderate adverse effects are considered likely.	This strategy proposes a much lower level of housing growth and therefore it is considered that development sites could be found that would be more likely to avoid areas of flood risk and therefore minor adverse effects likely.	This strategy proposes a much lower level of housing growth and therefore it is considered that development sites could be found that would be more likely to avoid areas of flood risk and therefore minor adverse effects likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	It is not known where this development would take place. The rural part of the HMA is large and many settlements are affected by areas of flood risk. This level of growth is likely to have minor adverse effects until further assessment can be undertaken.	It is not known where this development would take place. The rural part of the HMA is large and many settlements are affected by areas of flood risk. This level of growth is likely to have minor adverse effects.	It is not known where this development would take place. The rural part of the HMA is large and many settlements are affected by areas of flood risk. This level of growth is higher than the other two strategies but still likely to have minor adverse effects until further assessment can be undertaken.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse

Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have minor adverse effects. However, significant adverse effects are likely at West of Swindon.	-1.0 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have minor adverse effects.	-1.0 Overall, considering the assessment of all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have minor adverse effects.
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Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategies SW-B and SW-C score equally and are the more sustainable options as there are less adverse effects likely.**
- **Strategy SW-A is the least sustainable strategy as it is likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to the likelihood of increased flood risk at West of Swindon.
- Whilst all areas across Swindon (in Wiltshire) HMA demonstrate some areas at risk of flooding, some places are more constrained than others. Of all the localities under discussion in this area, Royal Wootton Bassett and the Rest of HMA are likely to offer the best opportunities for flood resilience.
- West of Swindon and Marlborough present more flood risk constraints, given areas of flood zones associated with the rivers Ray and Kennet respectively.
- For all new development, in order to provide climate change adaptation and mitigation and improve flood resilience, drainage solutions must incorporate green infrastructure and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems. The Wiltshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment informs as regards the sequential test and, if needed, the exception test, and should be consulted in further, more detailed assessment of potential development locations.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 6: Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?

Whilst this level of analysis makes reference to designated and non-designated heritage assets, these will be appraised in more detail at site-specific stage. At this stage, in/around the settlements the following can be stated.

Royal Wootton Bassett: Designated assets / settings include the conservation area and its setting, and listed buildings particularly in the town centre; road bridges across the railway; and isolated designated farmsteads surrounding the town.

Marlborough: Designated assets / settings include the Castle Mound scheduled monument and registered park and garden at Marlborough College; the town conservation area and Manton conservation area; Tottenham House registered park & garden (south-east) and Savernake Forest. The scheduled Roman settlement of Cunetio (east) and scheduled Forest Hill Camp (south-east) are also of note.

West of Swindon: Designated assets / settings include Purton and Lydiard Millicent conservation areas and Lydiard Park

DAQ 2: Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account the management objectives of Conservation Areas?

Whilst this level of analysis makes some reference to historic landscape character and townscape quality, design and conservation areas will feature more strongly in subsequent, more detailed / site-specific, appraisal.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	This strategy proposes a modest amount of housing and employment growth to Marlborough. The town has a large central conservation area and many listed buildings and scheduled monuments around the	Under this strategy, the amount of growth directed to Marlborough is the lowest, lower than for Core Strategy Continued, and this is likely to have lower impacts than SW-A and SW-C.	Under this strategy, the amount of development directed to Marlborough is the highest – and higher than for Core Strategy Continued. Such levels under this objective would be moderately challenging to accommodate. Conservation

	town. Conservation areas and their settings at Manton and Mildenhall also need to be considered for any development to the west and east of the town. Overall, as potential development sites are not known, moderate adverse effects are considered likely.	Overall, as potential development sites are not known, minor adverse effects are considered likely.	areas and their settings at Manton and Mildenhall also need to be considered for any development to the west and east of the town. Overall, as potential development sites are not known, moderate adverse effects are considered likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Quanta proposed in Royal Wootton Bassett are moderately high. The town's heritage assets are mainly in the town centre conservation area and development of this scale is more likely to be able to avoid significantly affecting heritage assets. There are a few other listed buildings and scheduled monuments in and on the edge of the town. It is considered that this scale of growth could be accommodated, and minor adverse effects would be likely overall.	Under this strategy the quantum proposed in Royal Wootton Bassett is the highest. It includes a moderate quantum for employment. In addition to the town's setting there are medieval fields to the south-east of the settlement, and small blocks of ancient woodland surrounding the town are legible historical markers in the landscape. In allocating this level of growth care would need to be taken to ensure that coalescence to the east, with Swindon, were avoided so as not to impact on the town's separate identity. Whilst it is considered that growth levels for this strategy may be able to be accommodated without having significant effects, minor adverse effects are likely where mitigation would be achievable.	Under this strategy development quanta proposed in Royal Wootton Bassett are similar to SW-A and therefore the significance of effects is similar. It is considered that this scale of growth could be accommodated, and minor adverse effects would be likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	This strategy directs a significantly higher amount of development to West of Swindon. It is considered that this scale of growth here would be moderately challenging in heritage terms. A key asset is the grade II registered and listed Lydiard Park. Its setting - which includes the post-medieval fields that survive to its north, south and west - has already been affected by development to the east. There is a need to avoid compromising the separate character of Lydiard Millicent and Purton, including the Church and Purton House (the latter being listed). To the east of Purton House, Milk House is a listed building. The need to respect and preserve this and the settings of Purton and Lydiard Millicent Conservation Areas may be a constraint to development. The non-designated Purton corn mill (now Fox Mill) also needs noting, and particularly this area in general has high archaeological potential. Given the above it is considered that moderate adverse effects are likely at West of Swindon.	The lower amount of growth proposed by SW-B and SW-C would be likely to have less impacts on heritage assets than SW-A, would be easier to accommodate without harming those assets, and therefore minor adverse effects are more likely.	The lower amount of growth proposed by SW-B and SW-C would be likely to have less impacts on heritage assets than SW-A, would be easier to accommodate without harming those assets, and therefore minor adverse effects are more likely.

	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	In Rest of HMA the strategy could generate minor adverse effects against heritage assets. These however are likely to be localised, and easier to assess once site-specific proposals emerge.	Some growth is also directed towards Rest of HMA – the same level as SW-A. Whilst development locations in Rest of HMA are unknown, the nature of heritage assets means that they would be present in multiple localities across rural areas, and due care would need to be exercised in avoiding harm. Minor adverse effects are therefore likely.	Under this development strategy growth in Rest of HMA is higher than under any other and includes 3ha of employment. Whilst growth locations are not specified the localised nature of heritage assets means that they are present in multiple localities across rural areas, and care would need to be exercised in order to avoid harm. Moderate adverse effects are therefore indicated at this stage due to the greater impact likely for higher growth levels.
Overall HMA score	Likely effects: minor adverse -1.5 Moderate adverse effects are likely overall in this HMA for this objective.	Likely effects: minor adverse -1.0 Minor adverse effects are likely overall in this HMA for this objective.	Likely effects: moderate adverse -1.5 Moderate adverse effects are likely overall in this HMA for this objective.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is the more sustainable option as there are less adverse effects likely.** This option increases the amount of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett which is better able to accommodate this growth without causing significant harm to heritage assets and reduces growth at the other settlements/areas which are more constrained in heritage terms.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score equally and are considered the least sustainable strategies as they are likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to higher proposed levels of growth at Marlborough, West of Swindon and in the Rest of the HMA.
- The three development strategies seek to direct the most substantial amounts of development to Royal Wootton Bassett. In each strategy Marlborough, meanwhile, is selected to take a relatively lower quantum of growth which would appear to be a more sustainable approach given numerous urban and rural designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings around the town.
- Heritage evidence indicates that only minimal growth could be accommodated at West of Swindon, whilst any future locations identified for development across the Rest of the HMA would need to be mindful of localised impact upon the historic environment.
- For strategy SW-A that focuses growth on Royal Wootton Bassett, the potential for development on previously developed land is restricted and it will be necessary for all new development to consider the town's elevated historical setting and central conservation area, isolated designated farmsteads surrounding the town, as well as the blurring of separate identity and rural character of neighbouring settlements, including Vastern, Ballard's Ash and Hook. The line of the Wilts and Berks Canal should be protected but may provide an opportunity for environmental enhancement as part of sensitive development.
- At West of Swindon, whilst the existence and setting of designated and non-designated assets at/around Purton, Lydiard Millicent and Lydiard Park need careful consideration, small housing numbers might be carefully accommodated. High archaeological potential exists across the general area, especially for Roman and Medieval artefacts. Evaluation and assessment would be required once individual sites were identified.
- At Marlborough, small-scale growth could be judiciously located around the town. However, high-quality designated and non-designated assets exist in many parts of the town and in surrounding areas. Development locations would need careful selection
- There is likely to be scope for development to conserve and/or enhance some heritage assets and their settings. Re-using previously developed land would be helpful, where possible, at all settlements. This however is unlikely to yield as much land in the Swindon HMA as it may do in other areas. Local impact assessments at site stage, including for archaeology, would be required to test assertions.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance nationally designated landscapes and their settings and locally valued landscapes?

Whilst this strategic-level analysis appraises designated as well as locally valued landscape assets, local ones will become even more prominent during detailed / site-specific SA.

Royal Wootton Bassett: In landscape terms the town is already visible from lower-lying countryside. Important features include distant views to the North Wessex Downs AONB, as well as Brynards Hill country park (south).

Marlborough: Main constraints to development would be North Wessex Downs AONB and Tottenham House registered park & garden (higher plateau to the south-east). The Kennet and Og chalk rivers and valley floor meadows are scarce and sensitive landscapes. Development meanwhile to the east and south-east would impact Savernake Forest ancient woodland.

DAQ 2: Protect rights of way, public open space and common land?

These features will be assessed in greater detail in successive rounds of sustainability appraisal when the analysis becomes more detailed.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	This strategy proposes the second highest level of growth at Marlborough. The town is fully within the North Wessex Downs AONB with the Marlborough Downs to the north and Savernake Forest Grade 2* Park and Garden to the south. Any strategy would need to avoid sensitive skylines and locations visible from the wider AONB. It is considered that moderate adverse effects are likely against this objective due to Marlborough's sensitive landscape location.	This strategy proposes the lowest amount of development to Marlborough; considerably lower compared to SW-A and SW-C. Due to Marlborough's sensitive landscape location, any development could have adverse effects on the landscape, but this lower level of growth is considered easier to accommodate without leading to significant effects. It is therefore considered that minor adverse effects are likely.	This strategy proposes the highest level of growth at Marlborough. The town is fully within the North Wessex Downs AONB with the Marlborough Downs to the north and Savernake Forest Grade 2* Park and Garden to the south. Any strategy would need to avoid sensitive skylines and locations visible from the wider AONB. It is considered that moderate adverse effects are likely against this objective due to Marlborough's sensitive landscape location.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Under this development strategy Royal Wootton Bassett takes a modest amount of development. The town is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB. However, it is visible from lower-lying countryside and there are distant views to the North Wessex Downs AONB to the south. Due to the lack of landscape designations in the area, it is considered that minor adverse effects are likely.	Under this development strategy Royal Wootton Bassett takes the highest amount of development, including 6ha of employment. The town is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB. However, it is visible from lower-lying countryside and there are distant views to the North Wessex Downs AONB to the south. Growth needs to be carefully planned to avoid coalescence with Swindon to the east. Due to the lack of landscape designations in the area, it is considered that minor adverse effects are likely.	Under this development strategy Royal Wootton Bassett takes the lowest amount of development. The town is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB. However, it is visible from lower-lying countryside and there are distant views to the North Wessex Downs AONB to the south. Due to the lack of landscape designations in the area, it is considered that minor adverse effects are likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
	This area is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB.	This area is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB.	This area is not covered by, or in proximity to, any national landscape designations e.g. AONB.

West of Swindon	Rural separation between the current western edge of Swindon and the smaller settlements of Lydiard Millicent and Purton should be maintained so that their separate character and identity is retained. Lydiard House (Grade I) & associated Park (Grade II) and Mouldon Hill Country Park will require specific consideration at individual site level. It is considered that this level of growth could take place without significant effects on landscape grounds and minor adverse effects are likely in this location.	Rural separation between the current western edge of Swindon and the smaller settlements of Lydiard Millicent and Purton should be maintained so that their separate character and identity is retained. Lydiard House (Grade I) & associated Park (Grade II) and Mouldon Hill Country Park will require specific consideration at individual site level. It is considered that this level of growth could take place without significant effects on landscape grounds and minor adverse effects are likely in this location.	Rural separation between the current western edge of Swindon and the smaller settlements of Lydiard Millicent and Purton should be maintained so that their separate character and identity is retained. Lydiard House (Grade I) & associated Park (Grade II) and Mouldon Hill Country Park will require specific consideration at individual site level. It is considered that this level of growth could take place without significant effects on landscape grounds and minor adverse effects are likely in this location.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Across the Rest of the HMA, whilst the quantum is fairly low, growth locations are as yet unclear and localised impacts could occur. However, the rural part of the HMA is a large geographic area and there is scope for development to take place without having significant effects. Therefore, minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.	Across the Rest of the HMA, whilst the quantum is fairly low, growth locations are as yet unclear and localised impacts could occur. However, the rural part of the HMA is a large geographic area and there is scope for development to take place without having significant effects. Therefore, minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.	Across the Rest of the HMA, whilst the quantum is slightly higher for this strategy, growth locations are as yet unclear and localised impacts could occur. However, the rural part of the HMA is a large geographic area and there is scope for development to take place without having significant effects. Therefore, minor adverse effects are considered likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.25 Overall the assessment of this strategy suggests that minor adverse effects are likely against this objective. However, significant adverse effects are likely at Marlborough.	-1.0 Overall the assessment of this strategy suggests that minor adverse effects are likely against this objective.	-1.25 Overall the assessment of this strategy suggests that minor adverse effects are likely against this objective. However, significant adverse effects are likely at Marlborough.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- **Strategy SW-B is considered to be the more sustainable option as there are less adverse effects likely.** This option increases the amount of growth at Royal Wootton Bassett which is better able to accommodate this growth without causing significant landscape impacts and reduces growth, in particular at Marlborough, which is fully within the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- **Strategies SW-A and SW-C score equally and are considered the least sustainable strategies as they are likely to have greater adverse effects.** This is primarily due to higher proposed levels of growth at Marlborough.
- Strategy SW-B seeks to direct the highest amount of development to Royal Wootton Bassett and the lowest amount to all other settlements/areas. In landscape terms, Marlborough is the most constrained given its setting within a national landscape asset (North Wessex Downs AONB). The Rest of the HMA also lies, in part, within North Wessex Downs and the *majority* of growth would need to be directed towards localities outside of the designated landscape.
- In landscape terms, it would seem possible to direct the levels of growth in SW-B to West of Swindon and Rest of the HMA as there are no national landscape designations affecting West of Swindon and only the southern part of the HMA is affected by the AONB.
- At Royal Wootton Bassett, any new development would need to consider the town's position on an escarpment, overlooked by the AONB from the south, inclusion within the Great Western Community Forest (GWCF), and coalescence with neighbouring settlements, including Swindon, Vastern, Ballard's Ash and Hook.
- With regards mitigation, the GWCF plan, which aims to maintain countryside separation between Swindon and Royal Wootton Bassett, seeks *inter alia* to improve and enhance: nature conservation; transition with, and repair of, countryside around the south of Swindon through woodland planting; and landscape character alongside opportunities for access / recreation / education / health.
- Further mitigation opportunities can be linked to green infrastructure enhancement and restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal corridor; both opportunities would lead to positive effects.

- At the West of Swindon, small housing numbers might be accommodated with careful site selection, accompanied by a requirement for a strong new landscape structure and countryside transitions in the form of tree and woodland planting. This area also partly lies (wholly or substantially) within the GWCF plan area. A key consideration is to maintain and improve an effective buffer between Swindon and the distinct setting and rural character around Purton and Lydiard Millicent, and improvement to the quality of the countryside transition / urban fringe with Swindon and to support GWCF objectives.
- At Marlborough, scattered, smaller-scale growth may be judiciously located around the town. However, the town is fully within the AONB, and development locations would need very careful selection and to take account of river corridors, valley sides and sensitive skylines, and conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 8: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing?

Delivery of homes in **Marlborough** has been broadly at planned rates. The ratio of house price to earnings has risen to 15.97, substantially higher than the average for Wiltshire. Only 10.4% of housing delivered at Marlborough during the period 1/4/09 – 31/3/18 was affordable.

At **Royal Wootton Bassett** the ratio of house price to earnings has also risen slightly to 9.32 but remains below the Wiltshire average. Only 22% of all housing delivered in the area in recent years has been affordable housing. Historic delivery of homes at the town has been substantially higher than planned levels.

At the **West of Swindon**, homes have been delivered at planned rates. The house price to earnings ratio for Swindon has risen marginally to 7.58 which is below the average for Wiltshire.

For the **Rest of the HMA** (the rural area) homes have been delivered at or above expected levels. Affordability ratios are, however, higher in rural areas, which reflects the limited supply of homes at large and small villages in recent years, relative to higher tier settlements.

The updated housing requirement means that growth for the HMA will be lower (by approximately 600 homes) than the number of homes allocated for 2006 – 2026 under the WCS. Approximately 44% of this proposed housing requirement for the Wiltshire part of the Swindon HMA is already committed. However, the provision of a significant number of new homes could potentially make a contribution to the provision of affordable homes in the HMA.

SA Conclusions relate to the ability of the strategy to deliver affordable homes where they are needed.

DAQ 2: Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?

Developments providing a mix of house types and sizes can be delivered on small or large sites. For this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 3: Deliver high quality residential development?

High quality developments providing a mix of tenures can be delivered on small or large sites. For this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options in relation to the quality of housing or mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Under Strategy A, existing commitments would deliver the majority of the housing requirement for Marlborough, leaving a residual requirement of 135	Under Strategy B, existing commitments would deliver the majority of the housing requirement for Marlborough, leaving a residual requirement of 50 dwellings. It is	Under Strategy C, the housing requirement is higher, but existing commitments would still deliver the majority of the housing requirement for the town, leaving a residual

	<p>dwellings. It is considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that this strategy would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor adverse</p>	<p>considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that Strategy SW-B would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor adverse</p>	<p>requirement of 245 dwellings. It is considered that the low scale of growth under this strategy would be unlikely to affect current trends to any notable degree and affordability would continue to be a significant issue for the town. Therefore, it is predicted that Strategy C would have minor adverse effects on affordability for Marlborough, although this would be more positive compared to strategies SW-A and SW-B.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor adverse</p>
Royal Wootton Bassett	<p>Rolling forward the pro-rata requirement for the town means that Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 900 dwellings from 2016-2036. Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 670 dwellings. It is considered that the relatively modest scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>Under Strategy B, Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 1,255 dwellings from 2016-2036 (an increase of just under 200 dwellings compared to the current WCS). Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 1,026 dwellings. It is considered that the higher level of growth under this strategy would be likely to have moderate positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.</p> <p>Likely effects: moderate positive</p>	<p>Under Strategy C, Royal Wootton Bassett would be expected to deliver 835 dwellings from 2016-2036. Taking into account existing commitments this leaves a residual requirement of 606 dwellings, comparable to Strategy A. It is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for the town.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>
West of Swindon	<p>Rolling forward the housing requirement for the HMA against current strategy would mean a reduction in housing provision of approximately 150 dwellings for the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 271 dwellings. Given the relative size of Swindon, it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon but could result in the delivery of fewer homes at the other settlements in Wiltshire.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>Strategy B would mean a reduction in housing provision of just over 400 dwellings for the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period, the same as Strategy C but lower than Strategy A. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 0. Given the relative size of Swindon, it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have a neutral effect on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon.</p> <p>Likely effects: neutral</p>	<p>Strategy C would mean a reduction in housing provision of just over 400 dwellings at the West of Swindon, compared to the previous plan period, the same as Strategy B but lower than Strategy A. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 0. There is, therefore a risk given the relative size of Swindon, and it is considered that the scale of growth under this strategy would be likely to have a neutral effect on the supply of affordable homes for Swindon.</p> <p>Likely effects: neutral</p>
Rest of HMA	<p>A continuation of relatively low levels of housing growth at small and large villages is likely to exacerbate affordability issues in these parts of the Rest of the HMA. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 358 dwellings.</p> <p>The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in a minor positive effect on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.</p>	<p>Under Strategy B, the housing requirements for 2016 – 2036, to be met at small and large villages, would be comparable to the current WCS requirement. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 358 dwellings.</p> <p>The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.</p>	<p>Under Strategy C a greater proportion of the housing requirements for 2016 – 2036 would be directed to the rest of the HMA but not significantly more than A and B. Taking into account commitments there would be a residual requirement of 583 dwellings.</p> <p>The opportunity for the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is however limited by appropriate site size and therefore the quantity of new affordable homes is likely to be small. These factors on balance are likely to result in minor positive effects on the supply of affordable homes in the rest of the HMA.</p>

	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Overall HMA score	0.5 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective.	0.5 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective.	0.25 Overall, considering the distribution of housing across all settlements/areas, this strategy is likely to have a minor positive effect on this objective but the benefits will be less than for A and B.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, **Strategies SW-A and SW-B score equally and are considered the most sustainable strategies** against this objective. Both strategies are likely to have minor positive effects on this objective.
- **Strategy SW-C also is likely to have minor positive effects but the benefits are likely to be less than SW-A and SW-B and this is the least sustainable strategy.**
- None of the strategies under consideration are likely to have significant benefits against this objective. The only settlement to score moderate positive is Royal Wootton Bassett under strategy B which proposes an increase in the housing requirement. But overall, these strategies propose a housing requirement for the Swindon HMA much lower (by approx. 600 dwellings) than for the current plan period. Existing commitments in many cases have led to a zero or small residual requirement which would not provide a consistent supply up to 2036. To increase the benefits for affordable and market housing provision in this HMA, the overall requirement would need to be significantly higher.
- SW-B allocates the least amount of development to Marlborough but the level of growth in each strategy for Marlborough is not significantly different. The ratio of house price to earnings in Marlborough has risen to 15.97, substantially higher than the average for Wiltshire. The provision of affordable housing at Marlborough should be prioritised to meet identified needs, perhaps through application of a specific affordable housing policy requirement for the town that is higher than for other parts of Wiltshire, subject to viability testing. Increasing the overall housing requirement considerably at Marlborough would have some benefits for affordable provision but would still be unlikely to significantly bring down the ratio.
- SW-B, however, allocates the highest amount of housing to Royal Wootton Bassett, which is considered better located to meet affordable housing needs.
- For West of Swindon, strategies SW-B and SW-C when considering commitments would have neutral effects because there would effectively be a zero requirement. However, Swindon Borough Council are proposing to meet the needs for Swindon within the Borough and so allocation of homes at West of Swindon, in Wiltshire, would be unlikely to be of benefit to the town but the reduction in the number of homes being allocated to the other Wiltshire settlements within the HMA could have a negative effect on the supply of affordable homes for these settlements.
- For the Rest of the HMA (the rural area) homes have been delivered at or above expected levels but affordability ratios are, however, higher in rural areas, which reflects the limited supply of homes at large and small villages in recent years, relative to higher tier settlements. Across all strategies, the proposed requirements are only likely to have minor benefits and provision would need to be significantly higher to make any real difference to affordability. A rural facilities survey should be undertaken to identify where the provision of homes could be targeted to help support the vitality of rural settlements in the HMA.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 9: Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities.

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Maximise opportunities within the most deprived areas?

There are no areas within the Swindon HMA that have been identified as being subject to deprivation.

Older people within **Royal Wootton Bassett** are more vulnerable and at risk of social isolation than across Wiltshire as a whole.

DAQ 2: Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?

At **Royal Wootton Bassett** there is an existing gap in GP provision (-409m²). This is expected to increase to -533m² by 2026. There is an opportunity to refurbish New Court Surgery. There is a planned expansion to Royal Wootton Bassett Academy, which will enable the school to meet identified needs. Complexities are considered in expanding this school further, due to PFI and as this would create a very large school and larger scales of growth are considered to be able to support new secondary school provision. New primary provision is expected to be required, as St Bartholomew's is currently undergoing expansion and there are only a small number of surplus places across the town.

At **Marlborough** there is a community hospital situated in the settlement. Marlborough Medical Practice is experiencing a provision gap of -379m² and Ramsbury and Wanborough Surgery faces a gap of -318m². These gaps are expected to stagnate in the period up to 2026. There is scope to expand the existing secondary school, but expansion is currently considered to be required with St John's in Marlborough currently operating over-capacity. A large scale of growth is considered to be capable of enabling a new school. Primary schools within the settlement have no scope for further expansion and new provision would have to be secured to meet demand from new housing. Issues are apparent in securing land for new school provision, however.

West of Swindon has one secondary school, which is positioned in Purton. This school currently has some capacity with demand for places reducing following the opening of a new school in Swindon, but is expected to be full by 2020. Additional land would need to be acquired to enable any future expansion. While there is some existing surplus of primary school places, none of the schools in the area are capable of expansion. Modest levels of housing growth could be accommodated as a result.

DAQ 3: Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that might support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?

For this high-level stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options in relation to public spaces and community facilities. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of housing and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 4: Reduce rural isolation, including access to affordable services for those without a car in rural areas?

Within the Rest of the HMA, rural areas suffer from lack of access to services and facilities, so focusing development in these areas without promoting services alongside could lead to more isolation. There is an opportunity for development to support services and facilities in rural areas. House price to income ratios in rural areas are higher than the Wiltshire average and house prices are above the Wiltshire average. Further, there is a risk of isolation among the over 65s. Housing development could potentially help to overcome these issues.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	This relatively low level of growth includes 4ha employment which will provide local jobs. This level of growth would be unlikely to place significant additional pressures on existing services and facilities – there is currently significant pressure on health and education facilities in the town. However, it should also have benefits in terms of provision of affordable housing and new or expanded facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Overall, minor positive effects are considered likely.	This low level of growth does not include any employment. It would be unlikely to place significant additional pressures on existing services and facilities – there is currently significant pressure on health and education facilities in the town. However, it should also have benefits in terms of provision of some affordable housing and new or expanded facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Overall, minor positive effects are considered likely.	This is the highest level of growth of all strategies and includes 3ha employment which will provide local jobs. This level of growth would be unlikely to have significant benefits but would not place significant additional pressures on existing services and facilities – there is currently significant pressure on health and education facilities in the town. However, it should have benefits in terms of provision of affordable housing and new or expanded facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Overall, minor positive effects are considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	This lower level of growth would be unlikely to place significant additional pressures on existing services and facilities – there is an existing gap in GP provision (-409m ²), expected to increase to -533m ² by 2026, and local schools have a lack of capacity. There should be benefits overall in terms of new jobs from 2ha employment provision, provision of	This higher level of growth includes 6ha employment which will provide local jobs. It may place some additional pressures on existing services and facilities in the short-term but gives more opportunities to help reduce isolation among older people and increase opportunities to invest in health and education provision.	This lower level of growth would be unlikely to place significant additional pressures on existing services and facilities – there is an existing gap in GP provision (-409m ²), expected to increase to -533m ² by 2026, and local schools have a lack of capacity. There should be benefits overall in terms of provision of affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in

	<p>affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>There should be benefits overall in terms of provision of affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>
West of Swindon	<p>At the West of Swindon, this strategy proposes a moderate level of growth. There are no significant constraints in accommodating this growth, however Purton secondary school is expected to be full by 2020 and additional land would need to be acquired to enable any future expansion. Significant benefits are not expected. There should be benefits overall in terms of provision of affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>This strategy proposes a lower level of growth. There are no significant constraints in accommodating this growth, however Purton secondary school is expected to be full by 2020 and additional land would need to be acquired to enable any future expansion. Significant benefits are not expected. There should be benefits overall in terms of provision of affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>This strategy proposes the same level of growth as SW-B. There are no significant constraints in accommodating this growth, however Purton secondary school is expected to be full by 2020 and additional land would need to be acquired to enable any future expansion. Significant benefits are not expected. There should be benefits overall in terms of provision of affordable housing for those on low incomes or living in inappropriate housing, new or expanded community/cultural/ recreational facilities, including new schools and healthcare facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise. New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>
Rest of HMA	<p>This strategy proposes moderate levels of growth in the Rest of the HMA. Benefits will very much depend on the location of any new development. Services and facilities differ across the rural area. Public transport services have reduced in recent years making some areas less accessible. It is likely that this strategy will be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>This strategy proposes moderate levels of growth in the Rest of the HMA. Benefits will very much depend on the location of any new development. Services and facilities differ across the rural area. Public transport services have reduced in recent years making some areas less accessible. It is likely that this strategy will be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>	<p>This strategy proposes a higher level of growth in the Rest of the HMA but effects are not expected to be significant. Benefits will very much depend on the location of any new development. Services and facilities differ across the rural area. Public transport services have reduced in recent years making some areas less accessible. It is likely that this strategy will be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities. Minor positive effects likely overall.</p> <p>Likely effects: minor positive</p>

Overall HMA score	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on Objective 9.	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on Objective 9.	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on Objective 9.
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Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, it has been difficult to differentiate between the different strategies, they all score equally and **there is no one strategy considered to be more or less sustainable against this objective**. Strategies that distribute higher levels of growth to different areas e.g. SW-A to West of Swindon, SW-B to Royal Wootton Bassett and SW-C to Marlborough and Rest of the HMA are likely to have greater benefits. However, these levels of higher growth are distributed between all of the strategies which is why they score so similarly, and growth is not of a scale where significant changes are likely to occur in the area.
- Increasing levels of growth in all settlements/areas, providing there is commensurate investment in infrastructure, services and facilities, is likely to have a positive effect in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities.
- New development in different parts of the HMA is considered to be positive overall, through provision of affordable housing and new or expanded health, education, cultural and recreational facilities, and creation of new areas of public open space that could help reduce social isolation and allow physical exercise.
New development is considered likely to be more positive than negative in terms of reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities.
- New development can cause pressure on existing services and facilities in the short-term and needs to be accompanied by adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new residents. This is especially the case regarding transport, healthcare and education where services are under pressure across much of the area. All of the settlements in the Swindon HMA, including the West of Swindon, have existing issues with secondary school capacity which could be worsened by further development. Additional school capacity would need to be found at all of the settlements. Strategies should also take the opportunity to invest in health services and facilities. This is particularly pertinent in Royal Wootton Bassett and Marlborough which have significant capacity issues and would need additional investment in GP surgeries to address the existing GP capacity gap. Increasing the levels of growth proposed could enable new educational facility supply but could lead to pressure on other services.
- For new development to be effective in reducing poverty and deprivation and promoting more inclusive communities, it will be very important that all new housing development includes a range of house types/tenures and a level of affordable housing that will actually help reduce the affordability ratio, which is high in this area, and that all new development provides the essential services and facilities that are needed to avoid increasing pressure on existing services and also reduces the need to travel and reduces out-commuting.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 10: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Promote mixed use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car?

Limited notable observations are possible at this stage in relation to this DAQ. Further consideration will be given to these matters at a later, more site specific, stage where more precise accessibility, development mix and travel options become clearer. Where observations can be made at this strategic stage, they have been made below.

None of the main settlements within this HMA possess a rail link with public transport services being provided by the bus travel options present to act as alternatives to private car travel. When looking at the rest of the HMA, along with development to the west of Swindon, many of these locations are positioned in less accessible locations than the market towns and principal settlements and may increase the reliance on the private car, often being positioned further away from many amenities or public transport services.

1.

DAQ 2: Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity (unless there is evidence that such impacts can be mitigated)?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of certain key strategic constraints at each location. At this stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise suitability of access along with the impacts on local transport capacity. More detailed assessment will be possible at the site assessment stage where impacts along with mitigation/improvement measures will become clearer.

Marlborough lies on the intersection of the A4 and A346 providing key links in each direction. These links are well used by transport from several locations and Marlborough acts as a pinch point for this traffic which can cause AM and PM peak hour delays, impacting travel times. This congestion also needs to be considered when trying to mitigate any further deterioration of the Air Quality in Marlborough, a location with an existing AQMA.

Royal Wootton Bassett's proximity to Junction 16 of the M4 influences patterns of travel in the area and can create additional volumes of traffic in the town. While other routes radiate from the surroundings into the town, the A3102 acts as the main route running through the town which suffers congestion at peak periods as a result.

Within the **Rest of the HMA** and locations west of Swindon, links to the highway network vary as do the levels of existing transport capacity. That being said, the majority of settlements in the rest of HMA will likely be less accessible to services and increase the likelihood of increasing usage of transport corridors with lower levels of capacity.

2.

DAQ 3: Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of certain elements of the existing transport infrastructure in each broad location that could be utilised sustainably if growth were to take place. At this stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise potential efficient use or impacts upon the existing transport infrastructure. More detailed assessment will be possible at the site assessment stage where the potential for utilisation or improvements to the existing transport infrastructure will become clearer.

In highways terms, **Marlborough** is well connected, acting as a central point at the intersection of the A4 and A346, with A345 also offering links to the south. Bus services utilise these links offering services to locations such as Swindon, Salisbury and Pewsey, which offer the locations for rail provision in the absence of a station within Marlborough. Great Bedwyn offers another option for rail travel, 6 miles away.

Royal Wootton Bassett is located in close proximity to Junction 16 of M4, also offering A routes to settlements such as Swindon. These A routes are utilised by bus services offering links to locations such as Calne, Chippenham, Malmesbury and Swindon. The nearest railway station is at Swindon.

The often rural nature of the **Rest of the HMA** and areas to the west of Swindon leads to a large variance in the nature and availability of transport infrastructure, both in public transport and highway terms. Existing sustainable transport infrastructure in the rest of the housing market area is often limited due to the remote location of certain areas with in-frequent public transport services and accessibility. Efficient use of existing transport systems in these locations is consequently more likely to be constrained by the lack of current infrastructure.

DAQ 4: Provide the opportunity to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure including safe active travel?

The below observations provide a brief strategic overview of the existing sustainable transport provision and pedestrian environment in each broad location that provide opportunity for enhancement moving forward. At this stage of appraisal, it is difficult to make notable observations on the precise opportunities to enhance safe active travel without knowing the spatial distribution of growth within each location. More detailed assessment should be possible at the site assessment stage where the opportunities to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure will become clearer.

Within **Marlborough**, in the absence of a rail link within the town, the enhancement of the public transport offer is likely to be in the shape of enhanced bus service provision, utilising the road network present within the town, namely the A4, A345 and A346. Active travel is characterised by National Cycle Network 254, 403 and 482 along with section 10 and 11 of the Wiltshire Cycleway passing through the area. The Marlborough town cycle network plan outlines further provision and opportunities.

The highway links provided by the A3102 and radial B routes provide the basis for the sustainable transport services present within **Royal Wootton Bassett** and the basis from which they are likely to be enhanced in the future, given no rail link is provided for in the town itself. The active travel present includes National Cycle network 24 and 254 lying just to the north and west of the settlement. A Royal Wootton Bassett town cycle network plan has been developed outlining provision and opportunities.

When looking at the **Rest of the HMA**, along with locations to the west of Swindon, it is acknowledged there is relatively poor cycle network provision in the rural hinterland and while settlements are connected by Public Rights of Way, the quality and visibility of these routes vary. The bus services are often limited or in-frequent, particularly in more sparsely populated rural areas, though it is acknowledged that growth of towns and villages in these areas may offer the opportunity to make some public transport services more viable to these areas.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
Marlborough	Marlborough is identified for a relatively low level of growth in this option. However, this will lead to additional traffic in the town which may exacerbate existing congestion levels and air quality issues. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, minor adverse effects are likely against this objective.	Marlborough is identified for a lower level of growth in this option. However, this will lead to additional traffic in the town which may exacerbate existing congestion levels and air quality issues. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, minor adverse effects are likely against this objective.	Marlborough is identified for a higher level of growth in this option. This is likely to lead to additional traffic in the town which may significantly exacerbate existing congestion levels and air quality issues compared with the other two lower growth options. Given the highway infrastructure and current sustainable transport provision present, moderate adverse effects are likely against this objective.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Strategy SW-A identifies a modest level of growth, mainly housing with a small amount of employment. This will lead to additional traffic in the town which may exacerbate existing congestion levels and air quality issues. However, an AQMA has not been designated currently. Overall, minor adverse effects are likely.	Strategy SW-B focuses more growth at Royal Wootton Bassett, higher than the roll forward of the WCS option. Currently this is assessed as having a minor adverse effect in this location given the level of growth remains moderate. The level to which mitigation measures can be established to accommodate this level of growth are currently unclear and an AQMA has not been designated currently.	Strategy SW-C identifies a similar level of growth to SW-A. This will lead to additional traffic in the town which may exacerbate existing congestion levels and air quality issues. However, an AQMA has not been designated currently. Overall, minor adverse effects are likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Significance of effects very much dependant on location of any new development. At this stage, minor adverse effects considered likely from this level of growth against this objective.	Significance of effects very much dependant on location of any new development. At this stage, minor adverse effects considered likely from this level of growth against this objective.	Significance of effects very much dependant on location of any new development. At this stage, minor adverse effects considered likely from this level of growth against this objective.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	A continuation of the current levels of growth in the rest of HMA, may place growth in locations with reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. Given the extent to which this is possible remains unclear at this stage, this level of growth in these locations is assessed as having a minor adverse effect against this objective.	SW-B proposes the same level of growth as SW-A. Development in rural areas is likely to have reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. The uncertainty over the geographical location of growth and the level to which sustainability may be achieved means this is likely to have minor adverse effects against this objective.	Focusing a slightly higher level of housing growth in rest of HMA may place development in locations with reduced access to sustainable modes of transport. For development to mitigate this effect it would need to improve the availability of sustainable transport provision and accessibility. This level of growth in combination with the uncertainty over the geographical location of growth and the level to which sustainability may be achieved is assessed as having a minor adverse effect against this objective.
	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall HMA score	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective.	-1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective.	-1.25 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor adverse effects on this objective, although effects will be greater due to likely significant effects at Marlborough under this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Based on scores overall across all settlements/areas, **Strategies SW-A and SW-B score equally and are considered the most sustainable strategies** against this objective. Both strategies are considered likely to have fewer adverse effects than strategy SW-C.
- **Strategy SW-C is the least sustainable option** as it is considered to have greater adverse effects overall – this is due to the likelihood of significant adverse effects at Marlborough.
- Transport issues within the Swindon HMA are largely focussed on trying to maximise the use and availability of sustainable modes of transport along with managing levels of congestion on strategic routes and in town centres, namely in Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett. This congestion can impact upon private and public transport, as well as impacting the strategic role of key routes running through each location. Overall, the level of growth proposed across the strategies is considered likely to increase traffic levels generally, and the impact of this must be taken into consideration when considering options moving forward.
- Marlborough has comparatively less growth identified for the town across all options, but the largest level of growth is proposed in strategy SW-C which is the reason for likely moderate adverse effects. Growth at this settlement through all strategies will need to be sensitive to further impacts on the highway routes that intersect at Marlborough, including current congestion and air quality issues with a designated AQMA in the town centre.
- Royal Wootton Bassett is identified for similar levels of growth in strategies SW-A and SW-C, with strategy SW-B focusing the largest level of growth on the town which puts the settlement forward as a focus for growth. Royal Wootton Bassett has its travel patterns influenced by its proximity to the M4, junction 16. This generates increases in traffic volumes using the road routes through the town with the A3102 acting as the main route through the town. The A3102 also offers a key link to surrounding settlements and is utilised by public transport services to offer links further afield, in combination to the other radial B routes from the town. With this in mind, future development must consider the impact and mitigation measures possible to maintain the efficient functioning of this road network, hence the negative effects for all strategies in relation to this settlement. The uncertainty reflects that the assessment is likely to change once further detail emerges around the sustainability of development in transport terms and the mitigation possible that can vary in different locations with differing levels of development.
- Growth in the Rest of the HMA, in rural areas, and at West of Swindon, may place development away from established sustainable transport provision. It should however be acknowledged that development here may facilitate and improve the viability of new sustainable transport options reaching more rural communities. At this stage, development in these locations has been assessed negatively against this objective mainly due to the likelihood that it will not make efficient use of existing sustainable transport infrastructure and may increase private car usage. However further work establishing the level of development required in certain locations to facilitate investment and improvements in sustainable transport options may change this assessment and clarify the sustainability of the rest of HMA, hence the uncertainty being placed against the assessments at this stage.
- It is considered key to locate development at locations that make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and can facilitate advancements in the use of sustainable transport. Therefore, favourable locations should be in well-connected areas that benefit from good accessibility to a wide range of sustainable transport options, or in locations that can facilitate improvements in such factors. Development should contribute to improving sustainable transport networks; this includes linking town centres with development sites as well as linking settlements together.
- Any future development proposals should carefully consider schemes to significantly reduce private car use. Strong investment may be required to improve public transport services and safe walking/cycling links, particularly within and to/from town centres.
- Mixed-use development proposals or sites that have good transport links to existing employment areas within the settlement are recommended as this will help increase self-containment and reduce need to travel.
- Significant new highway infrastructure may be necessary to enable higher levels of growth to take place in the identified settlements, depending on the exact scale and location of growth.
- More detailed transport assessments may be necessary to understand in detail the impact of certain levels of development on settlements and communities to understand the impacts and possible mitigation measures that can be put in place to improve congestion hot spots and sustainable transport provision.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 11: Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth

Decision-Aiding Question (DAQ) 1: Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?

The relationship with the town centre, and its immediate and wider rural context is complex and will also rely on trade from retail and non-retail businesses. Additional growth will inevitably contribute, to some extent, to the vitality and viability of town centres. At this stage, in the absence of specific site options to consider, the proximity of future housing and employment development to the town centres cannot be determined and therefore will not be considered as part of this high-level assessment but will be assessed at later stages.

DAQ 2: Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport?

The Local Plan Review is at an early stage of preparation and, consequently, details of the distribution and range of employment uses that will be provided is not known. Therefore, for this high-level stage of appraisal it is difficult to make notable distinctions between the options against this objective. It is assumed that these matters would not necessarily be affected by the strategic distribution of employment land and so no conclusions on this aspect of the strategic objective have been made at this stage.

DAQ 3: Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth?

The provision of housing and employment will require sufficient infrastructure to be in place to ensure that it is acceptable. This will largely be achieved through s106 contributions for those directly related to the development. CIL funds and grant funding will ensure the provision of strategic infrastructure. The quantum of homes and employment land to be delivered is the same for each of the strategies and therefore should result in the contributions towards infrastructure on a similar scale, albeit applicable to specific areas. The provision of infrastructure will need to be considered and tested further at the site options stage.

DAQ 4: Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel distances to work?

Wiltshire has large flows of commuters into and out of the county, with an overall net outflow of commuters. The majority of movement is to and from Swindon and Bath & North-East Somerset. 56% of people travel to work by car, 13% by foot and 5% by public transport. Self-containment in Wiltshire is 63%, compared to 74% in Swindon.

The extent that strategies can promote a balance between residential and employment development will, in part, depend on the existing provision in terms of housing stock and employment uses, the relationship between them, and the relationship/connectivity of a settlement with other parts the HMA/FEMA (which themselves are strongly influenced by travel to work areas) and adjacent areas. The provision of employment development in isolation could, for example, be more likely to lead to an increase in travel distances but not necessarily if it was located in an area of relatively higher rates of unemployment. The same might apply in areas where employment vacancies are high, or jobs are expected to increase. This will, however, depend on the extent that the skills base of the unemployed in the local area match that provided by any new employers.

Of the total need of 182ha of employment land identified in the FEMA, a substantial proportion can be met from existing operational employment sites and site allocations leaving 26ha to be met from additional allocations across the county. The residual requirement for employment land for the Swindon HMA is 6ha. Due to the extent of existing employment provision, none of the three strategies would be likely to result in major positive or negative effects, as the vast majority is already being met by current employment sites or existing commitments.

At **Marlborough** total employment has grown very slightly since 2009, with low levels of unemployment at the town. There is a high concentration of jobs in the Education sector. This is reflected in the JSF profile. Marlborough Business Park has provided an important new location for employment growth and new business but is practically fully let/sold, and workspace and land shortages have been identified. Below average town centre shop vacancy rates.

At **Royal Wootton Bassett** total employment has stagnated since 2009. No sector stands out as having a particularly high concentration. The small employment base is reflected in the JSF profile. Occupancy at Interface Park remains strong; there has been much MoD property investment at Lyneham to support its training facilities there. There is a low level of unemployment at the town and below average shop vacancy rates.

At **Swindon** the Borough supports a relatively productive economy with high levels of GVA per job, although productivity gains in the economy has slowed during recent periods. The diverse business base and strong representation of sectors in Swindon provides a diversity of employment opportunities for local workers, with a number of large international companies and headquarters across a number of sectors. The range of employment sites in Swindon generally comprise good quality, well-maintained stock with relatively low vacancy ². Total employment has steadily increased in recent years and is now at pre-recession levels. Unemployment at Swindon is low.

Settlement/ Area	Strategy SW – A (Current Strategy)	Strategy SW – B (Royal Wootton Bassett Focus)	Strategy SW – C (Rest of HMA Focus)
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² Swindon Employment Land Review, March 2017.

Marlborough	<p>Under this strategy 4ha additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and 570 dwellings. The scale of employment growth allocated would be unlikely to be matched by the scale of housing to be provided under this strategy. The high affordability ratio for housing at Marlborough is likely to be a strong factor in commuting patterns, meaning that employees are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there. Provision of 4ha of employment land is therefore unlikely to redress any imbalance but will still be positive in providing sites for local business expansion and inward investment, encouraging a vibrant and diversified economy. The housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Overall, minor positive effects are likely.</p>	<p>Under this strategy no additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and there would only be 485 new homes over the plan period. It is therefore predicted that this strategy would have a neutral effect on travel to work distances. The housing proposed will help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects are predicted when comparing with strategies TR-B and TR-C.</p>	<p>Under this strategy 3ha additional employment land would be required at Marlborough and 680 dwellings. As with, SW-A, the scale of employment growth allocated would be unlikely to be matched by scale of housing to be provided under this strategy, although there would be a slightly better balance with the additional homes proposed. The high affordability ratio for housing at Marlborough is still likely to be a strong factor in relation to commuting patterns, meaning that employees based at the new employment locations, are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there. Provision of 3ha of employment land is therefore unlikely to redress any travel to work imbalance but will still be positive in providing sites for local business expansion and inward investment, encouraging a vibrant and diversified economy. The housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Similar to the other strategies, overall, minor positive effects are likely.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	<p>Under this strategy 2ha of additional employment land would be allocated at Royal Wootton Bassett and 900 dwellings. Employment has stagnated at the town and therefore additional employment provision would be a benefit. The level of housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide an increased supply of local labour. Consequently, this strategy is predicted to result in minor positive effects overall.</p>	<p>Employment has stagnated at Royal Wootton Bassett and therefore additional employment provision of 6ha would be of substantial benefit, plus the higher number of homes proposed. This much higher level of housing proposed will also help to support local businesses, the town centre and provide a significantly increased supply of local labour. Consequently, this strategy is predicted to result in moderate positive effects on this objective.</p>	<p>No additional employment provision at Royal Wootton Bassett is predicted to have negative effects. However, 835 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, the town centre and providing an increased supply of local labour.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: moderate positive	Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	<p>Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon. It is assumed that the wider employment allocation in the borough would continue to meet the employment needs of the town. The 755 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.</p>	<p>Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon, the same as for strategies SW-A and SW-C. Because of the close relationship of the location with Swindon it is assumed that the employment needs would continue be met within the borough. The 485 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.</p>	<p>Under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the West of Swindon, the same as for strategies SW-A and SW-B. Because of the close relationship of the location with Swindon it is assumed that the employment needs would continue be met within the borough. The 485 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.</p>
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive

Rest of HMA	Under this strategy no employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean a continuation of the existing approach to the provision of employment land to meet local needs. The 1030 dwellings proposed under this strategy is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy no employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean a continuation of the existing approach to the provision of employment land to meet local needs. The 1030 dwellings proposed under this strategy, same as SW-A, is likely to have positive effects overall, but not significantly, through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Minor positive effects likely.	Under this strategy 3ha of employment land would be allocated for the rest of the HMA. This would mean an increase in the existing provision of employment land to balance the allocation of additional homes under this strategy. The 1255 dwellings proposed under this strategy is also likely to have positive effects overall through supporting local businesses, village services and facilities and providing an increased supply of local labour. Taken together in the rural part of the HMA, the combination of housing and employment is considered likely to have moderate positive effects overall.
	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: minor positive	Likely effects: moderate positive
Overall HMA score	1.0 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.	1.25 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.	1.25 Overall, it is likely that there will be minor positive effects on this objective.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Overall, **Strategies SW-B and SW-C score equally and are the most sustainable strategies** as they are likely to have the highest level of benefits across all areas.
- **Strategy SW-A is considered the least sustainable option** as it is likely to have fewer benefits across all areas.
- Strategy SW-A is likely to have benefits in every settlement/area but is unlikely to result in any significant benefits for a particular place. Whereas the distributions proposed in SW-B and SW-C are likely to have significant benefits for Royal Wootton Bassett and the Rest of the HMA respectively.
- Settlements/areas in these strategies that combine a higher level of both employment and housing are considered likely to give greater benefits against this objective as both elements help to improve self-containment of settlements and encourage vibrant and diversified places.
- Outstanding commitments in the Swindon HMA (within Wiltshire) are capable of meeting a significant proportion of the need for additional employment land to 2036. Consequently, the differences in the effects of the three strategic options for the distribution of the employment land requirement are limited by the relatively small scale of development under consideration. A key consideration has been the aspiration to reduce travel to work distances and achieving a balance between employment and housing growth. An imbalance of housing and employment e.g. at Marlborough through strategy SW-A, may have benefits overall for the local economy, but will mean employees are likely to travel to Marlborough to work rather than live and work there.

SA Annex 1.3 - Swindon Housing Market Area (HMA) - Assessment of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18)

Settlement/area	Emerging Spatial Strategy	
	Housing	Employment (ha)
Marlborough	680	0
Royal Wootton Bassett	1255	6
West of Swindon	435	0
Rest of HMA	1080	0
TOTAL	3450	6

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Avoid potential negative impacts of development on designated wildlife sites, protected species and priority species and habitats (international, national, local) and enhance these where possible? 2. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development? 3. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.25 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 2: Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Ensure efficient use of land? 2. Lead to the reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate? 3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability? 4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)? 5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. There are no areas considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 3: Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quality? 2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: neutral
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above.

	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -0.75 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. There are no areas considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 4: Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration? 2. Minimise effects on and where possible improve air quality and locate sensitive development away from areas of poor air quality (such as AQMAs)? 3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.25 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 5: Minimise impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation).	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Promote the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy? 2. Be located within Flood Zone 2? If so, are there alternative sites in the area that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zone 2? (To be determined through the application of the Sequential Test) 3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above.

	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. There are no areas considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 6: Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest, undesignated heritage assets and their settings? 2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.25 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance nationally designated landscapes and their settings and locally valued landscapes? 2. Protect rights of way, public open space and common land?	

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.25 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 8: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing? 2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community? 3. Deliver high quality residential development?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above.
	Likely effects: moderate positive
West of Swindon	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above.
	Likely effects: neutral
Rest of HMA	Overall beneficial effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Benefits are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above.
	Likely effects: minor positive
Overall score: 0.5 minor positive effects	

Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant positive effects against this objective is Royal Wootton Bassett.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 9: Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities.

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Maximise opportunities within the most deprived areas? 2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand? 3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that might support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions? 4. Reduce rural isolation, including access to affordable services for those without a car in rural areas?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall beneficial effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Benefits are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor positive
Rest of HMA	Overall beneficial effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Benefits are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor positive
Overall score: 1.0 minor positive effects	

Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. There are no areas considered likely to experience significant positive effects against this objective.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 10: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Promote mixed use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car? 2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity (unless there is evidence that such impacts can be mitigated)? 3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure? 4. Provide the opportunity to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure including safe active travel?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: minor adverse

West of Swindon	Overall effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Adverse effects are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.25 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 11: Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)? 2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport? 3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth? 4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel distances to work?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Emerging Spatial Strategy 2016 – 2036 (Reg 18) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall beneficial effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. However, this emerging strategy would not deliver the 3Ha employment land. Benefits are likely to be slightly less significant than LHNA SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-C above. Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-B as both strategies propose 1255 dwellings and 6Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-B above. Likely effects: moderate positive
West of Swindon	Overall beneficial effects considered to be the same as Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C as all strategies propose 435 dwellings and 0Ha employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Standard Method Strategies SW-B and SW-C above. Likely effects: minor positive
Rest of HMA	Overall beneficial effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-A. However, this emerging strategy would deliver 50 dwellings more. Benefits are likely to be slightly more significant than LHNA SW-A. Refer to the assessment findings for LHNA SW-A above. Likely effects: minor positive
Overall score: 1.25 minor positive effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The area most likely to experience significant positive effects against this objective is Royal Wootton Bassett.	

SA Annex 1.3 - Swindon Housing Market Area (HMA) - Assessment of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19)

Settlement/area	Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19)
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	Housing	Employment ³ (ha)
Marlborough	600	1.8
Royal Wootton Bassett	1,340	1.1
West of Swindon	0	0
Rest of HMA	1,510	0
TOTAL	3,450	2.9

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Avoid potential negative impacts of development on designated wildlife sites, protected species and priority species and habitats (international, national, local) and enhance these where possible? 2. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development? 3. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Moderate adverse effects considered likely. Likely effects: Moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. Minor adverse effects considered likely. Likely effects: Minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects. Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This revised spatial strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C given the housing numbers are not significantly different, the revised strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall. Likely effects: Minor adverse
Overall score: -1.3 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall for this revised strategy. The only settlement anticipated likely to experience significant adverse effects is Marlborough owing to the ecological designations and sensitivities present at the town, coupled with the level of growth being proposed. This revised strategy is considered more sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy against this objective, which had an overall score of -1.25.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 2: Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Ensure efficient use of land? 2. Lead to the reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate? 3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability? 4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)? 5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?

³ Employment figures based on actual allocations in Local Plan

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. This revised strategy would deliver an additional 255 dwellings over that strategy but it is not considered that significant effects would result from these additional dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this revised strategy. No settlements/areas are considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective. This revised strategy is considered more sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy against this objective, which had an overall score of -1.0.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 3: Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quality? 2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This revised spatial strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C given the housing numbers are not significantly different, the revised strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall for this revised strategy. The revised strategy is less sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy which had a score of -0.75. There are no areas considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 4: Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u>	

1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration? 2. Minimise effects on and where possible improve air quality and locate sensitive development away from areas of poor air quality (such as AQMAs)? 3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Moderate adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. This revised strategy would deliver an additional 255 dwellings over that strategy but it is not considered that significant effects would result from these additional dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.3 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations:	
Minor adverse effects likely overall for this revised strategy. The area most likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective is Marlborough. This revised strategy is considered slightly less sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy against this objective, which had an overall score of -1.25.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 5: Minimise impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation)).

Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Promote the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy? 2. Be located within Flood Zone 2? If so, are there alternative sites in the area that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zone 2? (To be determined through the application of the Sequential Test) 3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This revised spatial strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C given the housing numbers are not significantly different, the revised strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 minor adverse effects	

Conclusions/Recommendations:

Minor adverse effects likely overall for this revised strategy. No settlements/areas are considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective. This revised strategy is considered equally as sustainable as the Emerging Spatial Strategy against this objective, which also had an overall score of -1.0.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 6: Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environmentDecision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Conserve or enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest, undesignated heritage assets and their settings? 2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account the management objectives of Conservation Areas?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	The revised spatial strategy proposes less housing development in Marlborough in comparison to the emerging spatial strategy but proposes more employment land going from none to 1.8ha. The nearest comparable strategy is Alternative Development Strategy (Standard Method) SW-C which proposed a similar amount of housing but more employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Alternative Development Strategy (Standard Method) SW-C above. Although more employment land is being proposed it is considered that the likely effects will be the same as that strategy therefore moderate adverse.
	Likely effects: Moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	The revised spatial strategy proposes more housing development in Royal Wootton Bassett in comparison to all other strategies but proposes less employment land than the emerging spatial strategy. The nearest comparable strategy is Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B which proposed a slightly lower amount of housing but more employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B above. Although slightly more housing is proposed, the employment land is being proposed is less and it is considered on balance that the likely effects will be the same as that strategy therefore minor adverse.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	The revised spatial strategy proposes more housing development in the rest of the HMA in comparison to all other strategies. The nearest comparable strategy is Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-C which proposed a slightly lower amount of housing but more employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-C above. Although more housing is proposed, the employment land is removed and it is considered on balance that the likely effects will be the same as that strategy therefore moderate adverse.
	Likely effects: Moderate adverse
Overall score: -1.7 Moderate adverse effect	

Conclusions/Recommendations:

Moderate adverse effects are likely overall for this revised strategy with moderate adverse effects likely in Marlborough and the Rest of the HMA. The revised strategy is considered to be less sustainable than the emerging spatial strategy, due to a significant increase in housing proposed in the Rest of the HMA.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of placeDecision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)

1. Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance nationally designated landscapes and their settings and locally valued landscapes? 2. Protect rights of way, public open space and common land?

Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Moderate adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: Moderate adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. Minor adverse effects considered likely.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This revised spatial strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C given the housing numbers are not significantly different, the revised strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall.
	Likely effects: Minor adverse
Overall score: -1.3 minor adverse effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations:	
Minor adverse effects are considered likely overall for this revised strategy. The only settlement anticipated likely to experience significant adverse effects is Marlborough owing to the settlement sitting with the North Wessex Downs AONB and the associated landscape sensitivities around the town, coupled with the level of growth being proposed. This revised strategy is considered more sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy against this objective, which had an overall score of -1.25.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 8: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u>	
1. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing? 2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community? 3. Deliver high quality residential development?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	The revised spatial strategy proposes slightly less housing development in Marlborough in comparison to the emerging spatial strategy but more employment land. The nearest comparable strategy is Alternative Development Strategy (Standard Method) SW-C which proposed 15 more dwellings and slightly more employment land. Refer to the assessment findings for Alternative Development Strategy (Standard Method) SW-C above. The lower housing growth figure will deliver less affordable housing and effects are likely to be minor adverse.
	Likely effects: minor adverse
Royal Wootton Bassett	The revised spatial strategy proposes more housing development in Royal Wootton Bassett in comparison to the emerging spatial strategy but less employment land. The nearest comparable strategy is the emerging spatial strategy which proposed slightly less homes but more employment. Refer to the assessment findings for the Emerging Spatial Strategy. This level of housing in Royal Wootton Bassett will deliver significant affordable housing and effects are considered likely to be moderate positive.
	Likely effects: moderate positive
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects.
	Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	The revised spatial strategy proposes more housing development in the rest of the HMA in comparison to any other strategy but no employment land. The nearest comparable strategy is the Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-C. Refer to the assessment findings for Alternative Development Strategy (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-C. The higher level of housing proposed will deliver slightly more affordable housing, bearing in mind the restrictions of smaller site size in rural areas, the likely effects are therefore considered to increase to moderate positive.

Likely effects: moderate positive
Overall score: 1.0 minor positive
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects likely overall for this emerging strategy. The areas most likely to experience significant positive effects against this objective are Royal Wootton Bassett and Rest of the HMA. The strategy is considered to be more sustainable than the emerging spatial strategy due to the increase in the level of housing provision in the Rest of the HMA.

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 9: Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities.	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Maximise opportunities within the most deprived areas? 2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand? 3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that might support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions? 4. Reduce rural isolation, including access to affordable services for those without a car in rural areas?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Minor positive effects are therefore considered likely. Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects are considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy, alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. Minor positive effects are therefore considered likely. Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects. Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This Revised Spatial Strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to all other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C, given the housing numbers are not significantly different, with the Revised Spatial Strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. Minor adverse effects are therefore likely overall. Likely effects: minor positive
Overall score: 1.0 minor positive effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects are considered likely overall for this Revised Spatial Strategy. All settlements/areas are considered likely to experience minor positive effects, with no areas considered likely to experience significant positive effects. In sustainability terms, this Revised Spatial Strategy is equal to the Emerging Spatial Strategy, as they both achieved an overall score of 1.0.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 10: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Promote mixed use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car? 2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity (unless there is evidence that such impacts can be mitigated)? 3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure? 4. Provide the opportunity to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure including safe active travel?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects considered likely to be minor adverse due to the decrease in housing now proposed at Marlborough. Likely effects: Minor adverse

Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy. Minor adverse effects considered likely. Likely effects: Minor adverse
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects. Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	Overall effects considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C. This revised strategy would deliver an additional 255 dwellings over that strategy but it is not considered that significant effects would result from these additional dwellings. Minor adverse effects likely overall. Likely effects: Minor adverse
Overall score: -1.0 Minor adverse effect	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor adverse effects likely overall for this revised strategy. No settlements/areas are considered likely to experience significant adverse effects against this objective. This revised strategy is considered more sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy for this objective, which had an overall score of -1.25; this is due to the reduced number of dwellings proposed at Marlborough and the removal of proposed development at West of Swindon.	

Sustainability Appraisal Objective 11: Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth	
<u>Decision-Aiding Questions (DAQ)</u> 1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)? 2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport? 3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth? 4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel distances to work?	
Settlement/Area	Likely effects of Revised Spatial Strategy 2020 – 2038 (Reg 19) per settlement/area
Marlborough	Overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Standard Method Strategy SW-C. Minor positive effects are therefore considered likely. Likely effects: minor positive
Royal Wootton Bassett	Overall effects are considered to be similar to the Emerging Spatial Strategy alongside the Alternative Development Strategies (Local Housing Needs Assessment) SW-B. However, the amount of proposed employment land has reduced from 6h to 1.1ha in this Revised Spatial Strategy, which is considered will have an effect on employment opportunity and thus the likely effect for this objective has been reduced from a Moderate to a Minor positive effect. Likely effects: minor positive
West of Swindon	No housing or employment is proposed at West of Swindon, therefore neutral effects. Likely effects: Neutral
Rest of HMA	This Revised Spatial Strategy allocates more housing to the rest of the HMA in comparison to other strategies assessed so far. However, the overall effects are considered likely to be similar to Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Strategy SW-C given the housing numbers are not significantly different, with the Revised Spatial Strategy delivering an additional 255 dwellings. In addition, under this strategy there would be no additional employment land allocated to the rest of the HMA, which would mean a continuation of the approach to the provision of employment land to meet local needs. Minor adverse effects are therefore likely overall. Likely effects: minor positive
Overall score: 1.0 minor positive effects	
Conclusions/Recommendations: Minor positive effects are considered likely overall for this Revised Spatial Strategy. All settlements/areas are considered likely to experience minor positive effects, with no areas considered likely to experience significant positive effects. The reduction in the amount of employment land within this revised strategy (total 2.9ha) compared to the amount proposed within the Emerging Spatial Strategy (total 6ha) has resulted in this Revised Spatial Strategy being marginally less sustainable than the Emerging Spatial Strategy, which achieved an overall score of 1.25.	