

NORTH WILTSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2011

Written Statement
June 2006

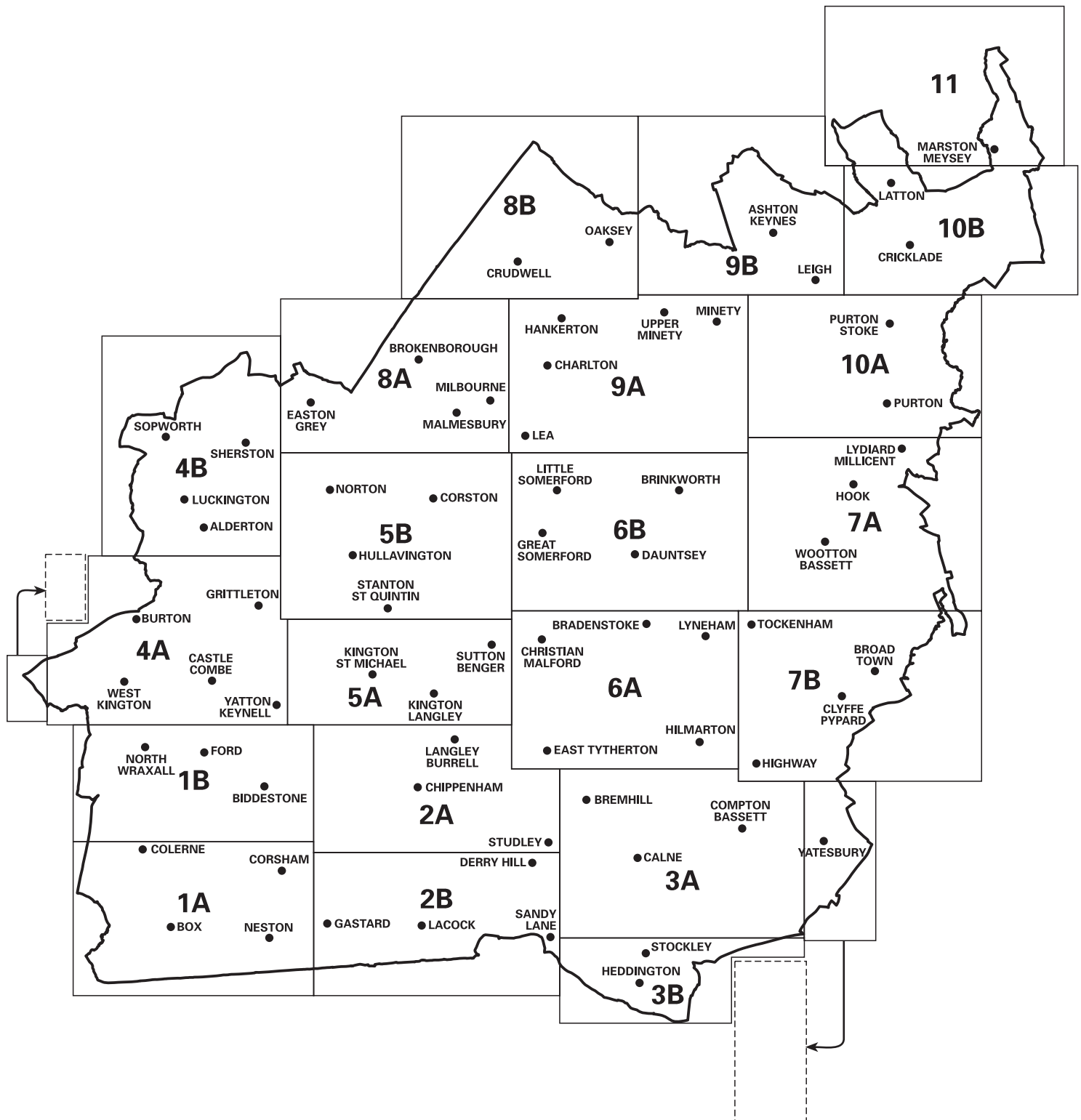
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Sheet Numbers 1 to 11



Note: Each sheet, except No. 11, is comprised of two maps, (e.g. 1A with 1B on the reverse)

PREFACE

North Wiltshire District Council is delighted to be able to offer our residents, partner organisations, businesses and potential investors in our District; the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. We hope that it will offer a Vision for the District that balances the protection of its valuable natural assets with the needs of our communities towards achieving sustainable growth.

The Plan follows on from the publication of the re-deposited Plan published in 2004 and the substantial number of representations, over 3500, that we received from about 680 individuals and organisations. We appreciate the time and effort that many have made towards making suggestions for improving the Plan. We took many of the suggestions on board and balanced the, often conflicting, views to create what we believe to be a fair and balanced Plan.

The Local Plan Inspector submitted in May 2006 a Binding Report in response to the Plan following a Public Inquiry during the Summer of 2005. It is a testament to the robustness of the Plan that he made few substantive alterations to its content. This Written Statement incorporates the amendments required by the Binding Report.

The North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 is a material consideration when dealing with planning applications. The previous North Wiltshire Local Plan 2001 is now revoked. We hope that the new North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 will be helpful to everyone as you assist us in the Council's principal aim: "Improving North Wiltshire".

Best Regards



Councillor Helen Dixon
Spatial Planning Portfolio Holder of North Wiltshire District Council

Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016

The Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016 was adopted on the 1st April 2006. Upon its adoption Wiltshire County Council issued a statement of the Conformity of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. The letter includes a summary which states:

“To summarise, in terms of conformity, the North Wiltshire Local Plan Revised Deposit Draft (November 2004) is considered to be in general conformity with the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016 with the exception of part of Policy H3 that allows “limited infill” housing development in settlements that would not comply with Structure Plan Policy DP3.”

The Local Plan Inspector in his Binding Report removed the reference to “limited infill” in policy H3 and replaced it with; “small scale or limited development”. However, it is not considered that this alteration materially affects the County Council’s determination of non-conformity. The substance of the County Council’s comment is that policy H3 is more permissive of development in the villages that have framework boundaries (but few facilities) than policy DP3 of the Structure Plan apparently allows.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011

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INTRODUCTION

1. NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL VISION STATEMENT AND SPATIAL STRATEGY

The Vision: Planning to improve North Wiltshire through sustainable development.

1.1 Within this Vision are five underlying Aims expressing, at a local level, the objectives for sustainable development set out at National, Regional and County level.

- To facilitate a sustainable pattern of land uses to reduce the consumption of natural resources whilst making best use of existing assets.
- To protect, enhance and provide the housing and facilities the community needs.
- To facilitate good quality design and protect existing amenities where possible.
- Enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors to North Wiltshire through the conservation of the built and natural environment.
- To facilitate sustainable business development for a prosperous and robust economy.

Spatial Strategy for North Wiltshire

1.2 The Spatial Strategy will set out a framework for the implementation of the Plan's Vision and Aims to achieve a sustainable pattern of development across the District balancing the relevant economic, social and environmental matters and to contribute to improving the quality of life in the District.

1.2a. At the time of publication, the planning guidance and policy that informs the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 are contained within the following documents:

- Various Planning Policy Statements (PPS's), Planning Policy Guidance (PPG's) and Circulars as published by Central Government.
- Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10) published by the Government Office of the South West - September 2001.
- Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 Adopted Explanatory Memorandum and Written Statement - January 2001.

The NWLP 2011 has been prepared to be in compliance with the above documents insofar as they form a strategic basis for developing local planning policies.

1.2b In addition, the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan Alteration 2016 has undergone an Examination in Public and the Panel's Report was published in October 2004. The Joint Strategic Authorities of Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council have not formally approved the Structure Plan Alteration. The NWLP 2011 and its supporting information has taken into account the emerging planning position, but recognising the limitation that the relevant time-scale of this Plan (to year 2011) differs from the time-scale of the Structure Plan Alteration (to year 2016).

1.2(c) Swindon is a substantial settlement that lies to the north and east of North Wiltshire and much of the western edge of the built up area is contiguous with North Wiltshire's administrative boundary. Swindon has been identified within the Regional Planning Guidance as a Principal Urban Area where growth will be concentrated. It is known that the emerging

Regional Spatial Strategy will propose to replace this guidance with an intention to at least maintain or perhaps strengthen this role for the town. This approach underlies the NWLP 2011 where the towns of North Wiltshire are not intended to accommodate substantial strategic growth at the regional level.

1.3 North Wiltshire is officially classified as 81% rural. The pattern of settlements in North Wiltshire is unusual, having four medium sized and two small sized market towns, surrounded by numerous villages and rural settlements. The District is located between the Bath/Bristol and Swindon urban areas. These larger urban areas have a substantial impact on the District, most notably through the high levels of commuting from all the settlements in the District to these larger urban areas. It is important that future patterns of development across the District reverse the unsustainable influences from these large urban areas whilst still providing the housing and community infrastructure our market towns and rural communities require.

1.4 The larger settlements within the District are all affected by very similar issues summarised as:

- A lack of opportunity for people to live and work within the District contributing to high levels of out-commuting
- Insufficient provision of affordable housing and other types of community infrastructure
- Need to re-cycle previously developed land in urban areas to ensure the efficient use of land in sustainable locations.
- Pressure on existing retail centres from larger neighbouring urban areas and existing out of town retail uses.

This Plan does not propose to create a hierarchy of settlements across the District to address these contributors to unsustainability due to the similarity of issues affecting all the larger settlements. Future development at each settlement needs to be proportionate to its size and needs. The District Council recognises that the emerging Structure Plan does propose a hierarchy of settlements with Chippenham being identified as the principal centre for growth within the District. Once the Structure Plan is adopted the Council will ensure it plans in accordance with strategic planning policy focusing larger scale development at Chippenham whilst mitigating the potentially unsustainable impacts of the neighbouring larger urban areas of Bristol/Bath and Swindon.

1.5 Within North Wiltshire there are spatial issues that need to be included in this Plan but they also have wider sub-regional implications. These issues may or may not be site specific, such as the potential re-development of surplus MOD sites and the provision of public transport infrastructure/services across the District. The Local Planning Authority has published a Local Development Scheme, which will be reviewed on an annual basis, and any requirement for further Local Development Documents to deal with these issues will be considered.

1.6 The District's rural areas are also affected by issues contributing to unsustainable patterns of land uses that can be summarised as:

- Decline in the level of rural services eroding the vitality and viability of local communities
- A period of rapid change in the agricultural economy.
- Pressure for unsustainable forms of development within the countryside.

This Plan will contribute to ensuring the District's rural communities do not stagnate by providing for levels of future development that will maintain and where appropriate enhance

local services and encourage the diversification and promotion of the rural economy, whilst preserving and enhancing the built and natural environment.

1.6a Development in the countryside, will only be permitted if it supports farming, the rural economy, rural communities, and countryside based activities including recreation and diversification.

1.7 The existing balance between housing and employment opportunities across the District are encouraging high levels of out-commuting as there are insufficient opportunities within North Wiltshire for people to live and work. This Plan will mitigate this unsustainable situation by providing employment opportunities and housing land within the constraints of the Wiltshire Structure Plan over the Plan period up to 2011. It is anticipated this pattern of development will need to be continued after 2011 to continue to tackle this problem. In addition to increasing the employment opportunities within our six main towns (Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade), the Plan also encourages diversification of the rural economy. The provision of employment opportunities proportionate to their location and associated with the dispersed rural communities will reduce the need for car borne journeys to the towns within the District and the neighbouring larger urban areas.

1.8 The Plan will provide sufficient housing opportunities across the District to ensure everyone has the opportunity of a decent home. The Plan will provide sufficient housing land to achieve the housing land supply requirements of the Wiltshire Structure Plan. Residential development will be focused on previously developed land within the District's larger settlements that will contribute to securing balanced patterns of development in locations that will reduce reliance on the car and promote cycling, walking and public transport. Residential allocations in the Plan will be proportionate to the size of the settlement to ensure sustainable growth that addresses the affordable housing requirements of the settlement and surrounding area.

1.9 The need for affordable housing provision in the District is high. In the year 2000, 64% of first time buyers who were looking to access the housing market had an income too low to get on the housing ladder. This Plan will aim to provide this group and others in housing need with the opportunity of a decent home in sustainable locations.

1.10 In addition to the provision of affordable housing, the Plan seeks to ensure new development proposals provide the community infrastructure that is required as a consequence of development. The emerging Community Strategy will be a significant material consideration in determining the type and level of community infrastructure provision required. It is vital that the Council works in partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver the required community infrastructure.

1.11 Development that is appropriate in rural areas will be primarily focused at existing settlements. This Plan will facilitate sustainable development that makes the most of new leisure and economic opportunities in the countryside, whilst minimising any potential detrimental effects on established rural activities, communities, countryside quality and the natural environment.

1.12 The District's town centres are coming under increasing pressure from a combination of the competition from the regional shopping centres at Bath/Bristol and Swindon and historically approved out of town retail developments on the edge of settlements within the District. This Plan will implement policies based on retail needs to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the District's town centres by focusing retail, leisure and other key town centre uses in these centres. Based upon the size of the settlements and the range of retail services provided, the main retail centres are considered to be in the towns of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade.

1.13 The District's diversity is a strength and can be used in conjunction with the policies contained within this plan to provide a sustainable framework, resulting in the improvement of the quality of life for residents and visitors to North Wiltshire. This plan will provide the basis for sustainable development in order to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations.

2. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Consultation to Date

2.1 The District Council has carried out a wide ranging consultation on the Local Plan to maximise understanding of, and increase involvement in the planning process. Town and Parish Councils and local amenity groups have had the opportunity for involvement from an early stage in the development of the Plan.

2.2 The first stage of the consultation was the production of and consultation on the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Issues Paper in October 1999, this included public meetings at the six towns within the District and consideration through *Peoples Voice*. This document explained the broad planning issues facing the District inviting comments from all interested parties. Over 320 comments were received commenting on the spectrum of planning issues set out in the Paper.

2.3 Across the District a number of Local Plans Working Groups were established around some of the existing towns. These Groups comprised representatives from both the District Council, local councils, amenity groups and at times, developers. These Groups considered issues specific to individual settlements and their views were taken into consideration in the formulation of the First Deposit Draft Local Plan.

2.4 A further stage of informal consultation was undertaken in 2002 following the production of the District's Urban Capacity Study where all Town and Parish Council's were actively encouraged to consider the Study and submit their views on the issue of future residential land allocation within the Plan. This pro-active, inclusive approach to plan making was re-inforced by the use of the District Council's five Area Committees as a forum for consultation and discussion of the issues allowing all interested parties to express their views for consideration by the Council.

2.5 The First Deposit Draft Local Plan was published in April 2003, followed by a six week consultation period. Some 2780 comments were made (from about 500 individual representations) to the proposed Plan and its policies. These comments were given due consideration, with each element of the Plan being reviewed. The proposed amendments have been discussed at the public meetings of the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel of the Council. This consideration has led to the development of this Plan.

2.6 The housing policies of the plan have been informed by an updated Urban Capacity Study. The review was undertaken following the consultation period of the First Deposit Draft Local Plan 2011 and the results were published in October 2003. A further programme of consultation on the housing issues raised was undertaken with the Area Committees of the Council, beginning in November 2003 and ending in March 2004.

2.7 Following the publication of the Revised Plan, there was a six week consultation period until December 2004. There was a period for the collation of the representations for the Public Local Inquiry that took place in June to September 2005.

Major Development

2.8 The Government has established challenging time periods for the determination of major applications. The District Council is committed to achieving these Government performance indicators. In addition to the commitment of the Council, the business community must also play its part by consulting communities¹ and relevant statutory consultees² on planning applications before they are made, to clarify and resolve issues before the formal processes start. Failure of potential applicants to undertake appropriate pre-application consultation may not prevent the registration of a planning application or its determination. However, the Council's commitment to determining applications within the period prescribed by Government may result in the application's refusal when appropriate pre-submission consultation could clarify and resolve the relevant issues enabling the application to be determined positively by the District Council.

Links to the Community Strategy

2.9 The Local Strategic Partnership has met since June 2004. A Community Strategy was prepared in 2005. This Plan will be monitored alongside the Community Strategy. Using the Community Strategy process in this way the Plan will be able to deliver the land uses that the Community wants, within the constraints of National and Regional Planning constraints.

Service Levels Customers Can Expect of Planning Services

2.10 [deleted]

2.11 Planning Services has a One-Stop-Shop approach to planning services for its customers. The range of planning services can be summarised as:

Planning applications for the carrying out of works to buildings (including Listed Buildings), their change of use, protected trees or displaying advertisements or signs.

Building Regulation applications for new buildings and extensions, internal alterations, change of use of a building and installation or alteration of a controlled service or fitting, i.e. drainage, central heating components, doors and windows.

Future Planning for the District. The system that helps to plan our towns and rural areas has changed in a fundamental way. Up to now, local planning authorities such as North Wiltshire District Council have had a duty to prepare planning policies that assist in directing new development to the most appropriate places and to protect important land and buildings from inappropriate development. This has occurred up to now by the adoption of planning policy documents such as the Regional Planning Guidance (in our case, for the South-West of England), the Structure Plan (prepared by Wiltshire County Council) or the Local Plan (as prepared by ourselves).

As a result of the new planning legislation that commenced in September 2004, this system has been replaced by a *Regional Spatial Strategy* (that will have development plan status) and by a variety of documents that together will form what will now be called, the *Local Development Framework*. It is expected that as the LDF is created, it will form strong links to the *Community Strategy* and therefore ensure that all appropriate aspirations of the community that have a *spatial planning* dimension are taken into account.

¹ Town and Parish Councils are considered to be the most appropriate bodies to facilitate local pre-application consultation by developers.

² Advice on the contact details of statutory consultees can be obtained from Planning Services, North Wiltshire District Council.

The existing Structure and Local Plans affecting North Wiltshire will remain in force over the next few years to ensure that the District continues to have full planning policy coverage. This will ensure that the public, landowners and the developers of land will continue to have the benefit of up-to-date planning policies that support their interests.

The Council will produce, and monitor on an annual basis, a Local Development Scheme setting out the programme for approving Development Plan Documents and other relevant Local Development Documents. This will include the programme for preparing a Statement of Community Involvement which when approved, must be thereafter followed for each DPD or LDD undertaken.

Enforcement. We investigate and where appropriate take action against unauthorised development in North Wiltshire. If you have a concern that unauthorised development may have taken place please contact us on 01249 706444 or email planning@northwilts.gov.uk.

Other advice on planning related matters. This is available at our main reception or over the telephone from 9am until 5pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am until 4:30pm on Friday. Contact the Customer Focus team on 01249 706444 or email planning@northwilts.gov.uk.

How Can I Get Involved?

If you have any queries or would like more information on the Plan, please contact:

Planning Services
Spatial Planning
North Wiltshire District Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

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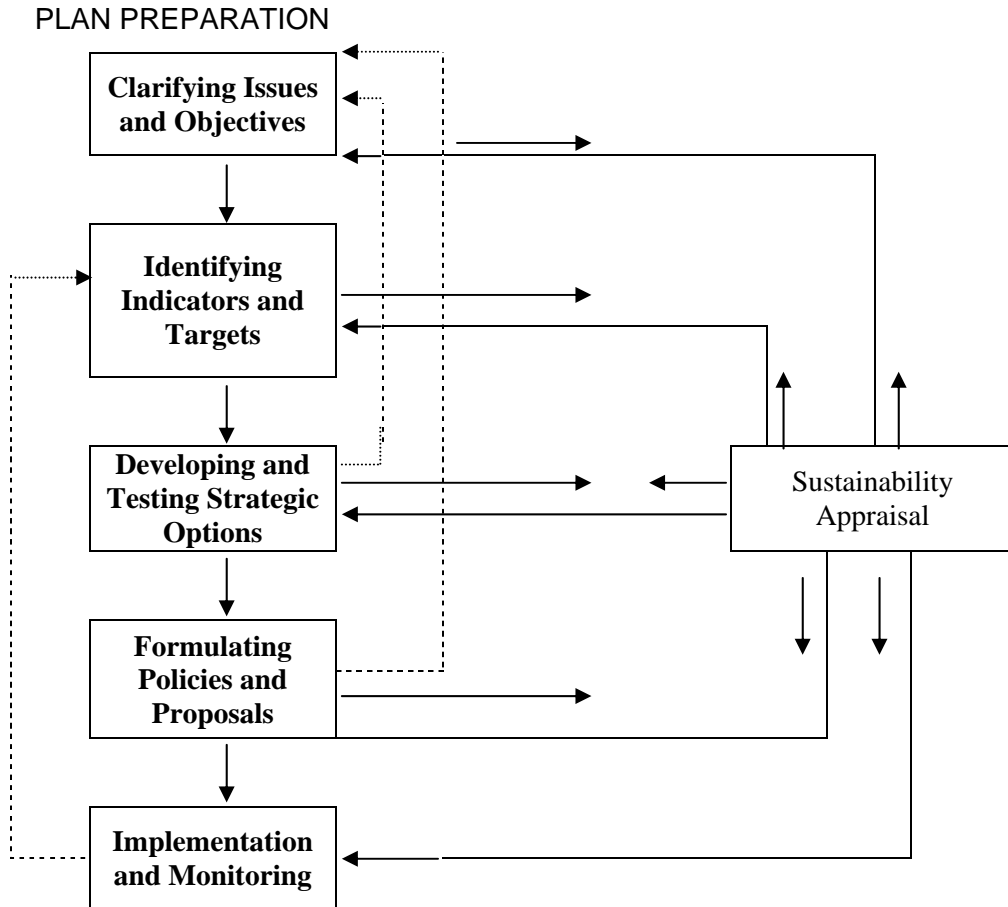
3. STATEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

3.1 The Local Plan First Deposit Draft has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, the results of which are available as a separate document. Appraisals took place at each stage of the plans preparation in order to ensure that its policies and proposals take us nearer to achieving sustainable development. This has been supplemented by a supplementary sustainability appraisal where substantial alterations or new policies have been included in the Revised Deposit Draft.

3.2 Government requires local authorities to carry out an environmental appraisal of their development plans. However, it is recognised that sustainable development is not limited to environmental concerns and that appraisals of plans need to encompass economic and social issues.

3.3 North Wiltshire District Council commissioned independent specialist consultants, Nicholas Pearson Associates Ltd, to assist in the design of an appropriate Sustainability Appraisal methodology to apply to the preparation of the Local Plan 2011. The following diagram illustrates the iterative process and the underlying basis of the Sustainability Appraisal which will ensure integration of sustainable development into each stage of preparation of the North Wiltshire Local Plan.

Figure 3.1: Sustainability Appraisal Flow-Chart



4. STATEMENT OF PLAN MONITORING

4.1 Regular monitoring will be essential to establish how both the Plan and the pending Community Strategy are working in practice, to assess whether the policies set out in them are being sufficiently implemented on the ground and having the desired effect. Monitoring will take place on an ongoing basis and will be displayed in an annual report; the results of this monitoring will be used to update policies and to formulate new policies as necessary.

4.2 Monitoring information should be used both to determine whether the policies in this guidance are being implemented and whether they may need to be reviewed. Monitoring may indicate that a particular part of the Plan requires some more detailed guidance to be prepared and this will be addressed through the development of supplementary planning guidance.

4.3 The review of other Council strategies and studies will also help to evaluate how the Plan is performing and whether any review is necessary. It is intended to review the North Wiltshire’s planning policy following the production of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Revised Deposit Draft. The monitoring information will then be used to inform the production and review of the North Wiltshire Local Development Framework. When the Plan is adopted regular reviews of the policies will be undertaken, and monitoring will be a vital part of this process.

4.4 When the Community Strategy for North Wiltshire is produced, the Local Plan will play an important role in delivering the land-use aspects of this Strategy. Accordingly there will be an opportunity to monitor both documents together and any identified changes in circumstances can be reflected in the policies and proposals of both documents.

4.5 The following table identifies key targets and indicators for a future monitoring system, they relate to the principles set out in Sustainability Appraisal. The regular monitoring of these may suggest new indicators that should also be considered.

Table 4.1: Plan Monitoring Targets and Indicators

Target	Key Indicators
A: SOCIAL PROGRESS WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF EVERYONE	
A1: Provision and access to safe, healthy and attractive living and working environments for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level and perception of crime - Road traffic accident data by category - Unemployment levels - No. of affordable homes built - No. of dwellings built - No. of houses required to meet the Structure Plan housing requirement
A2: Provision and access to community facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of services in towns and villages - No. of people registered per GP - Availability of public open space - Retail vacancy rates
A3: Reduced need for travel and reliance on the private car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Car ownership and use - Bus service availability - Length of cycle routes
A4: Reduced poverty and social exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waiting lists of social housing and registered homeless

B: EFFECTIVE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT	
B1: Quality and character of towns, villages and countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of land cover protected /designated for landscape and townscape value -
B2: Natural habitats and species diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of land cover with nature and biodiversity designation - No. of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) - Area of designated Wildlife sites damaged or destroyed as a result of planning permissions where overriding need not demonstrated. - %Planning permissions on sites that support protected species, with conditions and/or obligations aimed at retaining species. - Area of Local Nature Reserves within the District per 1000 population. - % New Housing with habitat creation and/or management built into the design of the development.
B3: Built and archaeological heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of listed buildings in appropriate use, or at risk of decay - Numbers and condition of built and archaeological designations
B4: Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of rivers
B5: Land and Soil Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area of farmland - No. of working farms - Net loss of greenfield land to development
B6: Quality of environment health: air, noise, light, odour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. environmental health complaints to North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC)
C: PRUDENT USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES	
C1: Reduced use of non-renewable energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewable Energy capacity installed by type
C2: Land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of new homes built on previously developed land - No sites and area of derelict or contaminated land - Amount of Reclaimed Land
C3: Waste management and minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % domestic waste recycled - Rate of waste disposal to landfill - % recycled/secondary aggregate construction material used in new build developments. - No. Community composting schemes.
D: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH AND STABLE LEVELS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT	
D1: Maintenance and improvement of attractive working environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available and vacant employment floorspace and land on identified industrial estates in urban and rural areas

