



Warrington
Local Planning Framework

Local Plan Core Strategy

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Incorporating Non-Technical Summary

September 2012





Sustainability Appraisal Report

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1 Summary and Outcomes

Non-technical summary

1.1 EU Directive 2001/42/EC and subsequent UK Regulations introduced the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all plans and programmes that have a significant environmental effect. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 made the broader Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process a requirement for certain documents produced as part of a Local Planning Framework.

1.2 The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of new development plan documents and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

1.3 A Core Strategy Scoping Report was published in September 2006. This set out:

- Environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other relevant plans and programmes;
- Baseline information on the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the borough;
- Key sustainability issues facing the borough; and
- An appropriate framework for Sustainability Appraisals including objectives and indicators.

1.4 The report was the subject of consultation in order to ensure that the information collected was comprehensive and accurate and an appropriate framework had been constructed that could be used to assess and improve the emerging Local Plan Core Strategy. As the production of the Local Plan Core Strategy has taken longer than originally anticipated, a second, updated Scoping Report was published for consultation in January 2009. The report covered the same issues, but presented more up to date information. Consultation responses received on both scoping reports have been taken into account in this Sustainability Appraisal Report.

1.5 All of the background information collected helped to shape the draft objectives of the Local Plan Core Strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal framework was used to check that these were as sustainable as they could be. The effects of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy have also been predicted and evaluated to make sure that there are no negative effects and any positive effects are maximised.

A statement of the likely significant effects of the Local Plan Core Strategy

1.6 The Local Plan Core Strategy is likely to have a positive effect in a number of areas. The most significant effects will be related to:

- Strengthening the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth by providing sufficient land for economic development in the right locations, and minimising the loss of any employment land to other uses.
- Ensuring access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing by providing sufficient land for housing development and increasing the amount of affordable housing completions secured as a percentage of all completions .
- Protecting and enhancing accessibility for all to essential services and facilities by locating them in accessible, sustainable places.
- Protecting and improving the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place by focusing on the regeneration of previously developed sites, protecting green spaces and ensuring high design quality.
- Protecting, managing and improving local amenity and local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding, and
- Ensuring the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation by focusing development on sustainable, accessible locations that make the best use of existing infrastructure.

1.7 The positive effects predicted that are not considered significant show that the Local Plan Core Strategy will also contribute to the creation of sustainable communities.

Statement on the difference the process has made to date

1.8 The Sustainability Appraisal process has made certain amendments, both in the drafting of the Local Plan Core Strategy objectives and the way in which the process of reviewing the Local Plan Core Strategy has been undertaken.

1.9 The process of undertaking Sustainability Appraisal has meant a logical approach to identifying the context in which the Local Plan Core Strategy should be reviewed and the relevant issues that should be addressed. The Sustainability Appraisal framework constructed as part of the scoping report exercise has been used to ensure that the objectives of the Local Plan Core Strategy are as sustainable as possible. It has also helped analyse the emerging strategy and policies to identify where the Local Plan Core Strategy could improve on the current situation. Finally, the process has helped to identify a monitoring framework for the Local Plan Core Strategy, which is already largely in place.

1.10 The Sustainability Appraisal process has not revealed any significant or unacceptable social, economic or environmental effects likely to arise from the adoption and implementation of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

2 Introduction

2.1 The Local Plan Core Strategy forms part of the Warrington Local Planning Framework, a suite of documents which make up the statutory planning framework for the Borough. The Local Plan Core Strategy is the overarching strategic policy document. It's main purpose is to set out a series of core, borough-wide and place specific policies for addressing the vision and objectives. It is these which provide the framework for guiding and co-ordinating future public and private investment in Warrington and for promoting a more positive and proactive approach to managing development within the borough. In addition, to being used to determine planning applications, these policies also provide a starting point for preparing more detailed policies and site specific proposals that will be contained in other Local Plan documents that allocate sites and address minerals and waste issues.

2.2 The Local Plan Core Strategy:

- Defines a vision of what Warrington will be like for residents and visitors in the future if it's policies are implemented.
- Identifies a set of objectives to realise this vision, and
- Sets out a series of policies to guide future growth and development in the Borough that both complement and integrate with other key plans, policies and programmes related to development

2.3 Local authorities are required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) on all development plan documents under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2008 to ensure that sustainable development is integrated into spatial planning and into policies developed in the Local Plan Core Strategy. In June 2004, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations came into force, transposing the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes into UK law. The SEA Directive requirements are met within the main SA document and the Non-Technical Summary, which is also a requirement of the Directive.

2.4 The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the likely significant effects of implementing the strategic policies within the Local Plan Core Strategy against a number of sustainability objectives using a Sustainability Appraisal Framework. A Sustainability Appraisal only requires the identification of any *significant effects* of implementing the strategic policies on achieving sustainable development.

3 Appraisal Methodology

Approach adopted to the Sustainability Appraisal

3.1 The sustainability appraisal that has been undertaken was based on the approach set out in the ODPM document "Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents" published in November 2005.

3.2 The ODPM guidance document sets out a five-stage process for undertaking Sustainability Appraisals:

Stage A	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope
Stage B	Developing and refining options and assessing effects
Stage C	Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report
Stage D	Consulting on the preferred options of the Local Plan Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal Report
Stage E	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan Core Strategy

When the Sustainability Appraisal was carried out

3.3 Work on the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy started in 2007 with the production of the "Borough Portrait". The production of this document included the collection and presentation of background information that was of relevance to the environmental, economic and social baseline of Warrington. This contained much of the information that was put together in the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which was the subject of consultation between September and October 2006. The process of producing the emerging Local Plan Core Strategy took much longer than expected, for a number of different reasons including changing requirements at a national level. It was therefore considered appropriate to update the original Scoping Report and consult on it again in January and February 2009.

3.4 Responses to both the scoping report consultations were analysed and background information was amended following this process.

3.5 Work on the Sustainability Appraisal tasks involving developing and refining Local Plan Core Strategy objectives and options and assessing their effects has been ongoing since the publication of the Council's "Issues and Options Report" in February 2009 and has included consultations on;

- a "Refined Vision Report" (January 2010),
- an "Objectives and Options Consultation Report" (July 2010),
- Housing and Employment Land Requirement Reports (November 2010), and
- an assessment of the sustainability of the three broad options (November 2010).

These previous stages all helped to inform the selected preferred option for the Local Plan Core Strategy, including the core strategic approach, the spatial and thematic policies and key strategic sites that went into the Pre-publication draft of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

3.6 After consulting on the Pre-publication version of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy in December 2011, a number of minor changes were made to the plan. These changes have been subject to the sustainability appraisal process as well. The results of this process are contained in Appendix 12. The appraisal was undertaken using the following process:

- Assessing each change individually and identifying the reason for the change;
- Any changes for reasons of clarity, spelling, punctuation or grammar were deemed to be minor and not significant;
- The remaining changes were then assessed to determine if they would have an effect on any of the SA objectives, and
- an opinion provided as to the affect of the change on the initial SA.

3.7 Work on finalising the draft Local Plan Core Strategy and producing the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report was undertaken throughout 2011.

Who carried out the Sustainability Appraisal

3.8 The Sustainability Appraisal process of the Local Plan Core Strategy document has been led by an officer within Warrington Borough Council's planning service. It has been informed by a Planning Policy team working group which has ensured a consistent approach to developing and refining the documents objectives and options.

Who was consulted, when and how

3.9 The Local Plan Core Strategy Scoping Report (which detailed the methodology and the Sustainability Appraisal Framework) consultation documents were sent to the four statutory consultation bodies (Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency) as well as the Warrington Local Strategic Partnership and the Government Office for the North West.

3.10 Specific Consultation Bodies and General Consultation Bodies as listed in the Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement were also either sent a full copy of the document, or a letter setting out that the consultation was being undertaken and that documents were either available on request, within Council offices or on the Council's website.

3.11 The Initial five-week consultation ran from the 11th September 2006 to the 13th October 2007. Because of consolidation of the roles of English Nature and the Countryside Agency and confusion over relevant contact details, it was considered that a second five-week period of consultation should be undertaken to allow Natural England to respond to the consultation. The second consultation ran from the 23rd October to the 24th November 2007.

3.12 The updated Local Plan Core Strategy Scoping report was the subject of similar consultation between January and February 2009.

3.13 The Scoping Report has not been re-issued following consultation, but the comments received during these consultations were taken on board in undertaking and producing subsequent Sustainability Appraisal work and documents.

Difficulties encountered in compiling information or carrying out the assessment

3.14 No difficulties were identified in compiling information or carrying out appraisals.

4 Background

Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal and the Sustainability Appraisal Report

4.1 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan Core Strategy was undertaken in order to ensure that the objectives of the document, and the document itself, were as sustainable as possible and dealt with all the economic, social and environmental issues that were considered appropriate.

4.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Report is an audit trail that sets out how the Local Plan Core Strategy was reviewed and how the Sustainability Appraisal was carried out and where it has influenced the final document.

Local Plan Core Strategy objectives and outline of contents

4.3 Warrington's Local Planning Framework therefore consists of a suite of documents as illustrated in Figure 4.1 below. Together these documents set the framework to guide decisions in the borough over the next 15 years about a wide range of activities that shape areas, from the role of the town in the economy, the health of the Town Centre, and how future housing needs can be accommodated, to the location of new schools and opportunities for outdoor play for children.

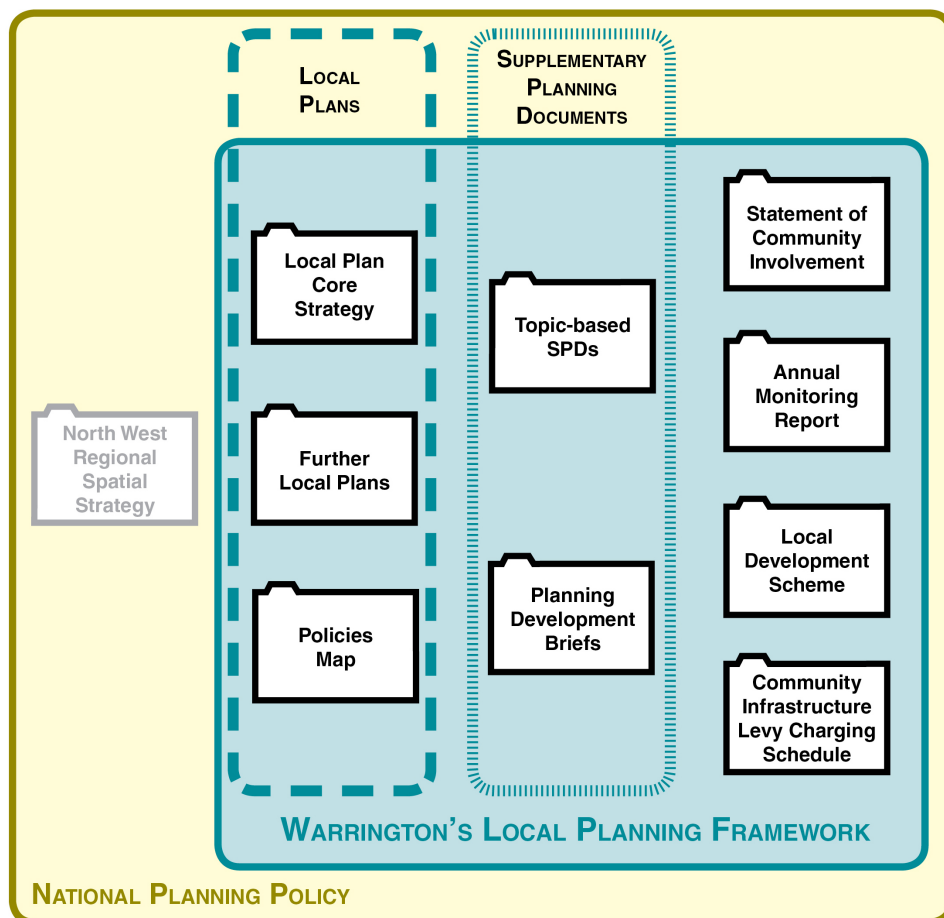


Figure 4.1 Warrington Local Planning Framework

4.4 The Local Planning Framework will gradually replace the Council's existing plan - the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

4.5 The **Local Plan Core Strategy** is the Council's first Local Plan to be prepared as part of the framework and is the key document from which all other Local Plans will follow. A Proposals Map which shows the boundaries of those policies within the Council's adopted plans which have an area or place specific implication has also been produced alongside the Local Plan Core Strategy in the form of changes to the UDP Proposals Map.

4.6 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides further details on and a timetable for the preparation of Local Plans. The Local Planning Framework also includes a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which provide further details and guidance on how some policies within the Local Plan Core Strategy are to be implemented. A number of these documents, which generally cover thematic based issues or which provide a framework for the development of specific sites, are already in place. The need for others will emerge as preparation of the Local Planning Framework progresses or following the review of existing elements of the Local Planning Framework.

4.7 With the exception of the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, which will set out required contributions from development in order to deliver the infrastructure needed to support strategic infrastructure in the borough, the remaining documents within the Local Planning Framework generally relate to the process of its preparation, monitoring and review.

4.8 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how and when the Council will engage and consult with stakeholders during the process of Local Plan production. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) monitors and subsequently reports on an annual basis the effectiveness and outcomes of Local Plan policies and in this regard fulfils a critical role in relation to identifying the need to review existing policies and plans. The Annual Monitoring Report also identifies how the Council is progressing with regards to meeting the timetable for Local Plan document production set out in the Local Development Scheme.

4.9 Warrington's **Local Plan Core Strategy** is the overarching strategic policy document in the Local Planning Framework. It sets out a strategic approach for guiding the location and level of development in the Borough up to 2027 as well as a number of principles that will shape the way that Warrington will develop between now and then.

4.10 The Council cannot shape Warrington alone. It must continue to work with partners to achieve agreed outcomes. A key partner is the Warrington Partnership which includes organisations and people who can influence what happens in the Borough from Health Trusts to the Environment Agency and the local Chamber of Commerce. Their vision for Warrington is expressed in their Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Plan Core Strategy, seeks to translate this vision into on the ground activity. Work is currently underway on developing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy which will replace the existing Sustainable Community Strategy.

4.11 The other key partner is the private sector, companies and individuals who choose to invest in the borough's economy and deliver the homes, jobs and supporting services that Warrington will need in the future. The Local Plan Core Strategy aims to ensure that this investment goes to the right places at the right time and that the resulting developments are sustainable.

4.12 In addition to the overarching vision, the Local Plan Core Strategy contains a series of visions which relate to thematic issues and specific places. Each of these visions sets out how each issue or place is expected to change over the plan period and is followed by a number of strategic objectives which outline the general policy directions that need to be pursued in order to realise the vision.

4.13 The Local Plan Core Strategy then sets out a series of borough-wide and place specific policies for addressing the vision and objectives and it is these which provide the framework for guiding and co-ordinating future public and private investment in Warrington and for promoting a more positive and proactive approach to managing development within the Borough. In addition to being used to determine planning applications these policies also provide a starting point for preparing more detailed policies and site specific proposals likely to be contained in other Local Plan documents such as the Land Allocations Local Plan and Minerals Local Plan.

4.14 The strategic objectives of the Local Plan Core Strategy are set out below. These have been tested against the Sustainability Framework Objectives and amended accordingly (see Appendix 4). The document also includes more specific objectives that relate either to issues or places relevant to Warrington. These have also been tested against the Sustainability Framework objectives and amended accordingly, but are not set out here in the interests of brevity.

4.15 The strategic objectives of the Local Plan Core Strategy include:

- W1 To secure the regeneration and renewal of the older areas of the town, strengthen existing neighbourhoods and make the most efficient use of infrastructure, ensuring development brings benefits to their host communities whilst:
 - Delivering a minimum of 10,500 new homes (equating to 500 per year) between 2006 and 2027, and
 - Supporting growth in the local and sub-regional economy by providing 277 Hectares of employment land between 2006 and 2027
- W2 To maintain the permanence of the Green Belt in the borough and protect it from inappropriate development
- W3 To strengthen the role of Warrington Town Centre as an employment, retail, leisure and cultural destination as well as a transport hub for the borough and the wider region
- W4 To be as accessible as possible whilst reducing the need to travel and providing opportunities to move people and goods by non-car modes
- W5 To secure high quality design which reinforces local distinctiveness and protects, enhances and embraces the borough's built and natural assets
- W6 To minimise the impact of development on the environment through the prudent use of resources and ensuring development is energy efficient, safe and resilient to climate change.

4.16 The Contents of the Local Plan Core Strategy are:

- Introduction
- Warrington Borough - A Spatial Portrait
- How this Document Works
- The Core Strategy
 - Strategic Vision
 - Key Diagram
 - How we are going to get there
 - Why we have taken this approach
- Borough wide strategies
 - Creating Prosperity and Vibrancy
 - Strengthening Neighbourhoods

- Securing a High Quality Environment
- Making the Place Work
- Place Making
 - The Town Centre
 - Inner and North Warrington
 - West Warrington
 - East Warrington
 - Stockton Heath and South Warrington
 - The Countryside and its Constituent Settlements
- Development Management
- Delivery and Monitoring
- Appendices

Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Regulations

4.17 The methodology for undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive was set out in the Core Strategy Scoping Report. Table 1 shows a summary of SEA requirements and where they are covered:

SEA Directive Requirements	Where covered in this report
A) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Scoping Report and paras 4.3 - 4.16 (pages 8 - 11) and para 5.1 (pages 13 & 14)
B) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan;	Scoping Report and paras 5.2 - 5.7 (pages 14 & 15)
C) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	Scoping Report and paras 5.2 - 5.7 (pages 14 & 15)
D) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance;	Scoping Report and para 5.8 (pages 15 - 19)
E) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	Scoping Report and para 5.1 (pages 13 & 14)
F) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above	Paras 6.39 - 6.41 (pages 35 - 40)

SEA Directive Requirements	Where covered in this report
factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects;	
G) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Paras 6.45 - 6.49 (pages 39 - 46)
H) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Paras 6.5 - 6.38 (pages 28 - 35)
I) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10;	Para 7.4 - 7.5 (page 47)
J) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Section 1: Paras 1.1 - 1.10 (pages 3-4)

Table 1

5 Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Task A1 - Links to other policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives and how these have been taken into account

5.1 Table 2 outlines, in no particular order, the key messages emerging from a review of policies, plans and programmes. The full review is contained in Appendix 1. Many of the key issues overlap and all of the documents of relevance might not be listed – just those that deal with the key issue as a major consideration.

Key Message	Source
Adhere to principles of sustainable development.	Johannesburg Declaration, European Strategy for Sustainable Development, ESPD, UK Government Strategy for Sustainable Development, Urban & Rural White Papers, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Action for Sustainability.
Create Sustainable Communities and Promote Social Inclusion	Communities Plan: Sustainable Communities in the North West, NW Equality and Diversity Strategy, Warrington Community Strategy, WBC Corporate Strategy, A Regeneration Framework for Warrington, Community Safety Strategy, Warrington Anti-poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy.
Achieve economic growth	Northern Way Growth Strategy, NPPF, Regional Economic Strategy, Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action, Sub Regional Economic Strategy for Warrington and Cheshire, Manchester and Liverpool City Region Development Plans, Warrington Economic Development and Competitiveness Strategy, WBC Corporate Strategy.
Protect and Enhance the built and natural environment	EU Habitats Directive, European Landscape Convention, Ramsar Convention, NPPF, WBC Tree and Woodland Strategy, WBC Corporate Strategy, WBC Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.
Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity	Habitats and Wild Birds Directives, Ramsar Convention, UK Biodiversity Strategy, NPPF, Biodiversity Action Plan for Warrington.
Improve air and water quality and consider impacts of flooding and flood risk whilst taking into account the impacts of climate change	EU 6 th Environmental Action Plan, Kyoto Protocol, EU Air Quality Directive, EU Water Framework Directive, National Air Quality Strategy, NPPF, The Air About Us – Warrington’s Air Quality Management Plan. EU Floods Directive. North West River Basin Management Plan
Provide an integrated transport network and secure wider benefits by reducing the need to travel by car	Transport 2010: DETR 10 year plan, NPPF, WBC Corporate Strategy, LTP3.
Achieve more sustainable waste management and mineral extraction	EU Framework Directive on Waste, EU Directive on landfill of waste, PPS10, MPG1 – 15, MPS2, Regional Waste Strategy, WBC Corporate Strategy, WBC Waste Strategy.
Minimising the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of climate change.	EU Renewable Energy Directive, Energy White Paper, NPPF, NW Sustainable Energy Strategy, Rising to the challenge - a climate change action plan for England's Northwest 2007-09, WBC Corporate Strategy, WBC Climate Change Strategy

Key Message	Source
Ensure Health and Wellbeing	NPPF, Investment for Health: A Plan for the NW of England, NW Plan for Sport and Physical Activity, WBC Corporate Strategy, WBC Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.

Table 2 Key Messages from PPP Review

Task A2 - Description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline

5.2 Establishing baseline information provides a basis for predicting and monitoring effects of plans and proposals and helps identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. An evidence base will consist mainly of quantitative indicators, but qualitative information can also be collected.

5.3 Establishing baseline information should occur at the same time as the evidence gathering pre-production stage of a Local Plan. Much information collected will, however, be generic to an authority's area rather than specific to a particular plan or SPD. It is therefore the intention that a Borough-wide evidence base is established and updated as necessary.

5.4 The 2006 scoping report baseline was expanded to produce the Borough Portrait in 2007. This document was a detailed account of how different parts of Warrington were performing in a number of areas considered by the Government to be key characteristics of a sustainable community.

5.5 The baseline evidence has since been updated. The main findings of this evidence base are presented in table and map form (see Appendix 2). There are, however a number of other qualitative sources of information which will be taken into account in the SA process, this includes documents that deal with historic landscape characterisation, landscape character, conservation area appraisals and management plans. This includes documents and resources such as:

- Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Landscape Character Volume - NW England
- Streets for All North West – a regional English Heritage guide to the management of streets and public open spaces
- Cheshire Historic Towns Survey, Warrington Borough.
 - Part 1: Archaeological Assessments.
 - Part 2 Archaeological Strategies.
- Heritage Counts: www.heritagecounts.org.uk
- National Monuments Record Centre: www.pastscape.org.uk
- Images of England – photos of listed buildings alongside the statutory list description: www.imagesofengland.org.uk
- Urban Surveys – HER / SMR or English Heritage: www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1294
- National Mapping Programme Aerial Photographs: www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr
- National and Regional skills report: www.helm.or.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.4625
- Quality of Life Assessment: www.countryside.gov.uk/LAR/Landscape/Quality/index.asp
- Countryside Quality Counts: www.countryside-quality-counts.org.uk

5.6 The SEA Directive requires that the likely evolution of the borough without implementation of the plan or programme should be identified. The baseline data gives the current state of the area, whereas extrapolation of trends can provide clues as to what would happen without Local Plan intervention. Major projects that are currently underway or planned include:

- Omega Business Development site

- New Urban Village at Chapelford
- Regional strategic site at Warrington Waterfront

5.7 Whilst the adopted UDP and other Regional and Council initiatives, plans and programmes will have an influence, without implementation of the Local Plan, the following trends are likely to continue:

- The population is projected to increase from 194,000 in 2006 to 201,400 in 2026.
- The size of the population is forecast to decrease for all age groups up to the age of 44. Conversely the size of all age groups over the age of 44 will increase, especially those over the age of 65.
- There is a high level of housing commitments in the borough, so it is expected that the high level of completions will continue, at least in the short term. The opportunities to secure affordable housing within the borough through the planning system may therefore continue to be limited.
- Some areas of the borough may continue to suffer from multiple deprivation.
- Current levels of employment land will continue to be provided.
- Continued high of levels car ownership within the borough will contribute to traffic congestion remaining at current levels.
- Current development within the town centre should help retain existing market share. A static leisure offer may mean a reduced leisure market share for the town centre.
- Chemical and Biological water quality within the borough could continue to be below regional and national levels.
- Significant areas of the borough could be affected by flooding from rivers or the sea.

Task A3 - Main social, environmental and economic issues and problems identified

5.8 The table below identifies social, environmental and economic issues that are relevant to the Local Plan Core Strategy. In addition to identifying the relevant issues, the table also explores how the Local Plan Core Strategy may contribute towards alleviating the problems associated with it.

Issue	Evidence	How Can the Core Strategy Address This?
Economic		
Accessibility of Employment	Travel to work by public transport / walking / cycling figures for Warrington are lower than regional or national average. Use of car is higher. Problem is exacerbated by New Town Development pattern. Source: 2001 Census, National Statistics as shown in 2008 Warrington Borough Profile	Ensure that new employment development is in accessible locations. Encourage the provision of Green Travel Plans.
Pockets of Unemployment	Averages for the borough as a whole are below regional and national averages, but Indices of Multiple Deprivation show high levels of employment deprivation in 24 SOA's in the borough. Source: Department of Communities and Local Government Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Link new employment development with areas currently suffering from deprivation.

Issue	Evidence	How Can the Core Strategy Address This?
The need to continue to promote sustainable economic growth	The RES vision specifically looks to fully develop growth opportunities around Warrington. Should ensure that available employment land continues to provide choice and opportunities for sustainable development. Source: RES, WBC Employment Land Report.	Ensure the provision of a choice of employment opportunities that are accessible in terms of location and types of jobs provided
Pockets of education, skills and training deprivation	There are 18 Lower Layer SOAs within Warrington Borough that rank within the 20% most deprived nationally in terms of the Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain. Source: Department of Communities and Local Government Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Ensure provision of and access to education facilities and training opportunities
Town Centre Vitality and Viability	Figures show vacancy and vitality and viability are currently at acceptable levels. Should ensure this continues to reflect the important role the centre plays in the Borough. Source: WBC Town Centre Survey 2010.	Ensure new retail and leisure development contributes to or does not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre
Social		
Pockets of relative deprivation	Index of Multiple Deprivation shows 18 SOAs in the 20% most deprived in England. The inner areas of Warrington tend to show higher levels of deprivation than outer areas. Bewsey and Whitecross, Orford, Poplars and Hulme, Poulton North and Latchford East all have SOAs in the 10% most deprived in England. Source: Department of Communities and Local Government Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Contribute to the creation of sustainable communities.
Shortage of Affordable Housing	Identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007.	Ensure all opportunities to secure affordable housing are taken.
Ageing population	Life expectancy in the Borough is above regional averages, and similar to national figures. There are significant changes to the structure of the population anticipated with a 37.8% increase in 65 to 74 year olds and an increase of 75.1% in over 74 year olds between 2006 and 2026. Source: http://www.seleisure.co.uk/Images/Population%20factsheet%202008_tcm31-27196.pdf	Ensure that all housing needs are catered for and accessibility issues are addressed.

Issue	Evidence	How Can the Core Strategy Address This?
Fear of Crime and Antisocial behaviour	Levels of crime within the borough are similar to regional and national averages, but household surveys show fear of crime at night is higher than national figures. Source: The Audit Commission	Contribute to the creation of sustainable communities.
Pockets of Health Deprivation	Figures for the borough as a whole are similar to regional and national averages, but Indices of Multiple Deprivation show high levels of health deprivation in 32 SOA's in the borough. Source: Department of Communities and Local Government Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Ensure provision of and access to health facilities as well as planning for health in the location and design of new development.
Environmental		
Protection & enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity assets	There are significant nature conservation, wider green infrastructure and geodiversity assets in the borough. Source: AMR & GIS records, MAGIC internet based map system and Natural England mapping system	Ensure development does not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity assets and opportunities to enhance biodiversity and geodiversity are maximised.
Protection and enhancement of the historic environment & landscape and townscape character and quality	There is a significant number of historic assets in the Borough & a number of buildings / monuments have been identified as being in vulnerable or deteriorating condition. Source: AMR & BAR records, English Heritage	Ensure development does not result in damage to heritage assets and opportunities to enhance are maximised.
Pollution, air quality and climate change	Three AQMAs are designated within the Borough. One is related to the motorway network, the other is focused on Wilson Patten Street, around Bank Quay Station and Sankey Way/Liverpool Road. Source: http://www.warrington.gov.uk/news/air/campaign/air_frame.htm	Ensure the location and design of new development does not worsen air quality within the borough.
Increasing car use and dependency	National trend exacerbated by New Town car dependency. Identified in the Local Transport Plan 3: Warrington Borough Council Local Transport Plan	Ensure that new development is in locations accessible by means other

Issue	Evidence	How Can the Core Strategy Address This?
		than the private car.
Rising traffic volumes and traffic congestion.	Identified in the Warrington Borough Council Local Transport Plan	Ensure that new development is in locations accessible by means other than the private car.
High levels of commuting into and out of the Borough	Identified in the Warrington Borough Council Local Transport Plan	Ensure that new employment development is in accessible locations. Encourage the provision of Green Travel Plans. Link new employment development with nearby residential areas.
Quality of land and waterways in the Borough.	A legacy of the towns industrial past. There are a large number of potentially contaminated sites within the Borough and a significant length of Warrington's rivers are graded as having poor chemical and biological quality. Source: The Environment Agency	Ensure that new development does not worsen the quality of land or waterways and remedial works are carried out.
Flood protection in the borough	Areas within the Borough are identified on the Environment Agency's Indicative Floodplain maps. Source: The Environment Agency	Ensure that new development does not increase flood risk and reduces flood risk, if possible.
Amount of waste entering land fill	Warrington's waste strategy sets out targets to increase recycling and composting to meet national targets. Source: Warrington Borough Council Waste Management Strategy	Ensure that new development helps to meet recycling and composting targets.
Renewable energy and energy efficiency	A need for a more pro-active approach to production / usage identified. Source: Warrington Borough Council Climate Change Strategy	Ensure, where possible, that new

Issue	Evidence	How Can the Core Strategy Address This?
		development contributes to renewable energy production and is energy efficient.

Table 3 Key Sustainability Issues

Limitations of the information and assumptions made

5.9 Wherever possible the data shown in the table and maps is from 2007/2008. In some cases, however, it has not been possible to obtain this data. In these cases, the most up to date data has been presented.

5.10 There are some omissions in the data where it has not been possible to identify an appropriate data source or figures or monitoring mechanisms are not currently in place. Work will continue on trying to establish base line information in order to rectify some of these omissions. There are also gaps in terms of regional and national comparators. Again, work will continue on trying to fill these information gaps.

5.11 The table and maps will be updated on a regular basis and care will be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that data is collected in the same format in order to establish trends and to be able to make reliable comparisons.

Task A4 - The Sustainability Appraisal framework, including objectives, targets and indicators

5.12 The Core Strategy Scoping Reports (September 2006 and January 2009) set out how the sustainability objectives and indicators have been derived (Appendix 3). Amendments have been made in response to consultation, and a Sustainability Framework which will be applicable to the Sustainability Appraisal of every Local Plan Document and SPD produced as part of the Warrington Borough Council Local Planning Framework has now been established.

5.13 The amended Sustainability Appraisal Objectives include:

1. Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth
2. Improve the education and skills of the population overall
3. Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion
4. Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes
5. Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities
6. Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing
7. Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime
8. Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare
9. Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities
10. Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside
11. Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value
12. Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place

13. Protect and enhance geodiversity and biodiversity
14. Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding
15. Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change
16. Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation
17. Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy
18. Minimise waste and maximise re-use, recovery and recycling
19. Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality

6 Issues and Options

Task B1 - Testing Objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

6.1 The objectives of the Local Plan Core Strategy that were published for consultation in July 2010 as well as amendments to the objectives as a result of consultation were assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. The results of these assessments are set out in detail in Appendix 4.

6.2 The assessment of the Local Plan Core Strategy Objectives resulted in a number of issues to consider. In such instances, either the objectives have been amended or amalgamated or these issues have been taken into account in the drafting of the Local Plan Core Strategy document itself. The following table sets out where changes to the Local Plan Core Strategy objectives have occurred as a result of the Sustainability Appraisal objective assessment.

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>H4 To ensure that from adoption and throughout the plan period, sufficient land is available for a deliverable rolling forward supply of at least 5 years, in sustainable locations</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p> <p><u>To ensure that from adoption and throughout the plan period, sufficient land is available, through reference to specific sites, for a deliverable rolling forward supply of at least 5 years and beyond this a developable forward supply of at least a further 5 years.</u></p>
<p>H5 To demonstrate that a developable supply can be sustained for a period of at least a further 5 years, and throughout the plan period and beyond, either by reference to specific sites or broad locations.</p>	<p><u>To ensure that from adoption and throughout the plan period, sufficient land is available, through reference to specific sites, for a deliverable rolling forward supply of at least 5 years and beyond this a developable forward supply of at least a further 5 years.</u></p>
<p>H7 To set criteria for the release of additional sites for housing development where justified by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to 'top up' the 5 year supply of housing land • The need to supplement the supply of affordable homes • The need to support regeneration initiatives • Overwhelming community support for a proposal which meets the criteria for sustainable, high quality development. 	<p>To set criteria <u>to guide</u> for the release of additional sites for housing development where justified by <u>reasons which may include</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to <u>'top-up' the ensure a rolling 5</u> year supply of housing land • The need to supplement the supply of affordable homes • The need to support regeneration initiatives • <u>Overwhelming community support for a proposal which meets the criteria for sustainable, high quality development.</u>
<p>H8 To provide a mix of both market and affordable housing in terms of type, tenure, size and price, that delivers a better balance to the housing market across the borough in terms of matching supply to identified needs.</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p> <p><u>To provide a mix of housing in terms of type, size and tenure to deliver a better balance to the housing market across the Borough in terms of matching supply to identified needs, securing</u></p>
<p>H10 To contribute to the overall supply of affordable housing in the borough through negotiations to secure planning obligations on qualifying housing developments, where viable, to complement initiatives in the Warrington Housing Strategy.</p>	<p><u>planning obligations on qualifying housing developments, where viable, to boost the supply of affordable homes within the Borough.</u></p>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>H11 To establish the level of need for criteria for sites to accommodate the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities that need to reside temporarily or permanently within the borough, and set criteria for the identification of sites to meet need.</p>	<p>H11To establish the level of need for criteria for sites to accommodate the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities that need to reside temporarily or permanently within the borough, and set criteria for the identification of sites to meet need.</p>
<p>E1 To identify sufficient land in attractive, accessible and sustainable locations to meet demand for economic development over the period 2003 – 26.</p>	<p>E1 To <u>identify sufficient land in attractive, accessible and sustainable locations and to give priority to previously developed land, taking into account the need to review current levels of provision and opportunities to re-allocate any surplus land to other uses when identity sufficient land to meet demand for economic development over the period 2003 - 2026</u></p>
<p>E2 To give priority to previously developed land, taking into account the need to review current levels of provision and opportunities to re-allocate any surplus land to other uses.</p>	<p><u>Amalgamated with E1</u></p> <p>-</p> <p><u>E1 To identify sufficient land in attractive, accessible and sustainable locations and to give priority to previously developed land, taking into account the need to review current levels of provision and opportunities to re-allocate any surplus land to other uses when identity sufficient land to meet demand for economic development over the period 2003 - 2026</u></p>
<p>E3 In assessing and making provision for employment land, to take account of the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for the different locational requirements of business, including size of site required, site quality, access, and proximity to markets, as well as an accessible workforce. • Identify locations in or on the edge of Warrington Town Centre as sites for larger B1 office developments, while recognising that market demand will influence office location. • Identify locations for uses generating substantial freight movements that avoid congestion and preserve local amenity interests, and give access to rail or water where feasible. 	<p>E2 In assessing and making provision for employment land, to take account of the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide for the different locational requirements of business, including size of site, site quality (<u>attractiveness</u>),<u>accessibility to markets and workforce in sustainable locations.</u>
<p>S2 To secure a proportion of the energy supply of new developments from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources.</p>	<p>S2 To secure a proportion of the energy supply of <u>all</u> new developments from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources <u>where appropriate.</u></p>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>T1 Ensure new residential development is built in sustainable locations with walking, cycling and public transport access health, education, leisure facilities and fresh food.</p>	<p>T1 Ensure <u>all</u> new residential development is built in sustainable locations with walking, cycling and public transport access <u>to</u> health, education, leisure facilities and fresh food.</p>
<p>T5 Increase the movement of freight by rail and water whilst ensuring that there is minimal detrimental effect as a result of increased swing bridge openings on the ManchesterShip Canal.</p>	<p>T5 Increase the movement of freight by rail and water whilst ensuring that there is minimal detrimental effect <u>on water quality, as well as limited detrimental impact on traffic movements</u>, as a result of increased swing bridge openings on the Manchester Ship Canal.</p>
<p>T7 Ensure new and existing development such as employment and schools explore demand management measures as part of travel planning to reduce dependence on the private car and encourage alternative modes of travel.</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p> <p><u>T7 Ensure new large scale development and existing development at key locations such as Warrington Hospital and schools are as sustainable as possible and explore demand management measures as part of travel planning to reduce dependence on the private car and improving accessibility to alternative modes of travel, particularly from deprived areas.</u></p>
<p>T9 To make sure key locations including WarringtonHospital are more sustainable, by ensuring that accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking, particularly from deprived areas, is assessed and improved.</p>	<p><u>T9 To make sure key locations including WarringtonHospital are more sustainable, by ensuring that accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking, particularly from deprived areas, is assessed and improved.</u></p>
<p>WC2 To reduce the level of vacancies within the primary shopping area of the centre</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p>
<p>WC4 To protect the town centre and other centres identified in the retail hierarchy from the harmful impacts of inappropriate retail development in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations.</p>	<p><u>WC2 To reduce the level of vacancies and protect the town centre and other centres identified in the retail hierarchy from the harmful impacts of inappropriate retail development in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations.</u></p>
<p>BE1 To identify, conserve and where appropriate enhance, the borough’s historic assets and their settings, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings and Structures • Conservation Areas • Buildings and Structures of Local Importance • Scheduled Ancient Monuments • Areas and Sites of Archaeological Significance 	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p> <p>BE1 To identify, conserve and where appropriate enhance the borough’s historic assets, and their settings, to ensure that the assets play their full part in the social, economic and environmental life of the Borough, for example by encouraging visitors to support the local economy and sustainably re-using and enhancing heritage assets as an inherent part of place shaping and regeneration.</p>
<p>BE2 To ensure that the identified historic assets play their full part in the social, economic and environmental life of the Borough, for example by encouraging visitors to support the local economy, and sustainably re-using and enhancing heritage assets as an inherent part of place shaping and regeneration</p>	

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>BE3 To achieve the high quality, inclusive and sustainable design of buildings, places, spaces, sites and streets</p>	<p>SA process concluded objective should be amended as follows:</p> <p>BE2 To achieve the high quality, inclusive and sustainable design (<u>as defined in paragraphs 33 to 36 of PPS1</u>) of buildings, places, spaces, sites and streets.</p>
<p>GI1 To identify, conserve, diversify and where appropriate extend the existing multi-functional network of green infrastructure in the urban and rural areas of the borough incorporating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places for outdoor relaxation and play • Space and habitat for wildlife with access to nature for people • Amenity space that has no other formal designation • Climate change adaptation - for example flood alleviation and cooling urban heat islands. • Opportunities for environmental education • Local food production - in allotments, gardens and through agriculture • Improved health and well-being – lowering stress levels and providing opportunities for exercise • Access to high quality opportunities to participate in sport and recreation <p>and including key sites and areas of international, national, regional and local significance for biodiversity, geodiversity, trees and areas of woodland, playing fields, farmland, wildlife corridors, and the courses and environs of rivers and canals</p>	<p>SA process concluded objective should be split and amended as follows:</p> <p>GI1 To identify, conserve, diversify and where appropriate extend the existing multi-functional network of green infrastructure in the urban and rural areas of the borough <u>to maximise its value in providing opportunities for:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places for outdoor relaxation and play • space and habitat for wildlife and access to nature for people • <u>improving health and well-being through providing opportunities for relaxation to lower stress levels and providing access to both informal and formal sport and recreation for opportunities for exercise</u> • climate change adaptation through for example flood alleviation, cooling urban heat islands <u>and the production of energy crops supporting economic development by providing attractive environments to contribute to inward investment</u> • opportunities for environmental education • local food production through allotments, private gardens and agriculture <p>GI6 To identify, conserve and where appropriate enhance key sites and areas of international, national, regional and local significance for biodiversity and geodiversity.</p>
<p>G15 To protect and enhance landscape and townscape character where appropriate.</p>	<p>GI5 To protect and enhance <u>the landscape and townscape character where appropriate of the built up areas of the borough.</u></p>
<p>MW1 To achieve a reduction the amount of waste produced in the borough and treat waste at as high a level of the waste hierarchy as possible.</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p>
<p>MW2 Radically reduce the proportion of waste going to landfill sites, by providing appropriate facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for re-use • for re-cycling 	<p><u>To achieve a reduction in the amount of waste produced in the borough and treat waste at as high a level of the waste hierarchy as possible, by providing appropriate facilities for:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>for re-use</u>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for recovery of energy from waste and/or enter into a partnership arrangement with private or public bodies to secure satisfactory provision of suitable waste management facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>for re-cycling</u> <u>for recovery of energy from waste</u> <u>and/or enter into a partnership arrangement with private or public bodies to secure satisfactory provision of suitable waste management facilities.</u>
<p>I5 To increase housing choices in areas of deprivation through the delivery of a variety of type and tenure of new homes</p> <p>To ensure that the location, size and type of affordable housing provides at least an equivalent standard of accommodation to housing available on the open market</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p> <p><u>To increase housing choices in areas of deprivation through the delivery of a variety of type and tenure of new homes, ensuring that the location, size and type of affordable housing provides at least an equivalent standard of accommodation to housing available on the open market.</u></p>
<p>HP4 To provide sport, recreational and cultural facilities in locations which are accessible for all.</p>	<p>HP4 To provide sport, recreational and cultural facilities in <u>sustainable</u> locations which are accessible for all <u>by modes of transport other than the private car.</u></p>
<p>TC9 Promote remodelling of the Cockhedge mall to achieve better links and integration with the town centre.</p> <p>TC10 Look at the potential of underutilised and underperforming gateway areas such as Cockhedge retail sheds and School Brow through masterplanning.</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could logically be amalgamated to read:</p> <p><u>Look at the potential underutilised and under performing gateway areas such as Cockhedge Mall retail sheds and School Brow through master planning in order to achieve better links and integration with the town centre.</u></p>
<p>RA1 Create an attractive route into town with landscape enhancement</p>	<p>RA1 <u>Make the A49</u> Create an attractive route into town with landscape enhancements</p>
<p>RA2 Create a successful and vibrant business location</p>	<p>RA2 <u>Make the A49 corridor</u> Create a successful and vibrant business location</p>
<p>RA5 To support the development of an attraction of sub-regional importance and increase the length of visitors stays using local facilities.</p>	<p>RA5 To support the development of an attraction <u>in SankeyValley</u> of sub-regional importance <u>which is accessible by a variety of modes of transport so as to</u> and increase the length of visitors stays using local facilities.</p>
<p>n/a</p>	<p>SA process concluded a need for a new objective within this section as follows:</p> <p>RA7 Safeguard biodiversity in SankeyValleyPark.</p>
<p>RA8 To achieve the delivery of employment development comprising a mix of industrial and storage uses at the site</p>	<p>To achieve the delivery of employment development comprising a mix of industrial and storage uses at the <u>Forrest Way</u> site.</p>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>RA9 To achieve the completion of the development of these sites.</p>	<p>To achieve the completion of the development of these sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>CarringtonPark</u> • <u>Former Greenall's Distillery</u> • <u>Naylor's Timber Yard Walton Locks.</u> • <u>Britannia Wire</u> • <u>Saxon Park East</u> • <u>Former Beers Timber Yard</u> • <u>MSCC, Thelwall Lane</u> • <u>Edgewater Park/New World Ltd</u> • <u>Eagle Ottawa Site, Thelwall Lane</u> • <u>Land to the north of Ryfields Retirement Village.</u>
<p>WW4 To support the development of an attraction in SankeyValley of sub-regional importance and increase the length of visitors stays using local facilities.</p>	<p>WW4: To support the development of an attraction in SankeyValley of sub-regional importance <u>which is accessible by a variety of modes of transport</u> so as to increase the length of visitors stays using local facilities</p>
<p>WW5 To support future provision, development and management of recreational facilities within the SankeyValley.</p>	<p>WW5: To support future provision, development and management of recreational facilities within Sankey Valley Park, whilst safeguarding the elements of heritage value, (including Bewsey Old Hall, RAF Burtonwood and St Helens canal and its biodiversity especially at Bewsey tip.</p> <p><u>(An amalgamation of WW5, WW6 and WW7 to form a single objective.)</u></p>
<p>WW6 Safeguard the Park's heritage value including Bewsey Old Hall, RAF Burtonwood and the St Helens Canal.</p>	<p>WW5: To support future provision, development and management of recreational facilities within Sankey Valley Park, whilst safeguarding the elements of heritage value, (including Bewsey Old Hall, RAF Burtonwood and St Helens canal and its biodiversity especially at Bewsey tip.</p> <p><u>(An amalgamation of WW5, WW6 and WW7 to form a single objective.)</u></p>
<p>WW7 Safeguard biodiversity in the Park especially at the Former Bewsey Tip.</p>	<p>WW5: To support future provision, development and management of recreational facilities within Sankey Valley Park, whilst safeguarding the elements of heritage value, (including Bewsey Old Hall, RAF Burtonwood and St Helens canal and its biodiversity especially at Bewsey tip.</p> <p><u>(An amalgamation of WW5, WW6 and WW7 to form a single objective.)</u></p>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>WW8 To achieve the delivery of employment development comprising a mix of industrial and storage uses at the site.</p>	<p>WW6: To achieve the delivery of employment development comprising a mix of industrial and storage uses at <u>Burtonwood Services</u>.</p>
<p>WW9 To achieve the completion of a development comprising market homes and a significant contribution towards the provision of affordable homes.</p>	<p>WW7: To achieve the completion of the development of <u>Dawson House</u> comprising market homes and a significant contribution towards the provision of affordable homes.</p>
<p>WW10 To support the role of Westbrook District Centre in the town's retail hierarchy</p>	<p>WW8: <u>To protect and enhance the vitality and viability of local shopping provision in the area</u> and support the role of Westbrook District Centre.</p>
<p>WW11: To control the extension and expansion of inappropriate retail development at Gemini</p>	<p>WW9: To control the extension and expansion of inappropriate retail development at Gemini.</p>
<p>CC2 To develop the recreational and visitor attraction potential of Walton Hall and Gardens.</p>	<p>CC2 To develop the recreational and visitor attraction potential of Walton Hall and Gardens, <u>whilst protecting the local environment and minimising additional travel by car.</u></p>
<p>CC3 To ensure that the predominant land use at Barleycastle Trading Estate continues to be transport related and storage, warehouses and distribution uses.</p>	<p>CC3 To ensure that the predominant land use at Barleycastle Trading Estate continues to be transport related and storage, warehouses and distribution uses, <u>whilst ensuring that development minimises travel by private car and encourages the use of more sustainable modes of transport.</u></p>
<p>CC5 To encourage the effective re-use and / or partial redevelopment of this extensive vacant site in the Green Belt in order to safeguard the built heritage value of the former school and grounds.</p> <p>A change was made to this objective following consultation which deleted the reference to: "this extensive vacant site in the Green Belt" and inserted "MasseyHallSchool".</p>	<p>To encourage the effective re-use and/or partial redevelopment of MasseyHallSchool in order to safeguard the built heritage value of the former school and grounds.</p>
<p>CC6 To support continued investment for the purposes of power generation, together with associated measures to reduce environmental and transport impacts.</p>	<p>SA process concluded objectives could be logically amalgamated to read:</p>

Objectives as set out in the Objectives and Options Report (July 2010)	Amendments owing to Sustainability Appraisal Process
<p>CC7 To provide opportunities for the establishment of related development including processing and manufacturing that would benefit from the proximity of resources at the site including heat, power, water supply and secondary aggregates.</p>	<p><u>To support continued investment at Fiddlers Ferry Power Station for the purposes of power generation, together with associated measures to reduce environmental and transport impacts, including opportunities for the establishment of related development that would benefit from the proximity of resources such as heat, power, water supply and secondary aggregates.</u></p>

Table 4 Changes to Local Plan Core Strategy Objectives as a result of Sustainability Appraisal Objective assessment

6.3 A number of the objectives have subsequently been amended and revised as a result of redrafting and simplifying of the document, bearing in mind the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives assessment.

6.4 In the case of the strategic objectives and Objective GI1, the changes made to objectives as a result of testing against Sustainability Appraisal Objectives and internal workshops have resulted in a significantly different objective. In these instances, the amended Local Plan Core Strategy objective has been subject to a re-assessment against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. The re-assessment has shown that further amendment of the objectives is not necessary.

Task B2 - Developing Options

Main strategic options considered and how they were identified

6.5 The ODPM guidance⁽¹⁾ states that “Given the duty under the Act on those preparing a DPD to contribute to sustainable development, it is essential for it to set out to improve on the situation which would exist if there were no DPD. It should also aim to improve on the effects of existing DPD or “saved plan”⁽²⁾. It goes on to state, however, that “To test this, options considered often include scenarios termed “no plan” and “business as usual”.

6.6 This assessment provides the baseline against which the effects of the Local Plan Core Strategy itself can be considered. The baseline for the purposes of this Sustainability Appraisal consists of:

- The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England - approved 2008
- The saved policies of the Warrington Unitary Development Plan - adopted 2006

6.7 A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the Regional Spatial Strategy in September 2008. The appraisal found that overall the plan itself is broadly sustainable and the SA has enhanced this situation (i.e. Making it more sustainable). Nonetheless, there were considered to be tough issues left to grapple with and the interpretation and implementation rested with the individual Local Planning Authorities.

6.8 The Panel examining the RSS found that the Regional Planning Body (once NWRA, then 4NW) and the Secretary of State had considered the SA in their decision making and with this in mind they could confidently say that the process of undertaking the SA had changed the plan for the better (better being more sustainable). The Panel felt that there was an inherent bias towards economic progress (which was justified and should not be denied), but that environmental elements had been made consistently more robust through the plan iterations.

1 Sustainability Appraisals of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (ODPM Nov 2005)
2 Para 3.3.6

6.9 An initial Sustainability Appraisal of each UDP Part 2 Policy was carried out at the time of preparation. This considered whether the policy had a positive, negative or neutral effect on 18 environmental, social and economic issues.

6.10 The existing strategy put in place by these two parts of the development plan can now be assessed in more detail against the Sustainability Framework Objectives (Appendix 5). Instead of simply measuring how sustainable the saved policies are, this process gives an idea of where the sustainability of the existing Policies could be improved.

6.11 The conclusions of this exercise are that the current situation could be improved by:

- Reviewing the levels of employment land supply including Omega and considering deliverability
- Providing for future levels of housing need in the context of updated land supply information, especially relating to deliverability.
- Maximising opportunities for new employment in areas of deprivation
- Improving the provision of transport links to employment areas
- Improving opportunities in the town centre
- Improving the consistency of approach with the current Local Transport Plan
- Increasing the provision of open space where there is an identified deficiency
- Addressing specific health issues
- Improve mechanisms to consider and address climate change
- Improve mechanisms to sustainably manage flooding issues
- Improve mechanisms to increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy
- Improve mechanisms to incorporate sustainable construction methods.

6.12 Delivery of an improvement on the current situation offers few reasonable strategic options that can be considered. Three strategic options that considered the distribution (and subsequent level of) development were therefore identified:

1. Prioritising development on Inner Warrington brownfield sites - the "no plan" or "business as usual" option
2. Prioritising development on Inner Warrington brownfield sites with selective release of other sites
3. Promoting development on all suitable and available development sites

6.13 Alongside the three strategic options, three levels of housing delivery were considered:

1. 274 dwellings per annum (deliverable through Strategic Option 1)
2. 322-465 dwellings per annum (deliverable through Strategic Option 2)
3. 337-480 dwellings per annum (deliverable through Strategic Option 3)

6.14 In addition, three levels of employment development were considered:

1. Continuation of current UDP levels of employment land provision
2. Decrease levels of employment land provision in line with monitoring
3. Increase levels of employment land provision

Task B3 - Predicting the effects of the preferred option

Comparison of the social, environmental and economic effects of the options

6.15 All three options have been considered against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (See Appendix 5). The table below provides a summary of the conclusions reached:

	Sustainability Objective	Strategic Option 1	Strategic Option 2	Strategic Option 3
Economic	Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth	+	++	-
	Improve the education and skills of the population overall	0	0	0
Social	Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion	0	0	-
	Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes	+	+	-
	Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities	+	+	+
	Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing	+	++	++
	Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime	+	+	+
	Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare	0	0	0
	Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities	++	++	+
	Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside	++	++	+
Environmental	Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value	++	++	++
	Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	++	++	++
	Protect and enhance geodiversity and biodiversity	++	++	++
	Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding	++	++	++
	Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change	+	+	+
	Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation	++	++	+
	Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy	+	+	+
	Minimise waste and maximise re-use, recovery and recycling	+	+	+
	Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality	++	++	+

Table 5 Assessment of Strategic Options against Sustainability Objectives

6.16 This assessment shows that Local Plan Core Strategy Strategic Option 2 will ensure that more economic, social and environmental objectives are supported. In particular, Strategic Option 2 is considered to be more supportive of the local economy and will more likely ensure sustainable economic growth.

6.17 Along with Strategic Option 1, Strategic Option 2 helps to focus development on inner Warrington and could therefore have the potential to:

- reduce the need to travel by car,
- protects and enhances access to services and facilities,
- provides, protects and enhances leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, Green Infrastructure and access to the countryside
- Ensures sustainable and prudent use of natural resources
- Ensures high quality and sustainable design appropriate to the locality

6.18 However, along with Strategic Option 3, Strategic Option 2 helps to ensure access to good quality sustainable housing, by ensuring that there is a deliverable supply of housing land.

6.19 Strategic Option 3, however has the potential to have a negative impact on the local economy and on levels of social exclusion and reducing the need to travel. This is due to the lack of spatial focus of the option, which could lead to dispersal of development to areas with lower land values, or fewer remediation costs. The dispersal of development would also mean that the very positive impacts of Strategic Options 1 & 2 in terms of accessibility to services and leisure opportunities as well as the sustainable and prudent use and management of resources are significantly reduced.

6.20 The general location and numbers of housing provided under the three strategic options were then considered against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. The results of which are contained in Appendix 6. The table below provides a summary of the conclusions reached:

	Sustainability Objective	Housing Option 1	Housing Option 2	Housing Option 3
Economic	Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth	-	+	+
	Improve the education and skills of the population overall	0	0	-
Social	Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion	+	+	-
	Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes	+	-	-
	Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities	0	0	0
	Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing	+	++	++
	Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime	0	0	0
	Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare	0	0	0
	Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities	+	+	-
	Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside	0	0	-
Environmental	Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value	0	0	0
	Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	0	0	0

	Sustainability Objective	Housing Option 1	Housing Option 2	Housing Option 3
	Protect and enhance geodiversity and biodiversity	0	0	-
	Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding	0	0	-
	Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change	0	0	0
	Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation	+	+	+
	Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy	0	0	+
	Minimise waste and maximise re-use, recovery and recycling	0	0	0
	Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality	0	0	0

Table 6 Assessment of Housing Options against Sustainability Objectives

6.21 This assessment shows that Local Plan Core Strategy Housing Option 2 will ensure that more economic, social and environmental objectives are supported. In particular, providing housing in Inner Warrington only would not supply sufficient housing to meet identified housing needs and would not provide sufficient housing and therefore working age population to support the economic growth aspirations of Warrington.

6.22 Whilst Housing Options 2 and 3 secure greater access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing due to the greater choice of sites available, it is also apparent that the amount of land required to provide for the levels of housing in Housing Option 3 would necessitate development of greenfield sites away from the inner areas of Warrington. This could have a detrimental effect on levels of deprivation, reducing the need to travel by car, and access to all to essential services and facilities, leisure and recreation provision.

6.23 Housing Option 3 could also have a detrimental effect on biodiversity and local environmental quality, due to the presumption that this option would look to develop housing on some greenfield sites, which could potentially fulfil a greater variety of important Green Infrastructure functions than the brownfield sites that are the focus of the other Housing Options.

6.24 In addition to housing provision the Employment Land Options were then assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. The full results of which are contained in Appendix 7, with a summary provided in the table below.

	Sustainability Objective	Employment Option 1	Employment Option 2	Employment Option 3
Economic	Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth	+	+	+
	Improve the education and skills of the population overall	0	0	0
Social	Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion	0	0	0
	Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes	0	0	0

	Sustainability Objective	Employment Option 1	Employment Option 2	Employment Option 3
	Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities	0	0	0
	Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing	0	0	0
	Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime	0	0	0
	Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare	0	0	0
	Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities	0	0	0
	Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside	0	0	0
Environmental	Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value	0	0	0
	Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	0	0	0
	Protect and enhance geodiversity and biodiversity	0	0	0
	Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding	0	0	0
	Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change	0	0	0
	Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation	-	+	--
	Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy	0	0	0
	Minimise waste and maximise re-use, recovery and recycling	0	0	0
	Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality	0	0	0

Table 7 Assessment of Employment Options against Sustainability Objectives

6.25 This assessment shows that Local Plan Core Strategy Employment Option 2 will ensure that more economic, social and environmental objectives are supported.

6.26 Whilst all employment options will support the objective of strengthening the local economy and ensuring sustainable economic growth, Employment Option 2 represents the most sustainable and prudent use of resources. This is because Option 1 (continuing with the current level of provision) would represent an over provision of land based on recent take up rates. A similar situation would

arise under Employment Option 3 which looks to increase provision from current levels. Both Employment Options 1 and 3 would continue to accumulate a surplus of employment land which will not be a prudent use of the Borough's land resource and which could sterilise land for other uses.

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A full assessment of the development sites included in the three Strategic Options has also been carried out through the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (published December 2011). This assessment is set out in full in Appendix 8. The assessment shows that the Council is not looking to allocate any sites within any of the options but that the emerging preferred option in terms of sustainability cannot be accommodated in areas that are not at risk of flooding. The assessment does show, however, that development that may be key to the draft Local Plan Core Strategy could not be located in areas of lower flood risk without compromising the strategy of regeneration and renewal of the older, inner areas of the town.

The detailed assessment shows that within the areas considered to be key in terms of the strategy and regeneration, there is still the opportunity to take a sequential approach to the location of development. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is also clear where a sequential and exceptions test must be provided as part of any application for development, or where the Council will have to provide fuller justification in terms of a Land Allocations Local Plan.

How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in choosing the preferred options

6.27 It is immediately apparent from the table set out above where the options are assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal framework that Strategic Option 2 has the potential to address more comprehensively the broad range of economic, social and environmental issues.

6.28 Given the level of support that the Strategic Option 2 could give to the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, it is clear that the preferred option in sustainability terms is Strategic Option 2 – Prioritising development on Inner Warrington brownfield sites with selective release of other sites.

Consideration of Alternative Options & why these were rejected

6.29 The accompanying Strategic Background Paper sets out the selection of the preferred strategic option. For the avoidance of doubt, this section within the Sustainability Appraisal reiterates this justification and outlines why the preferred approach has been taken and why other options and alternatives have been discounted.

Selection of Preferred Strategic Option

The initial Issues & Options report was published for consultation in February 2009. The three broad strategic options were suggested and each varied the balance between promoting and restraining development in each of the identified 'building blocks' in the borough.

In September of the same year, the Council published a report documenting the response received as a result of the February 2009 consultation, and indicating how the Council would take this into account in the next stage of work. 245 comments were received from 34 consultees.

The majority of responses to the broad strategy options favoured Option 1 and Option 2, which both maintained the current focus on regeneration of the older areas of the town, the latter Option allowing more flexibility by allowing the selective release of brownfield sites elsewhere within the town.

Option 1 essentially was to maintain the current UDP / RSS approach implying a strict focus of new housing development in the town’s regeneration areas in all but exceptional cases, and continuing with the annual housing requirement set at 380 for the new longer time-frame of the Core Strategy.

Option 2 built on the regeneration theme but would relax restraint in the approach to managing the supply of housing to allow more development in suburban areas of the town, and some development at the edge of the town in areas outside the Green Belt

Option 3 was to involve the promotion of all suitable and available land regardless of location, in all areas other than within the Green Belt. This was an unrestrained growth option.

Table 8 (below) illustrates the implications for different areas and ‘building blocks’ in the borough for each of the Options. This reflects amendments made to the spatial effect of the options following consultation, relating to Peel Hall Farm, Lymm and Culcheth.

	OPTION 1: Prioritising development on Inner Warrington brownfield sites	OPTION 2: prioritising development on Inner Warrington brownfield sites with selective release of other sites	OPTION 3: promoting development on all suitable and available sites
AREAS WHERE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE PROMOTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Centre • The Waterfront • Inner Warrington • Chapelford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Centre • The Waterfront • Inner Warrington • Chapelford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Centre • The Waterfront • Inner Warrington • Chapelford • Suburban areas • Lymm & Culcheth • Peel Hall • HCA sites (Appleton Cross, Grappenhall Hays, & Pewterspear)
AREAS WHERE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE REVIEWED AND PROMOTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omega 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omega • Suburban areas • Lymm & Culcheth • HCA sites (Appleton Cross, Grappenhall Hays, & Pewterspear) • Peel Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omega

AREAS WHERE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE RESTRAINED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban areas • Peel Hall • HCA sites (Appleton Cross, Grappenhall Hays, & Pewterspear) • The countryside & all villages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The countryside & smaller 'inset' villages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The countryside & smaller 'inset' villages
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Table 8

How do we decide which Option is right for Warrington?

The Issues and Options paper set out how we would go about selecting a preferred option for spatial development in Warrington. There was general support for the framework set out which included:

- Assessing the conformity of the options with national and regional policies;
- Consulting with the community, and public and private sector stakeholders;
- Considering how well the options address the key issues;
- Reviewing how the options support the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and other Council strategies;
 - Measuring the options against what our vision is for Warrington in the future and associated objectives;
 - Considering the impact of the options on Neighbourhoods
- Assessing the environmental, social and economic impacts of the options through Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.
- Assessing the ability of Infrastructure to cope with the options, and the capacity of the different options to deliver infrastructure improvements.

Each one of these will be considered in turn, with a preferred option emerging through each assessment.

Since publication of the initial background papers(s) there have also been a number of fundamental changes that may influence the emerging Core Strategy. In time sequence these have been:

- The global financial and banking crisis
- The onset of economic recession
- The associated collapse of the UK housing market
- A dramatic and continuing slow-down in the rate of housing completions
- The election of the Coalition Government
- Proposals to revoke RSS and abandon the regional tier of planning
- Major public expenditure cuts
- The announcement of an intention to introduce significant changes to the planning system
- The publication of the government's 'Plan for Growth' in March 2011
- The Localism Act 2011
- The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

It is not considered that any of these changes will particularly influence the selection of a preferred strategic option which guides the location of development in the borough. The changes will, however, influence the way in which the Core Strategy policies are framed and they highlight the importance of ensuring a flexible strategy that is capable of being monitored and either amended over time, or augmented through Supplementary Planning Documents.

Conformity with National and Regional Policy

6.30 PPS1 and PPS12 were the key elements of national planning policy that are relevant to the Strategic Background Paper and this assessment in the Sustainability Appraisal. 10 core principles were originally taken from PPS1 for the delivery of sustainable development through the Core Strategy. These are still directly relevant in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework

6.31 The following Table considers how each Option fares against this checklist of core principles. The more stars then the better the option was deemed to fare.

PPS1 para 27 Sustainable Development Principles	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1 Provide a positive planning framework for sustainable economic growth	*	***	***
2 Promote urban and rural regeneration to improve well-being	**	***	*
3 Promote inclusive safe communities respecting diverse and special needs	*	***	**
4 Bring forward sufficient land for development in appropriate locations	*	***	**
5 Provide improved access for all to services and facilities without reliance on access by private car	**	***	*
6 Focus developments that attract large numbers in existing centres	**	**	**
7 Manage urban growth to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development	**	***	*
8 Promote efficient land use including the use of suitably located previously developed land	**	***	*
9 Enhance and protect natural, historic and built environments	***	***	**
10 Address climate change and safeguard environmental resources	**	***	**

Table 9

6.32 This summary assessment supports the selection of Option 2 as the preferred option for the Core Strategy. As the focus of the National Planning Policy Framework is on the delivery of sustainable development, it has little or no impact on this assessment.

6.33 It is also considered that Option 2 has due regard to the North West Regional Spatial Strategy by maintaining the established focus on urban regeneration, minimising or at least delaying the need to bring forward land for development that would expand the extent of Warrington town onto green field areas, prolonging the permanence of the Green Belt, while enabling the delivery of more housing and economic growth.

Stakeholder Input: Process Undertaken**The Borough Portrait**

6.34 The Borough Portrait Consultation ran between September and November 2007. The document set out key facts and information to show what Warrington is like today. As such it was not intended to invite discussion over the future direction of policy, but rather to set out a baseline marking the start of preparing the Core Strategy.

Issues & Options

6.35 The Issues & Options Report was issued for consultation between February and March 2009, supported by 5 area background papers and 7 topic papers, together with a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Three initial broad options for a strategic approach to growth in the borough were suggested as the basis for more detailed consideration at the next stage.

Response	Comment	Outcome
Concern that release of Greenfield sites could undermine regeneration	The caution expressed in relation to the impact on regeneration of the release of greenfield sites was acknowledged.	This is a shared concern and the chosen policy framework will need to ensure that any release of greenfield sites is effectively managed and delayed until other sources of land supply are not sufficient to meet forward needs. This will also ensure conformity with RSS and could be achieved in Options 1 & 2
The housing requirement should be increased	At this stage, the borough's housing requirement was to be determined by RSS	Options 2 & 3 will increase the Core Strategy Housing requirement above the RSS level of 380
Release green belt sites to deliver family homes	The SHLAA will examine the deliverability of sites in Inner Warrington, the priority for which is led by the development plan. Further work will give a clearer idea of the capacity of the town to accommodate growth.	There is no evidence to suggest that the UDP approach, prioritising regeneration, will inhibit the supply of family homes. Nevertheless this will continue to be monitored and corrective steps taken to remedy any growing imbalance, though this will not necessitate the release of Green Belt land as other options are available. Option 2 would provide the most flexibility in the managed release of housing land
Identify Safeguarded Land	There is no evidence to suggest that it is necessary to do this in order to meet long term development needs	No safeguarded land is identified under any of the options considered
A clearer commitment to regeneration is needed	Comment noted.	Options 1 & 2 set out a clear sequential preference for regeneration and the re-use of previously developed land
Address the emerging Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at Parkside	The Council will work closely with St Helens to determine how and when this cross boundary issue will be accommodated in the Core Strategy	It is understood that the planning application has been withdrawn. If the proposal re-emerges at a future date it will be considered in the context of Green Belt policy, and if exceptional circumstances are

Response	Comment	Outcome
		established, the proposal will be assessed against the Council's development management policies
Sub-regional and cross boundary issues are not sufficiently addressed	Comments noted. Cross boundary issues will be addressed in future work	Cross boundary issues have been addressed fully (see section on Sub-regional and cross boundary issues)
Identify a 40-60 ha site for industrial development	Comments and concerns noted	The Omega site will fulfill this purpose under all Options
Cross boundary implications of any development proposals in Culcheth and Lymm raised	Comments noted. Cross boundary issues will be addressed in future work	None of the Options proposes any significant development in these villages, and their Green Belt boundaries are unaltered despite changes that have been requested by agents for landowners
Favour Lymm and Culcheth as locations for development	Support for Option 3 noted in the context of the suggested further option 4 involving Lymm & Culcheth	None of the Options proposes any significant development in these villages, and their Green Belt boundaries are unaltered despite changes that have been requested by agents for landowners. Options 2 & 3 do however include provision for the release of sites within their defined boundaries
Flexibility and deliverability are the most important issues	Comments noted	Option 2 includes scope for flexibility to meet possible contingencies. The final Core Strategy will address deliverability issues
Specific support for maintaining the Green Belt from several respondents	Comments noted	Apart from minor changes to the detailed Green Belt boundary at Glazebury, and the corrective change to the boundary at Peel Hall Farm following the High Court Judgement, the Green Belt remains unchanged from the Adopted UDP.
Omega is capable of contributing to the boroughs long term housing and employment development needs	Comments noted. An assessment of demand and supply of employment land will follow as work proceeds.	Subsequent work has confirmed that there is scope for a wider mix of land uses, but the key purpose of the site is the forward supply of land for economic development.
Support existing employment locations, including Birchwood	Comments noted	The importance of Birchwood Park as an established and successful location is recognised, as one of several existing employment areas where additional investment is to be encouraged
Continue the UDP framework as it was agreed following consultation and a public inquiry	Comments noted	Options 1 & 2 display a high degree of continuity with the UDP, in maintaining the Green Belt,

Response	Comment	Outcome
		prioritising regeneration, and encouraging housing development including affordable housing.
Options 1 & 2 are most in conformity with RSS	Comments noted	A Certificate of General Conformity with RSS continues to be required until it is revoked
Option 1 favoured by 8 preferences, Option 2 by 5, and Option 3 by 6	Comments noted	It will be important for the chosen Option to reflect expressed preferences where possible.

Table 10

Refined Vision

6.36 The Refined Vision was published for consultation in January 2010. Comments were invited over a period of 3 weeks, although no formal end date was specified and comments would be accepted beyond the 3 week period.

Response	Comment	Outcome
Retain Omega for strategic employment purposes	Comments noted	The strategy should recognise the RSS residual strategic role of Omega and aim to manage development to maintain availability of a large site for regional investment, and not preclude this by reason of piecemeal and unstructured land release
Prioritise Peel Hall over other Greenfield sites because of its regeneration and locational credentials	Comments noted	The relative merits of the Strategic Locations for longer term development needs is not determined at this stage, and will be pursued in a Land Allocations DPD when the need for additional land supply justifies it. This will consider their respective merits in a rational way taking account of all relevant considerations as pertain at that time.
Recognise the SRFI at Parkside	Appropriate amendments to the vision agreed	It is understood that the planning application has been withdrawn. If the proposal re-emerges at a future date it will be considered in the context of Green Belt policy, and if exceptional circumstances are established, the proposal will be assessed against the Council's development management policies

Response	Comment	Outcome
Take a more flexible approach to Omega to allow other uses and contribute to wider development needs	The scope for the introduction of other land uses would be considered following completion of a review of land requirements for economic development.	There is scope for a wider mix of land uses, but the key purpose of the site is the forward supply of land for economic development.
Support for maintaining the Green Belt	Support welcomed	Apart from minor changes to the detailed Green Belt boundary at Glazebury, and the corrective change to the boundary at Peel Hall Farm following the High Court Judgement, the Green Belt remains unchanged from the Adopted UDP.
There is undue reliance on regeneration: other allocations including greenfield are needed	Comments noted. The role of the SHLAA in delivery process was highlighted.	There is no evidence to suggest that the UDP approach, prioritising regeneration, will inhibit the supply of family homes. Nevertheless this will continue to be monitored and it will be important to ensure that corrective steps can be taken to remedy any growing imbalance, though this will not necessitate the release of Green Belt land as other options are available.
Maintenance of the Green Belt challenged – there is a need to deliver increased housing targets and to distribute development to all parts of the borough including rural areas, specifically Lymm	Comments largely repeat those previously made. Amendment to the vision relating to the Green Belt agreed.	The strategy should include sufficient flexibility to bring forward greenfield sites if and when necessary to maintain a deliverable supply of housing land. This can be achieved without change to the Green Belt. Development within the defined boundaries of Lymm and Culcheth is a development management issue
The wider role of Warrington as an employment centre, especially at Omega, is unsustainable	Concerns and the need to focus on sustainable locations acknowledged	Warrington’s wider role is the nature of the place, in common with other locations in the sub-region. Development management policies will aim to ensure sustainable transport measures are incorporated in development. Central sites are also important but will not provide for all market needs.
Support for accessible, central employment locations	Comments noted. Vision amended in response to comments	Central sites are important because of their accessibility by a range of transport modes and can be promoted under all options

Response	Comment	Outcome
Employment development is too dependant on Omega – sites in the countryside and key settlements should be promoted.	Comments noted	Omega is a significant part of forward land supply, but not the only source. Development in the countryside is contrary to Green Belt policy. There is no obstacle to employment development within the defined extent of Lymm
Larger scale sites in the centre of the regeneration area, such as Arpley Meadows should be promoted more strongly. Avoid altering the Green Belt until all other sources of land have been used	Comments relating to the Green Belt agreed, and reference made to the role of the SHLAA in the identification and selection of deliverable sites	All Options maintain the adopted general extent of the Green Belt, and 1 & 2 promote regeneration. Until further detailed work is done there is insufficient certainty that the sites referred to are deliverable, but it is anticipated that progress will be made during the life of the plan
Larger Greenfield sites should be retained or returned to agriculture because their development would have adverse impacts on regeneration	Comments noted	Impacts on regeneration are a shared concern and Options 1 & 2 will ensure that any future release of greenfield sites is effectively managed and delayed until other sources of land supply are not sufficient to meet forward needs
The scale of office development at Omega should be reduced	Comments noted. Policy for the site will take full account of national and regional policies	PPS4 (and the NPPF) recognises that not all office developments can be accommodated in central locations and it is important to offer a choice of locations. Provision at Omega is set alongside opportunities for investment in central locations
Reference to housing on Greenfield sites is premature – this should only be considered when it is necessary	Comments relating to the premature release of greenfield sites agreed, and reference made to the role of the SHLAA in the identification and selection of deliverable sites	Key objectives aim to ensure that any release of greenfield sites is effectively managed and delayed until other sources of land supply are not sufficient to meet forward needs

Table 11

Objectives & Options

Response	Comment	Outcome
The Green Belt should be reviewed and extended to include the former new town sites in south Warrington	There are no identified exceptional circumstances that would justify such a change to the extent of the Green Belt	No change to the green belt boundary in South Warrington

Response	Comment	Outcome
Further clarity is needed on the scale and distribution of housing and employment development	Reference made to the accompanying papers looking at housing and employment land requirements	See comments and responses to the 2 options papers relating to housing and employment requirements
Take a positive approach to economic growth and encourage investment	The need to encourage investment is agreed	The Core Strategy will adopt a positive stance towards economic development at allocated sites and at established employment areas and sites (including the town centre and central sites)
Support for the intention not to reduce the housing requirement below current RSS. Define the regeneration area, but don't exclude other sites	Comments noted and largely agreed	Options 2 & 3 increase the housing requirement above RSS levels and include the release of sites outside of the defined regeneration area
Support for revitalisation of the town centre, and Option 2 to extend development opportunities	Comments and expressed preferences noted	A wider choice of sustainable development opportunities will encourage investment and support growth
Objection to intention not to alter Green Belt boundaries as it does not accord with development needs, particularly for housing, employment and retail development in Lymm – a 'Key Service Centre'	The Council's ambitions for growth are focused on regeneration and the maintenance of the Green Belt is of key importance to deliver this. There is scope for flexibility and responsiveness. The approach set out will be supported by monitoring and management to facilitate appropriate responses if the issues raised about housing delivery occur, without any need to change the extent of the Green Belt.	Green Belt boundaries in the borough remain unaltered in all Options as development needs over the plan period and beyond can be accommodated without the necessity for such a change. As Lymm is a village 'inset' within the green belt, there is no obstacle in principle to development within the defined extent of the built form of the village.
Clarify the intention of the review of Omega	The intention is to review the mix of land uses at Omega, not the principle of development	All Options identify Omega as a key location for employment development over the plan period and beyond, but there is scope for the inclusion of a wider mix of land uses where this will promote sustainable development and support delivery.
General concern for impacts of development on the Strategic Road Network	Comments noted	The Options have been tested using the Multi Modal Transport Model, in close liaison with the Highways Agency.

Response	Comment	Outcome
Importance of Omega for the local economy is stressed	Comments noted	All Options identify Omega as a key location for employment development over the plan period and beyond

Table 12

Housing Land Requirement Consultation Responses

6.37 The Core Strategy Housing Land Requirement paper was the subject of informal consultation in November and December 2010. An initial four-week period to receive responses was given which lasted until the 17th of December. Due to the informal nature of the consultation, responses have continued to be accepted after this date.

Response	Comment	Outcome
<p>Core assumptions:</p> <p>Maintain the Green Belt – 7 supported, 2 objected</p> <p>Maintain regional distribution – 6 supported, 2 objected</p> <p>Do not carry forward oversupply – 8 supported, 1 objected</p>	<p>Support for maintaining the extent of the Green Belt is noted. The priority for development needs will continue to be the re-use of previously developed land and the regeneration of the urban areas of the borough. As time passes the use of Greenfield sites is likely to prove necessary in order to maintain supply at an appropriate level.</p> <p>Support for the issue of not carrying forward over supply into the current plan period is noted. The full implications of this have yet to be assessed before final decisions are made by the Council.</p> <p>Broad support for maintaining the Regional Distribution of current RSS also noted. This reflects the regional and local emphasis on regeneration of the urban areas, and there is no reason to suggest that this needs to change.</p> <p>Footnote: At May 2011 it has become clear following High Court judgments that the Approved RSS remains part of the statutory development plan that cannot be ignored despite the coalition government's declared intent to revoke individual RSS and abandon the regional tier of planning</p>	<p>No change to the general extent of the Green Belt, apart from minor changes to the detailed Green Belt boundary at Glazebury, and the corrective change to the boundary at Peel Hall Farm following the High Court Judgement that quashed the UDP Green Belt boundary south of the M62 and effectively defined the M62 itself as the established boundary.</p> <p>The housing land requirement taken forward in the Preferred Option reflects the regional distribution established in approved RSS (which remains a part of the Statutory Development Plan), and in the absence of any convincing argument that it is inappropriate to do so given the continuing shared priority afforded to regeneration by the Council, key partners, and other LAs in the Merseyside and Manchester city regions.</p> <p>The Housing background paper explains that the most appropriate start date for the Core Strategy is 2006. This provides the basis for the assessment of housing delivery over the plan period to 2027. The oversupply as measured by the excess number of completions above the RSS level @ 31/3/06 is not carried over into the Core Strategy assessments. However,</p>

Response	Comment	Outcome
		commitments (ie dwellings under construction, and those with planning permission but not started on site) are carried forward into the Core Strategy.
Option 2 – 1 favoured Option 3 – 4 favoured	Preferences noted	See the Housing Background Paper
Housing & employment should be considered together	This is addressed in terms of Unleashing the Potential, the sub-regional economic strategy. Its growth aspirations for housing and employment appear to be achievable in both Option 2 and Option 3	Options 2 & 3 are more than capable of delivering the aspirations and growth targets for the economy (including housing growth to sustain it) as set out in Unleashing the Potential, and as endorsed by the Local Economic Partnership.
Numbers suggested: 475, 600 plus 140 affordable if 2 strategic sites and constrained sites released, at least 1000 but 800 achievable if green belt sites are released.	Comments on the options in numerical terms are noted and will be taken into account along with a wide range of evidence to inform a balanced judgement by the Council for inclusion in the Core Strategy.	The Housing Background Paper indicates that the housing requirement should be set at an annual average level of 500 dwellings (net of clearance and other losses) over the plan period, after consideration of a wide range of evidence. This figure lies comfortably within the range of predicted or assessed requirements. It provides for an increase of about 30% above the RSS requirement and accords with the designation of the Mid-Mersey area as a Housing Growth Point whose constituent authorities committed themselves to high levels of housing delivery during 2008-2017.
Take account of Local Economic Assessment, Unleashing the Potential, and New Homes Bonus	The Local Economic Assessment has not yet been finalised and its conclusions will be considered in due course. The New Homes Bonus Scheme is not a consideration in determining land requirements as set out in PPS3.	The LEA concludes that <i>'Maintaining a level of housing completions of at least that set out in the Development Plan is likely to be an important driver of the Warrington economy over the next two decades. As social and demographic changes result in average household sizes diminishing, and as current residents retire, it is likely that Warrington will need a</i>

Response	Comment	Outcome
		<p><i>significant increase in housing to maintain the current working population.'</i></p> <p>This can be achieved through Options 1 and 2.</p>
Take recent housing market changes into account including the fall in demand for apartments	The SHLAA takes this into account, and the figures used in the Topic Paper reflect this.	The analysis underpinning the consideration of all Options places diminished reliance on the continuing supply of apartments in order to meet the housing requirement and a continuous 5 year supply of deliverable sites.
Flexibility needed – including with regard to Green Belt – to account for exceptional circumstances	In the absence of exceptional circumstances there is no justification for a review of the Green Belt boundaries in the borough. Flexibility to meet requirements and respond to changed circumstances does not require a Green Belt change.	As it is evident that development needs can be met in the borough without altering boundaries, and with demonstrable success in fostering regeneration, the Core Strategy respects and maintains the established Green Belt. National Policy allows for the consideration of inappropriate development in exceptional circumstances, should they arise.
New Homes Bonus is a challenge to the RSS regional distribution	The New Homes Bonus Scheme is not a consideration in determining land requirements as set out in PPS3.	No account has been taken of the New Homes Bonus as a material consideration in determining the level of housing in the borough over the plan period.
Figures should be more 'aspirational'	The figures must be evidence based and deliverable	The published Options include proposals to increase the housing requirement by 30% or more above the current RSS level. This actually exceeds the 'aspirational' growth suggested in 'Unleashing the Potential' as endorsed by the LEP.
Allow growth or small scale development in the outer villages	The comments imply support for Option 3, which is noted. Development restrictions on small infill sites within defined settlement boundaries in the borough would be lifted under this option	Options 2 & 3 would permit small scale 'infill' development in smaller settlements.

Response	Comment	Outcome
It is unsound to continue the current distribution – there is no policy basis for it. Other north-west LA's are reviewing their housing requirements taking account of new information	<p>There are two issues relating to the housing requirement that should not be confused with one another. One issue is numbers, and the other is the principles guiding the distribution of development.</p> <p>The regional distribution reflects the inter-authority and local emphasis on regeneration of the urban areas of the cities, and towns in their sub-regions, and there is no reason to suggest that this needs to change.</p> <p>Agree that it is appropriate to review the housing requirement in terms of numbers, to take account of up-to-date evidence, as other authorities are doing</p>	The Core Strategy continues to respect the priority afforded to regeneration in the region and the associated strategic distribution of development that at this point in time remains part of the approved development plan.
The search for sites should include the Green Belt, notably Lymm	The Council has already commented extensively on the issues raised regarding the Green Belt and does not need to repeat them	No change to the strategic extent of the Green Belt is proposed in any of the Options.

Table 13

Employment Land Requirement Consultation Response

6.38 The Core Strategy Employment Land Requirement paper was the subject of informal consultation in November and December 2010. An initial four week period to receive responses was given which lasted until the 17th of December. Due to the informal nature of the consultation, responses have continued to be accepted after this date.

Response	Comment	Outcome
Support for considering Omega as part of forward land supply without the previous 'regional' distinction.	The supportive comments are welcomed and the preference for Option 2 is noted.	No distinction is made regarding the spatial significance of employment development, but Approved RSS is respected in setting criteria to guide development and maintain the availability of large areas of land for potential single manufacturing operations.
Option1 – 2 preferences Option 2 – 4 preferences	Comments noted and will be taken into account as work proceeds	The preference for Option 2 will be taken into account.
The evidence supports a reduction, take-up trends are robust evidence	Comments noted and will be taken into account as work proceeds	The Preferred Option 2 is supported by this evidence

Response	Comment	Outcome
Retain Omega for employment development	Comments noted and will be taken into account as work proceeds	The Core Strategy retains Omega as the principal source of land for future employment development
Consider employment and housing together	This is addressed in terms of Unleashing the Potential, the sub-regional economic strategy. Its growth aspirations for housing and employment appear to be achievable in both Option 2 and Option 3	Options 2 & 3 more than achieve the aspirational targets of Unleashing the Potential which considers housing and employment together at the sub-regional level.
Consider the wider context eg 'Unleashing the Potential', economic forecasts, demographic information	<p>At the local level the most reliable and proven methodology is the use of well-evidenced information on land take up, and that is what the Council stands by.</p> <p>'Unleashing the Potential' recognises the capacity for growth in Warrington through regeneration of its central area, Omega and other important sites as highlighted in the Regeneration Strategy. The approach set out in the Core Strategy fully reflects this.</p> <p>The employment growth identified in Warrington over the entire period is stated to be an increase of 2000 jobs.</p> <p>The range of 'normal' assumptions for relating job requirements to land area is between 30 and 80 jobs per hectare, Applying these job densities gives a land requirement of between 25 and 67 hectares between 2006 and 2030. This is less than the provision proposed for the Core Strategy in either Option 1 or Option 2 as set out in the Employment Land Requirement Paper.</p>	Options 2 & 3 more than achieve the aspirational targets of Unleashing the Potential which considers housing and employment together at the sub-regional level.
Continuity of supply beyond 2026 is important	Comments noted and will be taken into account as work proceeds	The consideration of Options takes this into account.

Response	Comment	Outcome
Review following the 2011 census	Comments noted and will be taken into account as work proceeds	The 2011 census will be used to keep the evidence base up-to-date and ensure that the Core Strategy remains appropriate and relevant.
Figures are not ambitious, or aspirational	The figures must be evidence based and deliverable	Options 2 & 3 exceed the 'aspirational' growth suggested in 'Unleashing the Potential' as endorsed by the LEP.
Recent completions reflect the downturn and are not 'normal'	The view that the Council's assessment is based on development rates during the economic downturn is mistaken.	There is no reason to change to the demand assessment used
Concern over reliance on large sites particularly Omega, and in view of deliverability issues	<p>There is nothing unusual about employment land availability being focussed on large sites. There is a history of such major sites successfully attracting investment and creating employment throughout the borough, most recently at Birchwood Park. There are many other examples that emerged over the years having originated in the new town master plan.</p> <p>Supply is not entirely reliant on a single site, but an allocation in the development plan is only justifiable at the Omega site in view of the overall availability of land. The Core Strategy also sets out a clear intention to promote and support town centre locations and the regeneration of the A49 corridor, to complement opportunities in more peripheral locations, and widen choice.</p> <p>In terms of deliverability a significant area of the Omega site benefits from a recent planning permission. This includes a series of measures to overcome issues relating to impacts on the local and strategic road network. It is not surprising that the subsequent recession and the financial crisis has delayed implementation.</p>	The Omega site is maintained as the principal source of identified land supply for employment development over the plan period.

Response	Comment	Outcome
There is insufficient supply elsewhere in the borough, notably Lymm and 'key settlements	Issues relating to 'Key Service Centres' and associated suggestions for land allocations in Lymm have been the subject of previous responses at earlier stages of consultation	None of the options put forward deters employment development within the defined urban areas of the borough, including Lymm and Culcheth.

Table 14

Pre-Publication Draft Core Strategy Consultation Response

6.39 The Pre-Publication Draft Core Strategy was made available for public consultation for a period of six weeks between December 12 2011 and January 20 2012. The Consultation followed the process outlined in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In total, 379 representations were received in response to the consultation exercise, from a total of 144 respondents, as reported to the Executive Board on 12 March 2012.

6.40 The report and associated appendices provide detailed summaries of all representations received, the Council's responses to them, and the resulting (and other) changes made to the document. The main issues relating to the overall strategy and cross-boundary issues is summarised below.

Issue / Response	Comment	Outcome
The Green Belt	Widespread support continued to be expressed for the continued protection of the Green Belt across a range of interest groups including neighbouring local authorities, Parish Councils and local groups, statutory consultees, and some representatives of the development industry. A limited number of development industry representations maintained earlier calls for a review of Green Belt boundaries, in each case driven by a client or direct interest in a specific development site (primarily in the vicinity of Lymm)	No change to the strategy
Housing	The same site-specific development interests also repeated earlier calls for a greater increase in the rate of housing delivery than is already proposed, and also for its distribution to include sites at the edge off Lymm, Burtonwood, and Thelwall. Satnam also called for increased housing delivery to necessitate the earlier development of the site at Peel Hall Farm.	These suggestions would undermine the purposes of the Green Belt, the Council's regeneration strategy, and the encouragement of the re-use of previously developed land
Employment	The allocation of an extensive business park in the Green belt adjoining Lymm and the M6 was proposed, with an associated increase in the employment land requirement.	No change to the strategy

Issue / Response	Comment	Outcome
Omega	<p>Debate was prompted over the role of Omega in relation to the location of Office development here as opposed to the town centre.</p> <p>There was also debate about the scale and function of the 'Omega Hub' with calls for it to be given an enhanced role and scale in the retail hierarchy, and on the other hand, for it to be closely restricted in view of potential impacts on established centres</p>	<p>The policy has been clarified in respect of the status of existing consents for office development, and the town centres first approach confirmed in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>The Policy and associated text have been clarified to explain that the intention is for it to form a business services hub to support the sustainability and attractiveness of the Omega site as a business location. It is not intended to be a new retail centre within the retail hierarchy of the borough.</p>
Peel Hall Farm	<p>Almost 40% of the total objections received in response to the consultation related to the identification of Peel Hall as a Strategic Location. The majority of these were from residents within the vicinity of the site who object to the site being developed at any point in the future owing primarily to concerns regarding the loss of green space and resultant impact on local infrastructure particularly with regards to the local and wider highway network</p>	<p>While the Council recognises the concerns expressed by local residents, it remains convinced that the approach adopted in the Core Strategy is correct and in the public interest, does not commit the site to development, and is robust enough to protect the local environment and address the concerns raised</p>

Table 15

Addressing the Key Issues

6.41 The Issues and Options Report identified a number of key issues through analysis of the evidence base as well as a review of existing Council documents. These were refined through the consultation process and resulted in 22 key issues being identified. These are set out below alongside commentary of how each strategic option will address the key issue and a conclusion (where possible) as to which the preferred option would be in each case.

Delivering the RSS housing requirement and additional housing to achieve the mid-Mersey growth agenda

6.42 RSS continues in force as a part of the statutory development plan, alongside the UDP, and has to be taken into account in the Core Strategy. However, the abolition of the regional tier of planning means that it will not be replaced. The Core Strategy must therefore determine the appropriate level of housing development over the plan period (and beyond), in consultation with neighbouring authorities and others under the Duty to Co-operate. In developing the Council's approach there has been close liaison with Halton and St Helens as part of the Mid-Mersey Group, and more recently with the new Cheshire Unitary Councils. All neighbours have been regularly consulted throughout and no fundamental concerns have been raised about the strategic approach being taken forward.

6.43 The need for more new housing, including affordable housing, remains a government priority. Promotional measures include the 'New Homes Bonus' that rewards Councils and communities that achieve housing growth.

6.44 Current Unitary Development Plan policies focus new housing at sites and in areas in need of regeneration. We have now looked further ahead in order to assess whether this approach can be sustained to deliver the requisite amount of housing at the right time in terms of 5, 10, and 15 year periods. We have also taken account of the latest population and household projections, and analysis of the housing market at both local and sub-regional level. This draws upon the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010).

6.45 A Housing Land Requirement Options Paper was published and consulted upon in late 2010. This quantifies the delivery of a range of levels of housing development against the physical capacity of known sites (identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment), corresponding with the three strategic options set out.

6.46 The consensus through consultation appears to favour Option 2, which can be pursued without compromising the Green Belt that is so important to local communities, or posing a threat to environmental assets, and will support the local economy in line with assessment put forward by the Cheshire & Warrington Economic Commission and its successor Local Enterprise Partnership.

6.47 For further information on this, please see the Housing Land Requirement Options Paper, and associated Consultation Report, as well as the Housing Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011).

Option 2 emerges as the preferred option for this key issue. This option proposes to increase the borough's housing requirement by 30% to an annual average rate of 500 dwellings. This will be achieved by maintaining the existing focus on the re-use of previously developed land and the regeneration of the central areas of the town, accompanied by relaxation of the current restraint on new planning permissions to enable sustainable development to proceed across the town as a whole and within Lymm and Culcheth, and also to allow smaller scale developments in other settlements in accordance with policies for the Green Belt.

In addition, three strategic locations are identified at Omega, Peel Hall Farm, and the HCA sites in south Warrington. When monitoring indicates that additional sources of supply may need to be identified (later in the plan period) in order to maintain a deliverable 5 year supply and not release Green Belt land, land will be allocated from one or a combination of these locations in a further Development Plan Document.

Meeting housing need and delivering the right mix and type of housing

6.48 The Core Strategy needs to do more than simply meet the number of dwellings required by RSS and the New Growth Point. It will need to ensure that the mix and type of housing responds to the needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. It will also need to ensure that provision is made that meets the needs of the whole community including gypsies and travellers, and the growing elderly population in Warrington.

6.49 The Housing Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011) covers these issues.

All options would be capable of containing policies to guide the mix and type of both market and affordable housing, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure an appropriate supply of family homes, based on the conclusions of the SHMA. Option 1 may not deliver appropriate housing in all communities, as this option would continue to focus on Inner Warrington, so Options 2 or 3 would emerge as preferable for this key issue.

The Core Strategy will determine the level of provision to be made for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People and may also set criteria for the location of sites for the travelling community which will be identified in a separate DPD.

Delivering affordable homes

6.50 The 2007 Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) suggests that over 400 additional new affordable homes need to be provided in the Borough each year. The updated assessment in 2009 suggests this figure is now reduced to 171 following the 'credit crunch' and the collapse of the housing market that has brought more housing within reach of prospective buyers.

6.51 This still presents the Council with a significant challenge; as a planning authority we need to ensure we are doing as much as we can in difficult circumstances to increase the number of affordable homes on new housing developments, as well as ensuring we get the highest quality in terms of size, tenure and design.

6.52 The SHMA provides evidence to support a target provision of 40% affordable homes in housing developments. An Affordable Housing Viability Study has now concluded that this is not a viable Target for all sites. It suggests a Target of 20 – 30 % depending on the location and type of development.

6.53 The Council also works directly and in partnership with other agencies to deliver the key aims of its Housing Strategy: to increase the supply of affordable housing, improve housing conditions and develop sustainable communities.

6.54 The Housing Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011) covers this issue in more detail.

Options 2 and 3 would probably have greater chance of delivering affordable housing through planning mechanisms as these options consider a greater number of sites in more viable locations.

The Preferred Option will set thresholds and targets for the viable provision of affordable homes within market housing development, to an equivalent standard of design and location, as informed by the SHMA and moderated by the Viability Study.

Delivering the right amount and type of land for employment development

6.55 The coalition government launched its 'Plan for Growth' in March 2011. The Plan for Growth includes a package of measures to create a new model of economic growth by achieving four overarching ambitions:

- To create the most competitive tax system in the G20,
- To make the UK the best place in Europe to start, finance and grow a business,
- To encourage investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy, and
- To create a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe.

6.56 Measures include fundamental reforms to the way the planning system works and reductions to the burden of regulation that businesses have to comply with. A written Ministerial Statement by the Minister for Decentralisation & Cities included the following text:

"The planning system has a key role to play in this, by ensuring that the sustainable development needed to support economic growth is able to proceed as easily as possible. We will work quickly to reform the planning system to achieve this, but the Government recognises that many of these actions will take some months to deliver, and that there is a pressing need to ensure that the planning system does everything it can to help secure a swift return to economic growth. This statement therefore sets out the steps the Government expects local planning authorities to take with immediate effect.

The Government's top priority in reforming the planning system is to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy".

6.57 The Regional Spatial Strategy does not set a requirement for employment land – the appropriate level of future provision will continue to be set locally by the Core Strategy. The present rate to 2016 is set by the UDP and is based on an annual average requirement of 13 ha (including a 20% allowance to ensure that choice is available to the market). There is currently a healthy supply of attractive, available sites in the borough provided through the UDP and planning decisions, and a welcoming policy framework for sustainable economic development in the adopted UDP.

6.58 Early in 2010 the Council published an Employment Land Requirement Options Paper for consultation, in order to address these key issues. This should be referred to for more discussion on these issues, together with the associated Report of Consultation. Other relevant publications that are now available include the Cheshire & Warrington Economic Strategy (*'Unleashing the Potential'*), and the Council's Local Economic Assessment. The latest Employment Land Review and Availability Reports were published in 2010.

6.59 The consultation responses to the Employment Land Requirement Paper generally agree with taking forward a small reduction in the average annual supply figure to reflect the conclusions drawn from monitoring development rates over a lengthy period of time. This Option enables Omega and Lingley Mere to be identified as a strategic location which allows the area to deliver economic benefits across the borough and beyond and provides scope to consider how it might deliver those benefits more sustainably, for example through the introduction of other land uses to support viability.

6.60 The Employment Background Paper covers this issue in more detail.

The emerging preference to slightly reduce the amount of employment land provision over the Core Strategy period aligns with Strategic Option 2 in that this focuses on brownfield land, but also provides for the development of employment sites such as Omega. This level of provision is supported by local evidence, and is more than capable of achieving the aspirational job growth targets set out in Unleashing the Potential, as endorsed by the Local Economic Partnership. Additional sites will also inevitably arise through windfall, and in the form of potentially larger scale developments that will be promoted in and around the town centre for a range of employment related uses, including office developments.

The key to achieving the planned requirement is Omega, and this will be maintained principally for employment development, but with scope allowed for the introduction of other supporting uses where their inclusion will promote sustainable development and improve the prospects of delivery of economic investment.

It is not proposed to maintain the 'regional' status of Omega, and this will not continue following the proposed revocation of RSS by the government. Until that occurs and for as long as is practically possible, the Core Strategy will adopt an approach that will enable the continuing availability of a site suitable for large scale manufacturing development by adopting a phased approach and promoting compact rather than piecemeal development. However this will not be applied in such a way as to arbitrarily restrict smaller scale sustainable economic development.

In accordance with the government's 'Plan for Growth', the Core Strategy will adopt a positive, welcoming attitude towards sustainable growth and investment.

Considering the scope for re-allocation of employment land to other uses

6.61 RSS suggested that there is a surplus of land available for employment development in the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region, and that there is a need to de-allocate a number of larger sites. It reported that the large sites are mainly found in Ellesmere Port & Neston, Vale Royal and Warrington.

6.62 In Warrington, current local assessments do not indicate that there is any major surplus, but the preferred option for employment land requirement and Strategic Option 2 would in effect provide scope to create a more sustainable business community at Omega potentially including non B1, B2 or B8 uses, as detailed above.

No evidence of a significant oversupply of employment land in the borough emerged from a local review of the situation, but Strategic Option 2 does provide some scope for the introduction of other uses at Omega (see above) without prejudicing forward land supply.

Strategic Option 1 may not provide enough employment land over the Core Strategy period whilst Strategic Option 3 could result in a significant oversupply of employment land and potential sterilisation of land for other uses.

The Core Strategy will also carry forward the policy framework established in the UDP for the consideration of changes of use from employment development to other uses (though this will also be affected by the proposal by the government to allow changes of use from employment to housing as 'permitted development', if it is implemented).

Maintaining the Green Belt up to at least 2021

6.63 The coalition government has pledged that the maintenance of the Green Belt is a key objective of planning policy and will remain so as a priority issue within the proposed National Planning Policy Framework. The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West explicitly states that the Green Belt boundary in Warrington should not be reviewed before 2021.

6.64 The UDP was designed to ensure that the Green Belt boundary remained unchanged 'for as far as can be seen ahead' (interpreted and agreed by the Inspector as until about 2026). It did this by demonstrating that sufficient land would remain available to meet development needs beyond the end of the plan period.

6.65 Under the current planning system, a Green Belt review would be driven by a wider strategic review of the Regional Spatial Strategy and would not be a matter for direct consideration in the Local Development Framework. The changes being introduced by the new government will see the disappearance of regional planning, and the introduction of a duty to co-operate with neighbouring Councils to determine an appropriate strategic planning framework.

6.66 This, together with the widened geographical basis for considering needs and determining local development levels in terms of the sub-regional housing market area, and the economic market and travel-to-work area within which the Local Enterprise Partnership will operate, will provide the forum for issues relating to the need to alter green belt boundaries as monitoring starts to raise issues closer to the time.

6.67 The principle adopted in RSS, that the unnecessary release of green field land should be avoided if there is a risk that to do so would undermine regeneration in an adjoining area, is a sound one, and the Council will work with neighbouring authorities to seek to maintain it.

6.68 Nevertheless, development requirements over the plan period do need to be considered in the context of a broader time frame, to take account of earlier levels of development including previously approved development that will contribute towards meeting needs or be built in the plan period, and the need to give a strong indication that the borough will retain the capacity to sustain growth beyond it. This is an important consideration for the policy approach to the monitoring and management of land supply during the plan period.

Significant support for maintaining the Green Belt across a range of interests emerged through the various consultation stages as work on the Core Strategy progressed.

Apart from a small number of detailed boundary changes, Strategic Options 1 and 2 would allow the maintenance of the extent of the Green Belt established in 2006 when the UDP was adopted. The UDP established detailed Green Belt boundaries across the whole of the borough for the very first time, and despite calls from a small number of development interests promoting particular sites, for a review of the Green Belt, none has justified this request by reference to exceptional circumstances as necessitated by PPG2 and the NPPF.

Strategic Option 3 would remove the focus on regeneration initiated by the UDP, and could therefore give rise to pressure to release Green Belt sites for development in advance of the other two strategic options.

Other Issues

6.69 The remaining Key Issues (listed below) are either explicitly considered in the individual Background Papers that are also currently available or are covered in the policy approach set out in the emerging Core Strategy.

Key Issue Identified	Where the issue is covered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering employment in accessible, sustainable locations Delivering a qualified and skilled workforce to match the needs of new businesses 	Covered in the Employment Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revitalising Warrington Town Centre and other key local centres in the borough Regenerating the town centre fringe areas 	Covered in the Town Centre Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling congestion 	Covered in the Transport Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimising the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of climate change 	Covered in the Climate Change Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering development that takes full account of the risk of flooding in the borough Safeguarding and enhancing environmental assets through an integrated approach to green infrastructure Safeguarding and enhancing the boroughs built heritage and promoting good design Addressing inequalities The look of the place Delivering healthy and secure communities with access to opportunities for exercise Delivering access to jobs, services and facilities 	Covered in the policy approach set out in the emerging Core Strategy

Key Issue Identified	Where the issue is covered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring there are good facilities for the sustainable disposal of waste Ensuring that the borough contributes to the supply of minerals and aggregates as appropriate 	<p>Covered in the Waste and Minerals Core Strategy Background paper (Dec 2011) but will be the subject of a separate Waste and Minerals Development Plan Document</p>

Summary

6.70 Each of the key issues considered above support different Strategic Options, but consistently Strategic Option 2 emerges as being capable of addressing the issues set out.

Fit with Council & Other Agency Policy

Warrington Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy

6.71 With an overarching aim that, “by 2030, Warrington will be recognised as one of the best places to live and work in the UK where everyone enjoys an outstanding quality of life”, the Sustainable Community Strategy identifies 5 main ambitions:

- Maintain a strong economy and deliver widespread prosperity to our residents.
- Provide a sustainable, attractive and vibrant environment.
- Create safe, strong and flourishing communities and neighbourhoods.
- Ensure everyone can enjoy good health and well-being.
- Inspire people to reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

6.72 The Core Strategy has taken these ambitions into account as it is able to contribute to their achievement in so far as they relate to spatial development in the different areas of the borough.

Strategic Option 2 supports the Sustainable Community Strategy across a wide range of social, environmental, and economic issues. The provision of a forward land supply for economic investment will support to intention to maintain Warrington’s strong economy. Other ambitions and priorities are reflected in and supported by a range of locational and development management policies.

Strategic Options 1 and 3 would either focus development in the borough too narrowly or not prioritise areas of significance in the Sustainable Community Strategy sufficiently.

WBC Corporate Plan 2009-12

6.73 The corporate Plan sets out a number of ambitions and priorities with the overall objective of making Warrington prosperous and vibrant, environmentally responsible and attractive, safe and strong, healthy and active, and ambitious and achieving.

6.74 The focus of corporate Council policy, in terms of the role of Warrington from a wider perspective than its own internal operations and services, relates to the economy. The aspiration is for Warrington to sustain its position as a successful economy with strategic influence as a key UK economic centre, with a good representation of national and international companies, and with key sites such as Omega and the Warrington Waterfront also bringing economic and other benefits to the wider north-west region.

6.75 This is to be framed in a new marketing strategy for Warrington as a premier location for business investment. The short-term aim is to ensure that Warrington is well-positioned to take advantage of an economic upturn, by progressing sites and opportunities so they are ready for development.

6.76 In terms of place-making and economic growth, the Council's clear priorities are the Town Centre and Omega

Strategic Option 2 supports the Corporate Plan across a wide range of social, environmental, and economic issues. The provision of a forward land supply for economic investment will support the intention to maintain Warrington's status and role locally, and in the wider regional and sub-national context.

Omega will continue to play a key role in this, and development will bring benefits to the wider north-west as a function of its location and accessibility in relation to the mid-Mersey and Cheshire sub-regions, and the adjoining city regions.

The continuing commitment to strengthen the Town Centre and prioritise regeneration of the older central areas of the town will support the Council's efforts to realise further opportunities and secure progress at sites such as Bridge Street, Winwick Bridge and the Waterfront.

Strategic Options 1 and 3 would either focus development in the borough too narrowly or not prioritise areas of significance to the Corporate Plan sufficiently.

WBC Regeneration Framework

6.77 The Regeneration Framework is a clear statement of the Council's commitment to promote growth through regeneration in order to reinvigorate the town's older areas not only as a guiding principle, but also as a springboard for a number of specific initiatives all of which are carried forward into the Core Strategy

Strategic Option 2 is entirely supportive of the Regeneration Framework and will give its priorities, purposes and projects greater impetus and significance as it gains status as the statutory development plan for the borough.

Strategic Options 1 and 3 would either focus development in the borough too narrowly or not prioritise areas of significance to the Regeneration Framework sufficiently.

Warrington & Co

6.78 Warrington & Co is Warrington's urban regeneration partnership bringing together all the key agencies involved in regeneration in the town, co-ordinating their activity and helping to steer the Regeneration Framework.

Strategic Option 2 is entirely supportive of the Regeneration Framework and will give its priorities, purposes and projects greater impetus and significance as it gains status as the statutory development plan for the borough.

Strategic Options 1 and 3 would either focus development in the borough too narrowly or not prioritise areas of significance to the Regeneration Framework sufficiently.

WBC Local Transport Plan

6.79 The Council's planning policies should be co-coordinated with the policies, priorities and programmes set out in the Local Transport Plan. The most recent Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) was published in March 2011 and deals with the period 2011 - 2030. The LTP helps to address local transport issues by providing a framework for decisions on future investment. It:

- Sets objectives for transport to support wider goals and ambitions set out at a national, regional and local level,
- Establishes policies to help achieve these objectives, and
- Contains plans for implementing these policies.

6.80 The document is split into 7 themes including:

1. Active Travel - walking, cycling, equestrianism and public rights of way for day to day and leisure use.
2. Public Transport - all passenger transport modes
3. Managing Motorised Travel - routes and facilities used by private motorised passenger modes including freight
4. Smarter Choices - decisions people make about their journeys including whether to make them, where, when and the mode of travel
5. Safety and Security - including specific duties of Warrington Borough Council in relation to road safety
6. Asset Management - maintaining physical transport assets
7. Network Management - how to make the best of use of the existing highway network and fulfil the Council's network management duty.

6.81 Each theme looks at evidence, issues and challenges before identifying headline facts and key challenges. Policies and actions are then set out to address each issue.

6.82 The Strategic Options have been developed and tested using the fully integrated Multi-Modal Transportation Model in association with transport strategy officers and consultants, and the Highways Agency. This is considered in more detail in the Transport Core Strategy Background Paper (Dec 2011) as well as the Multi Modal Transport Model Public Domain Document.

Strategic Option 2 continues to focus development on Inner Warrington, making the best use of existing infrastructure and locating development in the most sustainable locations.

Whilst Strategic Option 1 also focuses development on Inner Warrington, it may not achieve the levels of development that other plans and strategies aspire to. Focusing development only on Inner Warrington could also put existing infrastructure under strain as it could be required to run over capacity. Strategic Option 3 would not focus development in any way and could lead to development in unsustainable locations that are reliant on private car use and that are not accessible by a choice of means of transport.

WBC Climate Change Strategy

6.83 The Climate Change Strategy was published in December 2007. The strategy has three broad aims. Firstly, to lead the way and make climate change a cross-cutting theme in all of the Council's strategy documents. Secondly, to reduce WBC's own emissions and thirdly to influence the wider community to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

6.84 The production of the Climate Change Strategy was the first step in the Council's mission to embed carbon reduction across the council and the climate change issue has since been embedded in a number of the Council's strategic documents, including the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS); the Corporate Plan; the Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and more recently a Carbon Management Plan (April 2011).

6.85 The Carbon Management Plan supports Warrington's climate change strategy and provides a strategic way forward for the authority to deliver carbon reduction of its own emissions and help in mitigating the effect of climate change from April 2010 up to March 2015. The primary focus of the

work is to reduce emissions from council buildings (in particular schools), its vehicle fleet and street lighting. This plan sets an aspirational target of reducing the Council's CO₂ emissions by 40% over 2009/10 levels by 2015.

The Climate Change Strategy does not necessarily align more closely with any of the Strategic Options. The Preferred Option will need to contain a range of policies designed to address the causes and impacts of climate change, and will contribute to achieving the objectives of the Climate Change Strategy through development management.

WBC Housing Strategy

6.86 The strategic planning team works closely with the Council's strategic housing service with a view to ensuring that all of Warrington's residents have access to decent quality and affordable housing. The Housing Strategy and the Core Strategy should complement each other to provide an effective framework involving:

Strategic planning

- housing needs assessment
- preparation /implementation of district housing strategies
- contributions to sub-regional housing strategies
- policy and performance management
- research and intelligence

Affordable housing delivery

- S.106 negotiations with private house-builders
- identification of development opportunities and funding streams
- liaison with Housing Association partners/co-ordination of grant bids

Influencing property management/ enabling house improvement

- monitoring management of council-owned housing
- housing stock options appraisal
- commissioning care & repair services

Reducing disadvantage and preventing discrimination

- equality and diversity reviews
- BME housing strategy
- older people's housing strategy
- special needs housing
- disabled adaptations policy

Strategic Option will provide a sustainable and flexible supply to ensure that the planning system plays a full part in supporting the delivery of both market and affordable homes.

Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership

6.87 The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) was just one of twenty three partnerships nationally to be awarded full status in October 2010. The inaugural board meeting was held in March 2011, and this identified a number of growth priorities including: business investment, skilled and productive workforce, infrastructure and connectivity, promoting Cheshire and Warrington, the rural agenda and deregulation. The LEP has fully endorsed 'Unleashing the Potential'.

Strategic Option 2 makes provision for a forward land supply for economic investment and housing development that fully supports the growth aspirations of Unleashing the Potential, and reflects the priority afforded to regeneration.

Strategic Option 1 would not achieve the levels of growth set out in the economic strategy, whereas Strategic Option 3 would not reflect the priority afforded to regeneration.

Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission

6.88 The Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Commission is the Sub Regional Partnership providing the professional, technical and administrative support for the Local Enterprise Partnership covering Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington Unitary Authorities. The Commission published ‘*Unleashing the Potential*’, an economic strategy for the sub-region, in 2010. Its recommendations regarding future economic and housing growth should be fully taken into account as the preferred option for the Core Strategy is determined.

Strategic Option 2 makes provision for a forward land supply for economic investment and housing development that fully supports the growth aspirations of Unleashing the Potential, and reflects the priority afforded to regeneration.

Strategic Option 1 would not achieve the levels of growth set out in the economic strategy, whereas Strategic Option 3 would not reflect the priority afforded to regeneration.

Summary

Each of the Council and other agency policies outlined above support Strategic Option 2 as the preferred option that is capable of comprehensively addressing the issues set out.

6.89 EU Directive 2001/42/EC and subsequent UK Regulations introduced the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all plans and programmes that have a significant environmental effect. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 made the broader Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process, embracing social and economic considerations in addition to environmental impacts, a requirement for certain documents produced as part of a Local Development Framework.

6.90 These are distinct mandatory requirements, although they can be combined into a single process. For the Core Strategy, the SA and SEA are being considered together.

6.91 An Overall SA Scoping Report was published in September 2006 and revised following consultation in 2009. The purpose of consultation was to ensure that the information collected was comprehensive and accurate, and that an appropriate framework had been constructed that could be used to assess and improve all future Development Plan Documents in Warrington, including the emerging Core Strategy, subject to continuous updating of other plans and programmes and the baseline characteristics. Consultation also ensured that the public and authorities with social, environmental and economic responsibilities were involved as part of the assessment process

6.92 The scoping report explained and summarised the Development Plan and Sustainability Appraisal processes, and set out an assessment of:

- environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other relevant plans and programmes;
- baseline information on the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the borough;
- key sustainability issues facing the borough; and
- an appropriate framework for the Sustainability Appraisal, including Sustainability Objectives and Indicators;

6.93 and indicated that more specific scoping reports to be produced for each LDD will look at:

- Details of the individual LDD and timetable for production;
- specific implications of other relevant plans and programmes and identified sustainability objectives; and
- specific baseline information on the area or topic being considered.

6.94 The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of new Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The effects of each Strategic Option have been assessed and evaluated to identify positive and negative impacts.

6.95 The Table below summarises the outcomes of the SA of the 3 strategic options. The full SA Report from which this summary is taken is also available for scrutiny.

	Sustainability Objective	Strategic Option 1	Strategic Option 2	Strategic Option 3
Economic	Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth	+	++	-
	Improve the education and skills of the population overall	0	0	0
Social	Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion	0	0	-
	Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes	+	+	-
	Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities	+	+	+
	Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing	+	++	++
	Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime	+	+	+
	Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare	0	0	0
	Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities	++	++	+
	Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside	++	++	+
Environmental	Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value	++	++	++
	Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	++	++	++
	Protect and enhance geodiversity and biodiversity	++	++	++

	Sustainability Objective	Strategic Option 1	Strategic Option 2	Strategic Option 3
	Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding	++	++	++
	Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change	+	+	+
	Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation	++	++	+
	Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy	+	+	+
	Minimise waste and maximise re-use, recovery and recycling	+	+	+
	Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality	++	++	+

Table 16 Assessment of Strategic Options against Sustainability Objectives

6.96 This assessment shows that Core Strategy Strategic Option 2 will ensure that more economic, social and environmental objectives are supported.

6.97 In particular, Strategic Option 2 is considered to be more supportive of the local economy and will more likely ensure sustainable economic growth.

6.98 Along with Strategic Option 1, Strategic Option 2 helps to focus development on Inner Warrington and could therefore have the potential to:

- reduce the need to travel by car,
- protects and enhances access to services and facilities,
- provides, protects and enhances leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, Green Infrastructure and access to the countryside
- Ensures sustainable and prudent use of natural resources
- Ensures high quality and sustainable design appropriate to the locality

6.99 However, along with Strategic Option 3, Strategic Option 2 helps to ensure access to good quality sustainable housing, by ensuring that there is a deliverable supply of housing land.

6.100 Strategic Option 3, however has the potential to have a negative impact on the local economy and on levels of social exclusion and reducing the need to travel. This is due to the lack of spatial focus of the option, which could lead to dispersal of development to areas with lower land values, or fewer remediation costs. The dispersal of development would also mean that the very positive impacts of Strategic Options 1 & 2 in terms of accessibility to services and leisure opportunities as well as the sustainable and prudent use and management of resources are significantly reduced.

6.101 Planning Policy Statement 12 (para4.43) states that: *“The Sustainability Appraisal should perform a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan and form an integrated part of the plan preparation process. Sustainability Assessment should inform the evaluation of alternatives. Sustainability Assessment should provide a powerful means of proving to decision makers, and the public, that the plan is the most appropriate given reasonable alternatives.”*

6.102 In this case, the Assessment indicates clearly that Option 2 is the most appropriate course for the Warrington Core Strategy to follow.

Infrastructure Capacity

6.103 Infrastructure that is required to support development across the borough over the next 10 – 15 years has started to be identified. The process undertaken to date is outlined in more detail in the Infrastructure Background Paper. In general it is possible to identify that to date there are **no strategic constraints to development** for Strategic Options 1 and 2. Strategic Option 3 may begin to cause problems in terms of infrastructure delivery as there would be no focus for or limit to development.

6.104 Information gathered to date provides a preliminary introduction in which to begin to understand where additional modelling, investigation and partnership working is required, particularly with reference to delivering the longer term strategic sites and the wider responsibilities for delivering infrastructure and gaps in funding. It is envisaged that additional work to be completed with internal and external partners, further knowledge and understanding surrounding the constraints to deliver sites across the borough will be confirmed and this will further inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the Core Strategy, whilst also supporting the production of a charging schedule that will support the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy. This could therefore provide future funding alongside Section 106 Agreements to further support the delivery of sites.

Preferred Strategic Option

6.105 All of the assessments set out above can be summarised in the following table:

	Supports Strategic Option 1	Supports Strategic Option 2	Supports Strategic Option 3
Conformity with National and Regional Policy	Yes	Yes	
Stakeholder Input	Yes	Yes	Yes
Addressing Key Issues		Yes	
Fit with Council and other Agency Policy		Yes	
Sustainability Appraisal		Yes	
Infrastructure Capacity	Yes	Yes	

Table 17

6.106 The table shows that overall, through all assessments, Strategic Option 2 emerges as the Preferred Option, and it is on this basis that the Core Strategy has been drafted.

Conclusion

6.107 The reasoning and justification set out in this section of this Sustainability Appraisal Report indicates how we have considered which option is the most appropriate at each stage of the process.

6.108 Although Strategic Option 1 concentrated on inner Warrington and could therefore bring benefits in terms of regeneration and dealing with deprivation, the amount of development that could be accommodated on land within Inner Warrington would not be sufficient to meet identified housing needs or provide for a necessary level of growth (both in terms of population and employment) for Warrington.

6.109 This could lead to an imbalance within Warrington where there is either significantly more employment, or more residential population, which could lead to increased unsustainable transport movements as people either commute out of the area to access job opportunities that are not available in Warrington, or are drawn to employment opportunities in Warrington that cannot be taken up by the resident population. This Strategic Option has therefore been rejected.

6.110 Strategic Option 3 brings more benefits in terms of the potential for growth in Warrington, but the lack of focus in this option means that opportunities to address social deprivation issues are missed. The Strategic Option could also mean a dispersal of development, which would not contribute to sustainable development within the borough, and which could lead to increased deprivation, social exclusion and an increased need to travel by car to access essential services, facilities and leisure and recreation opportunities. This Strategic Option has therefore been rejected.

6.111 The level of housing provision set out in Housing Option 1 does not meet the identified housing need, and provides limited opportunity to provide sustainable, affordable housing across the borough. This housing option has therefore been rejected.

6.112 Whilst the level of housing provision set out in Housing Option 3 more appropriately meets the identified housing need, the location of development could lead to increased deprivation especially when considering access to essential services and facilities.

6.113 The monitoring of employment land take up rates has shown that it would be appropriate to decrease the level of provision currently pursued through the Unitary Development Plan. This is borne out when considering the three employment options against the Sustainability Objectives. Employment Options 1 and 3 both result in an oversupply of employment land over the plan period, which does not constitute the more prudent use of land and resources, and which could sterilise land for other potential uses. These Employment Options have therefore been rejected.

Overall Conclusion

6.114 In summary, the selection of option 2 was considered to be the most appropriate at start of the Sustainability Appraisal process and work undertaken to date indicates that this remains the case. The issues with strategic options 1 and 3 remain the same and there have been no changes in circumstances since this time to warrant a change in the preferred policy approach.

Task B4 - Evaluating the effects of the preferred option

6.115 The impacts of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy on each indicator that was used to construct the evidence base at the scoping stage have been considered (see Appendix 9). In each case any impact identified has been assessed as to whether it is positive or negative, its likelihood, scale and permanence. Secondary, cumulative or synergistic effects are considered later. A conclusion has then been reached as to the significance of the impact of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy on the issue the indicator considers.

6.116 The assessment shows that in a number of cases, it is possible that the draft Local Plan Core Strategy will have a positive impact. In many cases whilst the overall trends can be monitored, it would be difficult to measure direct effects of the Local Plan Core Strategy itself. These impacts were therefore not considered to be significant, but will help to create sustainable communities. In a small number of cases, the potential impact of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy against certain indicators could be negative (e.g. Development in Areas at Risk of Flooding). In these cases it should be borne in mind that appropriate policies would be included in the draft document to ensure that development would incorporate mitigation measures that would ensure that it would not be at risk from flooding and would not increase flooding elsewhere.

6.117 The positive impacts of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy considered to be of significance are outlined below.

SA Objective & Indicators	Can the effect be quantified?	Targets (where available)	Effect over time	Comments / Explanation
<p>1. Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of land developed for employment type. • Percentage of above, by type, which is on previously developed land. • Losses of employment land in local authority area and • development / regeneration areas • Amount of employment land lost to residential development. 	Yes – will be measured through the Annual Monitoring Report.	<p>Draft Local Plan Core Strategy makes provision for 277ha of land for employment purposes over the plan period.</p> <p>No targets are included for development on previously developed land, or for losses of employment land</p>	+	<p>The draft Local Plan Core Strategy makes provision for employment land over the plan period, and seeks to direct such development to either inner Warrington or to existing employment areas. Existing employment areas are protected from non-employment uses except where justified.</p> <p><i>Likelihood: Possible</i></p> <p><i>Scale: Borough wide</i></p> <p><i>Permanence: Long term target will take into account short term fluctuations</i></p>
<p>6. Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing completions – by type • Re-use of previously developed land for housing • Affordable housing completions (as a % of all completions) 	Yes – will be measured through the housing trajectory and the Annual Monitoring Report.	<p>Draft Local Plan Core Strategy makes provision for an annual average of 500 dwellings.</p> <p>The Draft Local Plan Core Strategy sets a target of 80% of new housing being delivered on previously developed land.</p> <p>The Draft Local Plan Core Strategy sets a target for affordable housing of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% on previously 	+	<p>The draft Local Plan Core Strategy makes provision for housing development over the plan period and seeks to direct such development to inner Warrington and to previously developed sites. The Local Plan Core Strategy also looks to secure affordable housing by ensuring that all developments which incorporate open market housing make provision for affordable housing.</p> <p>Likelihood: Possible</p>

SA Objective & Indicators	Can the effect be quantified?	Targets (where available)	Effect over time	Comments / Explanation
		developed or Greenfield sites between 5 and 14 dwellings regardless of location within the borough <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% on previously developed sites of 15 or more dwellings within Inner Warrington • 30% on previously developed sites of 15 or more dwellings where the site is located outside of Inner Warrington • 30% on Greenfield sites of 15 or more dwellings regardless of its location within the borough 		<i>Scale: Borough wide</i> <i>Permanence: long term</i>
9. Protect and enhance accessibility for all to essential services and facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development respectively. • Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure 	Yes – will be measured through the Annual Monitoring Report.	There is no target for the total amount of retail, office or leisure development over the plan period or for the percentage to be completed within defined centres.	+	The Draft Local Plan Core Strategy does not set out a target for the total amount of retail, office or leisure development over the plan period. Policies within the Draft Local Plan Core Strategy set out that such development

SA Objective & Indicators	Can the effect be quantified?	Targets (where available)	Effect over time	Comments / Explanation
development respectively in town centres.				will be directed towards defined centres <i>Likelihood: Possible</i> <i>Scale: Borough wide</i> <i>Permanence: long term</i>
<p>12. Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and the wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of derelict land and buildings 	Yes – will be measured through the Annual Monitoring Report.	No target available	+	<p>Draft Local Plan Core Strategy seeks to direct housing and employment development to the inner Warrington, where there is greatest concentration of derelict land and buildings. In addition the draft strategy prioritises the re-use of PDL in urban areas and indicates that at least 80% of all new homes will be delivered in these locations.</p> <p><i>Likelihood: Possible</i></p> <p><i>Scale: borough wide</i></p> <p><i>Permanence: long term</i></p>
<p>14. Protect, manage and improve local amenity and local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of derelict land and buildings 	Yes – will be measured through the Annual Monitoring Report.	No target available	+	<p>Draft Local Plan Core Strategy seeks to direct housing and employment development to the inner Warrington, where there is greatest concentration of derelict land and buildings. In addition the draft strategy prioritises</p>

SA Objective & Indicators	Can the effect be quantified?	Targets (where available)	Effect over time	Comments / Explanation
				<p>the re-use of PDL in urban areas and indicates that at least 80% of all new homes will be delivered in these locations.</p> <p><i>Likelihood: Possible</i></p> <p><i>Scale: borough wide</i></p> <p><i>Permanence: long term</i></p>
<p>16. Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-use of previously developed land for housing • Amount of employment development completed on brownfield land • Green spaces lost to development • Area of derelict land and buildings 	<p>Yes – will be measured through the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>	<p>The Draft Local Plan Core Strategy sets a target of 80% of new housing being delivered on previously developed land, but does not have a similar target for employment land.</p> <p>No targets are available for green spaces lost to development or the total area of derelict land and buildings.</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Draft Local Plan Core Strategy seeks to direct housing and employment development to the inner Warrington, where there is greatest concentration of derelict land and buildings. In addition the draft strategy prioritises the re-use of PDL in urban areas and indicates that at least 80% of all new homes will be delivered in these locations.</p> <p>The Local Plan Core Strategy also looks to protect green spaces / infrastructure and only allows their development where fully justified.</p> <p><i>Likelihood: Probable / Possible</i></p> <p><i>Scale: borough wide</i></p>

SA Objective & Indicators	Can the effect be quantified?	Targets (where available)	Effect over time	Comments / Explanation
				<i>Permanence: long term</i>

Table 18

6.118 In order to determine secondary/cumulative impacts of the plan in its entirety, each draft Local Plan Core Strategy policy was then assessed against the Sustainability Objectives. The graph below shows the proportion of the draft Local Plan Core Strategy policies that have a very positive, positive, unknown and negative effect on each of the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives and where the policies are not expected to have any effect on the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives.

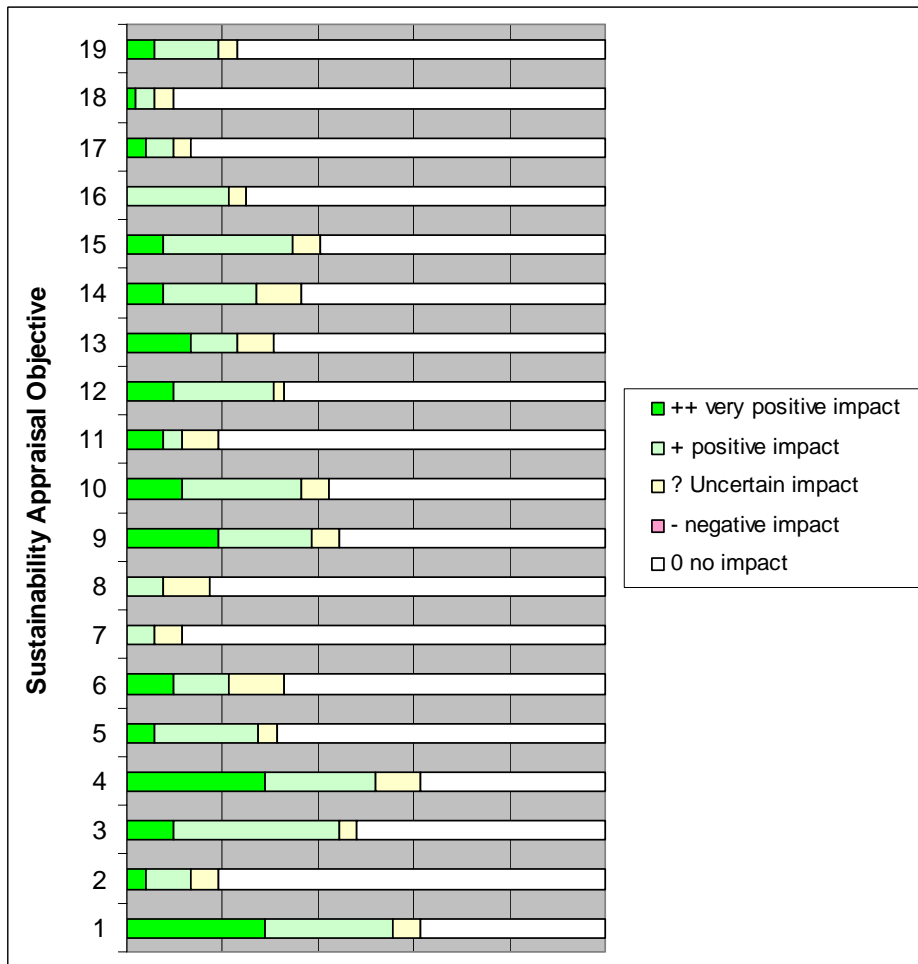


Figure 6.1

6.119 This shows that the Local Plan Core Strategy has at least a positive, if not very positive overall effect on the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. No negative effects were identified. Where unknown effects were identified, this was either due to questions over detailed implementation or where possible mitigation measures (in terms of amendments to the policies) were identified. The resulting amendments to the policies as a result of the assessment are set out in the next section. The full policy assessments are set out in Appendix 10.

Task B5 - Mitigating potential effects

6.120 The Local Plan Core Strategy will deliver an improvement on the current situation and evaluating the draft Local Plan Core Strategy Objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives shows that in the majority of cases where the Local Plan Core Strategy has an impact, this is considered to be positive. A number of draft Local Plan Core Strategy Objectives were amended as a result of the assessment to ensure that impacts were positive and these are set out in at the start of this section, in Task B1.

6.121 In predicting and evaluating the draft Local Plan Core Strategy against the baseline indicators, it was found that in a small number of cases the draft Local Plan Core Strategy could potentially have a negative impact on a number of indicators being considered as a direct result of development (e.g. The level of development at risk from flooding). In all cases it was considered that the possible negative impact would not materialise as protection is afforded by other polices.

6.122 It was therefore not considered necessary to propose any mitigation measures to the overall strategy.

6.123 In undertaking an assessment of each draft policy against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives some potentially uncertain or negative effects were identified, but these were not considered to be significant as it was felt that the cumulative effect of all of the policies in the plan would afford protection against these effects. There were however, a number of instances where changes were suggested to policies to mitigate either negative or uncertain impacts. These are listed in Table 9 below.

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
CS1	Possible need to reference location of services (such as health facilities) in appropriate / accessible locations, not just “sites”	Throughout the borough, development proposals that are sustainable will be approved.	Throughout the borough, development proposals that are sustainable will be approved.
	There is no reference to active travel as this would have health benefits	To be sustainable, development must accord with national and local planning policy frameworks	To be sustainable, development must accord with national and local planning policy frameworks
	Could make reference to local distinctiveness to encourage community identity	and have regard to:	and must, in no particular order, have regard to:
	The strategic policy makes no specific reference to green infrastructure / leisure / recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planned provision made for economic and housing growth; The requirement to provide for the full range of identified needs; The priority afforded to the protection of the Green Belt and the character of the countryside; The priority afforded to accommodating growth in Inner Warrington through the use of previously developed land; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planned provision made for economic and housing growth; The requirement to provide for the full range of <u>recognised and</u> identified development needs; The priority afforded to the protection of the Green Belt and the character of the countryside; The priority afforded to accommodating growth in Inner Warrington through the use of previously developed land;
	A specific reference to the prudent use of resources could be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to develop sites in appropriate and accessible locations; The need to make the best use of existing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
	<p>A specific reference to energy efficiency could be included</p> <hr/> <p>A specific reference to minimising waste and maximising re-use, recovery and recycling could be made.</p>	<p>infrastructure within existing settlements, and ensure additional provision where needed to support development;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre and other designated centres that act as community hubs; • The need to address the causes of and be resilient to the effects of climate change; • The need to sustain and enhance the borough's built heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity; • The need to safeguard environmental standards, public safety, and residential amenity; • The delivery of high standards of design and construction; and • The need to improve equality of access and opportunity. 	<p>the town centre and other designated centres that act as community hubs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to develop sites, <u>services and facilities</u> in appropriate locations and accessible locations <u>by public transport, walking and cycling</u>; • The need to make the best use of existing <u>transport, utility, social and environmental</u> infrastructure within existing settlements, and ensure additional provision where needed to support development; • The need to address the causes of and be resilient to the effects of climate change; • The need to sustain and enhance the borough's built heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity; • <u>The importance of prudently using resources and maximising re-use, recovery and recycling where possible</u>; • The need to safeguard environmental standards, public safety, and residential amenity; • The delivery of high standards of design and construction, <u>that have regard to local distinctiveness and energy efficiency</u>; and • The need to improve equality of access and opportunity
CS2	The policy should make reference to the hierarchy of centres, not just the town centre	<p>6th Bullet:</p> <p>Warrington Town Centre will maintain its role and status by being the focus for further retail and leisure development investment, and strictly</p>	<p>6th Bullet:</p> <p><u>Defined centres including</u> Warrington Town Centre will maintain their role and status by being the focus for further retail and leisure development investment, and by strictly</p>

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
		controlling inappropriate out-of-centre retail developments;	controlling inappropriate out-of-centre retail developments;
CS6	Consider making reference to linkages to the wider greenway network / green infrastructure in the policy.	<p>The Council will support development in the town centre where it supports its viability and vitality and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generates job growth, particularly in indigenous sectors, including retail and high value jobs; or • adds to the provision and attractiveness of the office market in the town centre; or • supports existing, committed and planned public and private investment; or • increases the diversity of uses and contributes to the day or night time economy; or • supports the town in its role as a regional transport gateway / interchange and improves linkages to it from the rest of the borough and beyond; or • includes housing development. 	<p>The Council will support development in the town centre where it supports its viability and vitality and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generates job growth, particularly in indigenous sectors, including retail & high value jobs; or • adds to the provision and attractiveness of the office market in the town centre; or • supports existing, committed and planned public and private investment; or • increases the diversity of uses and contributes to the day or night time economy; or • supports the town in its role as a regional transport gateway / interchange and improves linkages to it from the rest of the borough and beyond <u>especially by active travel modes</u>; or • includes housing development.
CS7	Consideration should be given as to whether a reference to leisure opportunities / GI should be included.	<p>The Council will not support proposals to develop the Strategic Location which seek to develop the site in a piecemeal or disjointed manner. Development proposals should have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any proposed phasing of development on the site and the timely delivery of any necessary and agreed mitigation measures and infrastructure; • The need to link employment development to adjoining residential areas, especially in Inner Warrington to maximise local employment 	<p>The Council will not support proposals to develop the Strategic Location which seek to develop the site in a piecemeal or disjointed manner. Development proposals should have regard</p> <p>to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any proposed phasing of development on the site and the timely delivery of any necessary and agreed mitigation measures and infrastructure; • The need to link employment development to adjoining residential areas, especially in Inner
	Consideration should be given to including more specific reference to sustainable design and the aspiration / potential for CHP.		

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
		<p>opportunities that can be accessed by active travel or public transport modes; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to adhere to policies elsewhere in the plan especially those that relate to sustainable development (CS11), ensuring a high quality place (QE7) and active travel and public transport (MP3 and MP4). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warrington to maximise local employment opportunities that can be accessed by active travel or public transport modes; and The need to adhere to policies elsewhere in the plan especially those that relate to sustainable development (CS1), <u>Decentralised Energy Networks and Low Carbon Development (QE1)</u>, <u>Green Infrastructure (QE3)</u>, ensuring a high quality place (QE7) and active travel and public transport (MP3 and MP4).
CS8	Consideration as to whether a more specific reference to education and skills improvement in this area should be made.	<p>Inner Warrington will continue to be the focus of development and physical change in the borough.</p> <p>Development in the area should look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the maximum physical and environmental benefits from the re-use and redevelopment of underused, vacant and derelict land; Secure the maximum social benefits in order to contribute to the Council's "Closing the Gaps" agenda and address issues within areas of deprivation Contribute to the delivery of new homes to help achieve the 60% target set out in Policy CS1, whilst ensuring that a mix of housing in terms of type, size and tenure is delivered to ensure that an attractive and balanced housing offer is available Ensure accessible employment opportunities for the local population are maintained and improved. 	<p>Inner Warrington will continue to be the focus of development and physical change in the borough.</p> <p>Development in the area should look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the maximum physical and environmental benefits from the re-use and redevelopment of underused, vacant and derelict land; Secure the maximum social benefits in order to contribute to the Council's "Closing the Gaps" agenda and address issues within areas of deprivation; Contribute to the delivery of new homes to help achieve the 60% target set out in Policy CS1, whilst ensuring that a mix of housing in terms of type, size and tenure is delivered to <u>help meet identified needs and</u> ensure that an attractive and balanced housing offer is available; and Ensure accessible employment <u>and training</u> opportunities for the local
	Consider making reference to "identified housing needs" to illustrate the need to use Council evidence		

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
			population are maintained and improved.
CS10	Consider making reference to potentially acceptable uses	No reference made	Added to policy: "Further consideration and guidance on appropriate uses will be provided through either the Site Allocations Development Plan Document or a Supplementary Planning Document".
CS11	Consider whether a reference to water quality is necessary	5 th bullet: any adverse effects on sites of nature conservation importance, to ensure that these effects are avoided, mitigated or compensated as appropriate.	6 th bullet: Any adverse effects on <u>other</u> sites of nature conservation importance <u>or water quality</u> , to ensure that these effects are avoided, mitigated or compensated as appropriate.
SN2	Policy could be strengthened to include an explicit reference to securing accommodation specifically targeted at the elderly as a means of helping to enable a greater degree of self independent living and therefore mental wellbeing.	No reference made	additional bullet point added: "Requiring development proposals to give specific consideration to meeting the needs of the elderly and enabling a greater degree of self independent living"
QE8	Consider amending wording of policy to include reference to economic activity	The Council and its partners will aim to recognise the significance and value of historic assets by identifying their positive influence on the character of the environment and an area's sense of place; their ability to act as a catalyst for regeneration; and their ability to inspire the design of new development.	The Council and its partners will aim to recognise the significance and value of historic assets by identifying their positive influence on the character of the environment and an area's sense of place; their ability to <u>contribute to economic activity and</u> act as a catalyst for regeneration; and their ability to inspire the design of new development.
MP10	Consider amending the policy to reference the types of infrastructure to be considered	The Council and its partners will ensure that Warrington's future growth is supported and enhanced through the timely delivery of necessary infrastructure required to support strategic and site specific	The Council and its partners will ensure that Warrington's future growth is supported and enhanced through the timely delivery of necessary <u>transport, utility, social and environmental</u> infrastructure required to support

Policy	Issue Identified	Original Wording	Amended Wording
		infrastructure proposals in accordance with the overall spatial strategy by:	strategic and site specific proposals in accordance with the overall spatial strategy by:

Table 19

6.124 Although the exercise of predicting and evaluating effects has produced only minor changes in the draft Local Plan Core Strategy, this is probably due to early consideration of a full range of sustainability objectives in the drafting of the Local Plan Core Strategy objectives and the document itself.

6.125 The minor changes that resulted from the exercise of predicting and evaluating the effects were incorporated into the policies that were consulted on at the Pre-publication stage in December 2011. After consultation on the Pre-publication Draft Local Plan Core Strategy a number of further amendments were made to the plan, which were approved by the Council's Executive Board on 12th March 2012. These changes have been subject to the sustainability appraisal process as well, the details of which are contained in Appendix 12. This evaluation concluded that in most cases the changes would have no significant impact. In a small number of cases it was considered that the changes would have a minor positive impact on the sustainability indicators in line with the wider appraisal.

6.126 The Proposed Submission Core Strategy went to Full Council on 26th March 2012 to secure consent to submit to the Secretary of State, which was duly granted. Between then and the Proposed Submission Core Strategy being released for consultation, under Regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, a further series of changes were made to the document. These alterations were confined solely to minor editorial and technical changes only and as such did not warrant an assessment to conclude whether a further re-appraisal under the SA process was required. The schedule of changes has been published along side the Proposed Submission Core Strategy.

6.127 These latest changes, also included the deletion of one of the six waste and minerals objectives but this was the result of two objectives (MW1 and MW2) being amalgamated to form a single objective. This change did not result in a significant change in direction and hence any change to the policy approach so therefore a re-appraisal of the new objective was not considered to be required.

Any proposed mitigation measures

6.128 Overall, the assessment of RSS and UDP policies with improvements as set out in the preferred strategic, housing and employment preferred options have not identified any potentially significant negative outcomes. It is therefore not considered necessary at this time to consider any mitigation measures.

6.129 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and has replaced all previous Government planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements (except for PPS10 Sustainable Waste Management which remains relevant).

6.130 The NPPF continues and strengthens the emphasis on sustainable development as a "golden thread" that runs through planning policy. As there is no change to this central thrust of national policy which is already reflected in the emerging strategy, it is not considered necessary to re-appraise the strategy at this stage.

7 Implementation

Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level

7.1 The Local Plan Core Strategy is the main document in the Council's new Local Planning Framework. Other development plan documents of relevance within the Local Planning Framework will be:

- Joint Waste and Minerals Local Plan
- Land Allocations Local Plan

7.2 The timetable for the production of each of these documents is set out in the Council's revised Local Development Scheme that was approved by the Council's Executive Board on 16th April 2012. Each of these documents will be subject to their own Sustainability Appraisal.

Task B6 - Developing Proposals for monitoring

7.3 The sustainability process is an iterative process, so its success and effectiveness will be monitored by the continued collection of data according to identified indicators in the sustainability framework.

7.4 The likely significant affects of the Local Plan Core Strategy policies that have been identified in this Sustainability Appraisal will be monitored to evaluate their success. The mechanisms for monitoring the baseline evidence of the Local Plan Core Strategy are well established in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Alignment between indicators used for monitoring the Local Plan Core Strategy with Sustainability Framework indicators has been ensured as far as possible so as not to overburden any monitoring regime.

7.5 Sustainability Appraisal monitoring for the Local Plan Core Strategy will be incorporated into the existing monitoring arrangements and in particular the AMR prepared for the Local Planning Framework. Section 20 of the Draft Local Plan Core Strategy outlines the indicators that will be used for monitoring both the Local Plan Core Strategy policies and the SA objectives. Although the format of the Annual Monitoring Report may change with the amendments made to reporting arrangements in the Localism Bill, any changes will consider the need to reflect all relevant Sustainability Appraisal objectives and indicators.

7.6 Any unforeseen adverse affects arising from implementation of the policies will be highlighted in the AMR and recommendations made regarding the need for revisions to any policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy.

8 Appendices

8.1 Due to their substantial volume the appendices are contained in a separate document.



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