

Rotherham local plan

Sites and Policies

Strategic Environmental Assessment Post Adoption Statement

July 2018

Contents

Introduction	2
Background.....	3
Integrating environmental & sustainability considerations into the Sites and Policies document	5
How the Environmental Report has been taken into account	7
How consultation responses have been taken into account	14
Reasons for choosing the final version of the Sites and Policies document (in light of other reasonable alternatives).....	19
Measures to monitor the significant environmental effects of the Sites and Policies document	24
Table: 1 Core Strategy preparation and Sustainability Appraisal process	3
Table 2: Sites and Policies preparation and Sustainability Appraisal process	4
Table 3: Outstanding sustainability issues and potential mitigation or enhancement.....	9
Table 4: January 2018 IIA of the Proposed Main Modifications to the Publication Sites and Policies Document: Results	13

Acronyms and other abbreviations used in this report are listed below:

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
EqIA	Equalities Impact Assessment
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IIA	Integrated Impact Assessment
LDF	Local Development Framework
LP	Local Plan
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
UDP	Unitary Development Plan

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Introduction

1. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council adopted the Rotherham Sites and Policies document on 27 June 2018. This Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Post Adoption Statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004¹ ('the SEA Regulations'), which requires that on adoption of a plan or programme, a statement setting out the following is published:
 - How the environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
 - How the Environmental Report has been taken into account;
 - How opinions expressed during consultation have been taken into account;
 - The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

2. The IIA/SA, prepared to accompany each iterative stage of the Rotherham Sites and Policies Document has been undertaken by Jacobs U.K. Limited in conjunction with chartered town planners and other specialists within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. Details of each stage of Local Plan and IIA/ SA preparation are provided in tables 1 and 2 below. Whilst this post-adoption statement has been prepared by RMBC, review of this Statement and appropriate verification and sign-off has been sought from independent SA/IIA consultants – Jacobs who have retained responsibility throughout for leading on the preparation of the SA/IIA to support the Local Plan.

3. In keeping with Section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Planning Act 2008²), an appraisal of the sustainability of the Sites and Policies document has been conducted. In accordance with the SEA Regulations, the 'significant effects' of implementing the plan have been included in an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) report³ which reported upon the outcomes of four assessments which informed the development of the Sites and Policies Document. These were:
 - Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which assessed effects of the policies in the Sites and Policies Document and the proposed site allocations across a range of environmental, social and socio-economic issues;
 - Health Impact Assessment (HIA) which assessed impacts of the Sites and Policies Local Plan on the health and well-being of the population and ability to access health-related facilities and services. This also addressed equalities issues and thus has had some overlap with an Equalities Impact Assessment;
 - Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) which assessed the impacts of the Sites and Policies Local Plan on equalities issues in particular disadvantaged or excluded groups of people. EqIA helps identify where we can best promote equality of opportunity; and
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening which assessed the potential for the Sites and Policies Local Plan to significantly affect a European

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/made>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents>

³ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Sites and Policies Document: Submission Version Volumes 1 to 4, and Addendum (March 2016) & Integrated Impact Assessment of Main Modifications (January 2018)

nature conservation site, and determined whether or not there was a need for a full Appropriate Assessment.

4. The IIA identified social and economic effects alongside the environmental effects required by SEA. The IIA Report is the equivalent of an SA Report, and has been concurrent with the preparation of the Sites and Policies document. SA incorporates the requirements of SEA in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC⁴ and the SEA Regulations, and removes the need to carry out a separate SEA. As a result, the IIA of the Sites and Policies document satisfies the relevant regulations and legislation.
5. For ease of reference, references in this report to SA also refer to the IIA produced from 2013 onwards. Full references to specific reports are provided in footnotes where relevant.

Background

6. The Sites and Policies document forms part of Rotherham's Local Plan. It identifies housing, employment, retail and mixed use development sites across the borough to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy (adopted in 2014). Two special policy areas are included within the Sites and Policies Document at Waverley New Community and the former Maltby Colliery site with accompanying site specific policies. This Local Plan allocates sites for new homes, retail and employment development. It also includes detailed policies to guide decisions on planning applications.
7. The accompanying Policies Map identifies all proposed development site allocations, land uses and policy designations in the borough. The Sites and Policies document brings forward the adopted Core Strategy, which sets out the 'spatial' strategy for the whole Borough including the identification of the broad locations for delivering new housing and employment growth, including provision for retail, leisure and community facilities. It also sets out the strategic policies and the required new infrastructure to make all this happen over the Plan period 2013 - 2028. The Sites and Policies Document forms part of the Local Plan and is in accordance with the Core Strategy.
8. SA has been undertaken as an iterative process throughout the development of the Sites and Policies document. The table below summarises the process of SA with respect to the Core Strategy:

Table: 1 Core Strategy preparation and Sustainability Appraisal process

Core Strategy Development	SA / IIA Stage	Timeline
-	Sustainability Appraisal General Scoping Report	2006
Core Strategy Objectives	Compatibility Appraisal with the SA Objectives	Late 2006 – 2009
Three Strategic Options / Scenarios	Assessment Against the Baseline	2006
Nine Policy Directions		
Core Strategy Preferred Options Report	SA Report (by Arup)	January 2007
Urban Extension Options	Assessment Against Growth Scenarios	2009
Three Options for Growth, Employment Land Strategy,	Assessment Against the Baseline	2009

⁴ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042>

Core Strategy Development	SA / IIA Stage	Timeline
Rotherham Town Centre Spatial Options		
Core Strategy Revised Options Report	SA Report (by WSP)	May 2009
-	Sustainability Appraisal General Scoping Report - Update	May 2011
Revised Urban Extension Options	Assessment Against the Baseline	2011
Draft Policies		
Final Draft Core Strategy	IIA Report (by Jacobs)	May 2011
Schedule of Changes	Comparison with the Final Draft Core Strategy, Assessment of Material Changes Against Previous Predictions or Against the Baseline (as appropriate)	2012
Publication Draft Core Strategy	Addendum 1 to the IIA Report (to be read alongside the May 2011 IIA Report)	May 2012
Focused Changes to the Publication Core Strategy	None (There were no changes significant to the SA, and therefore no assessment was necessary.)	January 2013
Submission Version of the Core Strategy	IIA Report (by Jacobs) (Included review of Focused Changes)	June 2013
Core Strategy Proposed Main Modifications	Addendum 1 to the IIA Report – Submission Version of the Core Strategy (June 2013) (by Jacobs)	February 2014 (with post consultation update in May 2014)
Adopted Core Strategy	SEA Adoption Statement (by RMBC)	August 2014

9. The Table below summarises the process of SA preparation for the Sites and Policies document Local Plan.

Table 2: Sites and Policies preparation and Sustainability Appraisal process

Sites and Policies Development	SA/ IIA Stage	Timeline
Draft Sites and Policies	IIA Report (by Jacobs) Assessment against Baseline. All sites individually assessed.	May 2013
	Sustainability Appraisal General Scoping Report - Update	2013
Final Draft Sites and Policies	IIA Report (by Jacobs) Assessment against Baseline. All sites individually assessed.	September 2014
Publication Sites and Policies	IIA Report (by Jacobs) Assessment against Baseline. All sites individually assessed.	September 2015
Submission	IIA Report (by Jacobs) Errata prepared and corrections/ changes made to September 2015 version to ensure soundness of the IIA Report prepared to accompany the Sites and Policies Document at its submission.	March 2016
Additional Housing Sites Consultation	SA of two additional housing site allocations proposed to meet the settlement grouping target at Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton (by Jacobs).	July 2017
Sites and Policies Document proposed Main Modifications	IIA of Main Modifications (including the two additional sites at Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton) prepared at Inspector's request to ensure soundness of the Local Plan and to identify any policies/ site allocations requiring change following the IIA of the Main Modifications (by	January 2018

Sites and Policies Development	SA/ IIA Stage	Timeline
	Jacobs).	
Adopted Sites and Policies Document Local Plan	SEA Post Adoption Statement	July 2018

10. Prior to submission of the Sites and Policies document Local Plan, consultation provided the public and statutory bodies with an opportunity to comment on the Sites and Policies document and associated SA / IIA reports during the Draft Sites and Policies (2013), Final Draft Sites and Policies (2014), and Publication (2015) stages.
11. The Council's Sites and Policies document and accompanying SA⁵ were submitted to Government for examination in March 2016. Mr Chris Anstey was appointed as the Inspector to conduct the independent examination into the soundness and legal compliance of the Sites and Policies document.
12. Following the hearing sessions of the Sites and Policies document independent examination, the Council consulted on proposed additional housing sites. This stage was accompanied by an IIA report⁶. A hearing session to consider the additional housing sites was held, following which the Inspector's draft Main Modifications to the Sites and Policies document were published and also subject to consultation. An addendum to the IIA Report⁷ was published alongside this consultation, which occurred in January and February 2018.
13. The Council received the Inspector's Final Report⁸ on 4 April 2018, which included the final Main Modifications. Paragraph 6 notes that none of the amendments significantly alters the content of the modifications as published for consultation or undermines the participatory processes and sustainability appraisal that has been undertaken.

Integrating environmental & sustainability considerations into the Sites and Policies document

14. As shown in the table above, Sustainability Appraisal has been carried as an iterative process throughout preparation of the Sites and Policies document. This has allowed reasonable alternatives for achieving the housing, retail and employment site allocations to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy; to be assessed for their sustainability effects and for alternative site allocations to be considered; and ensured that the wording of the specific development management policies (as reflective of requirements, provisions and aspirations for development) minimise negative sustainability impacts and maximise opportunities to deliver the sustainability objectives.
15. Rotherham's approach applies the SA / IIA Framework (a set of environmental, social and economic objectives for the borough), originally developed in 2006, as a guiding tool. However the assessment under each Topic (from 2011 onwards) is conducted against the baseline. The process has identified the risk that a significant effect or

⁵ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Sites and Policies: IIA Report – Submission Version of the Sites and Policies Document Local Plan (March 2016)

⁶ Integrated Impact Assessment of Additional Housing Sites and Site Justification: Wath-upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton Consultation Sites (June 2017)

⁷ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Proposed Main Modifications to the Publication Sites and Policies Document (January 2018)

⁸ Report on the Examination of the Rotherham Sites and Policies Plan (4 April 2018).

impact might occur, and the control mechanisms in place to avoid, reduce, or offset the potential impacts of those risks. It also identifies the opportunities for beneficial impacts, and the proposals which may enhance those benefits. Section 3.3: Volume 1⁹ summarises the SA Framework and Scoping Issues for this IIA and table 3.1 provides details of the SA Objectives for Rotherham. In total 14 SA topic themes are identified and a series of guiding questions or decision-making criteria prepared for each theme to probe the sustainability of planning policies.

16. The SA of allocations has been structured in accordance with the SA Framework (refer to Table 3.1 and Appendix 1-C of Volume 1). The Framework is made up of SA Topics and Objectives covering environmental, social and economic issues. We have developed criteria relevant to site selection and physical features or constraints, and framed our criteria under the relevant SA Topics. Where relevant, we have merged the consideration of the different SA Topics where constraints or features overlap on different issues (for example, access to sustainable transport modes addresses several socio-economic topics). The criteria mainly focus on constraints and therefore identify risks of negative effects, which is a proportionate and SEA-compliant level of assessment detail at this stage.
17. A Red / Amber / Green assessment for most of these criteria was applied: Red indicates a potentially significant constraint and/ or significant negative impact on the achievement of an SA Objective; Amber indicates some potential constraint and/ or negative impact on the achievement of an SA Objective; and Green indicates where there is no known constraint and/ or little negative impact on the achievement of an SA Objective. The detailed criteria / constraints can be found in the methodology section at Appendix 2-C, Section 2- C.4 of Volume 2¹⁰.
18. The Scoping Report Section 5: SA Approach and Framework, specifically Table 5.3: 'Guidelines on how the significance of impacts of a Local Development Document should be concluded'¹¹; outlines how the baseline (as categorised) will react to changes of differing magnitudes caused by a Local Development Document, which can indicate a relative significance 'score' for any risk of an impact or opportunity identified. When combined with table 5.2: 'Guideline on considering the importance and sensitivity of potential receptor types, locations, indicators or other features'; these identified criteria allowed stakeholders to clearly follow the line of reasoning of the SA and influence the way in which SA is carried out. A summary of net residual effects - the combined effects of site allocations, safeguarded land (if developed in the future) and policies are considered alongside the certainty of that assessment. These results are reported in volume 3¹².
19. Section 17 of Volume 3 'Conclusions and Supporting Detail' summarises the IIA's assessment of the likely significant effects of the Sites and Policies document, these are the key risks that should be monitored and managed and the opportunities which should be secured through its implementation. Sections 3 to 16 of this volume provide further detail on the assessments. Table 17.1 'Summary of Likely Significant Effects of

⁹ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 1: Section 3.3 SA Framework and Scoping of Issues for this IIA. Table 3.1: SA Objectives for Rotherham.

¹⁰ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 2 Appendix 2_C and Section 2-C.4

¹¹ Sustainability Appraisal /. Integrated Impact Assessment of Rotherham's Local Plan: General Scoping Report: 2013 Post-Consultation Update

¹² Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 3

the Sites and Policies Document (and of the Local Plan as a whole)' refers. Section 17.2 summarises the mitigation recommendations.

20. The Sites and Policies document, has developed alongside the SA / IIA process, and has incorporated within its policies, ways of mitigating risks and taking advantage of opportunities. The SA / IIA assess the potential significant effects as a result of any remaining risks and opportunities with mitigation in place. Site allocations and alternatives are considered in the light of each SA topic, and the results presented in the IIA report.
21. Stakeholders, including statutory consultees, were given opportunities to comment at each stage of plan production. Any views expressed were used to guide and inform the Sustainability Appraisal and plan preparation process. The development of the Sites and Policies Local Plan and the accompanying SA / IIA has therefore been an iterative and inclusive process.

How the Environmental Report has been taken into account

22. The SA / IIA process has contributed to the development and refinement of the Sites and Policies document by providing an assessment of the proposed policies and potential site allocations throughout the plan preparation process.
23. Each SA and IIA report demonstrates how the sustainability objectives have been taken into account at each stage and integrated into the Sites and Policies document. Policies have also been assessed and recommendations regarding mitigation and monitoring have been provided. These recommendations have been taken into account throughout preparation of the Sites and Policies document.
24. For example the 2013 SA report¹³ made a number of recommendations regarding policy directions, many of which have informed further drafting of the Sites and Policies Local Plan, including:
 - Reference to Sustainable Design and development being adaptable to meet changing occupier circumstance throughout their lifetimes.
 - Further emphases on 'Secured by Design' principles in the design policy are required.
 - Development proposals should encourage easy and convenient recycling and composting, and consider innovative ways to reduce the disposal of waste to landfill.
 - Include measures to improve access for the disabled.
 - More strongly prioritise the need for sustainable transport infrastructure and access in order to maximise active lifestyle opportunities and minimise potential increases in emissions.
 - Provision of appropriate community facilities including a variety of health facilities and health services at the local level, in discussion with NHS and public.
 - Improved accessibility for the Gypsy and Traveller community to local services and facilities.
 - Masterplanning could be enhanced by requiring high quality engagement with the public and possibly EqIA.

¹³ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Draft Sites and Policies Document Parts 1 and 2 plus errata (May 2013)

- The provision of opportunities for play, recreation and sport, phrasing to be reviewed to ensure that potential developers demonstrate capacity and levels of access to such facilities.
- Protection of high quality soils at design stage and through the siting of development; policy should also include construction processes for temporary storage and reuse of high quality soils.
- Proposals should demonstrate appropriate consideration of height and duration of soil storage mounds, and ensure these are viable alongside construction compounds and work sites.
- Decisions need to be based on new and up-to-date Agricultural Land Quality Classifications.
- Each of the 'in combination' alternatives – were assessed and groups of individual sites were considered for potential combined effects from which any further 'reasonable alternatives' could be identified. The following 'in combination' alternatives were found in the Rotherham Conurbation and Dinnington settlement groupings. Each alternative has a unique set of potential benefits and potential adverse effects, and therefore trade-offs are inevitable.
- In Rotherham, the IIA has identified that the number of allocations and safeguarded land required between Greasbrough and Rawmarsh could be reduced in order to lower the potential impact on soils, water resources, historic environment and landscape. However, the negative effects of such an alternative would include greater challenges in achieving highways access, impacts on Local Wildlife Sites, and slightly greater flood risk. There is also a 'middle option' which could reduce impacts on the Registered Park and Garden but would increase the pressures on biodiversity and ecology.
- In Dinnington, the IIA has identified that the number of allocations and amount of safeguarded land in the east and south of Dinnington could be reduced in order to lower the potential impacts on landscape, soils and biodiversity. However, this would require selecting sites in the northwest, which could have townscape effects, lower accessibility to services (including recycling centres) and potential for increased impact on water resources.
- It was considered that individual site assessments were an adequate basis for making decisions on preferred allocations in all other settlement areas. These areas include Brampton / Wath, Catcliffe / Treeton / Waverley, Thorpe Hesley, Ravenfield Common, Kiveton Park / Wales, Maltby / Hellaby and Thurcroft.

25. The 2014 Final Draft SA report¹⁴ concluded that in the majority, the policies of the Sites and Policies document are capable of addressing all risks of negative sustainability effects, and achieving net benefits. The Sites and Policies document (Final Draft) has been enhanced based on the recommendations of previous revisions of the IIA report, by incorporating changes and improvements identified in the IIA of policies conducted in 2013 into the updated Sites and Policies document. There are no current or outstanding recommendations on the policies:

- Stage 3 of the site selection process compared and prioritised those sites that were the most sustainable for development and that best met the strategic objectives of the Local Plan as a whole. One hundred and ninety two sites were identified for allocation or safeguarding based on greatest fit with strategic objectives (including potential positive sustainability effects) and least negative sustainability effects. This accounted for the potential to avoid, reduce, remedy

¹⁴ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Sites and Policies Document (Final Draft) Parts 1 and 2 and non-technical summary (September 2014)

or offset negative effects. Some of the more specific messages for the Sites and Policies document are reiterated below:

- the need for more affordable housing with a mix of tenures to meet the needs of the existing population;
- the importance of prioritising the long-term improvement and prosperity of Rotherham Town Centre;
- prioritising the development of brownfield land;
- achieving high energy-efficiency and water-efficiency in development, and being sensitive to the water resource availability of the catchments in the borough;
- the need to address anticipated growth in waste production, and to treat different types of waste within accessible, urban locations, close to where waste is generated;
- the need for development to support Rotherham’s visitor economy;
- an opportunity to integrate with the South Yorkshire Forest Plan/ Green Infrastructure Strategy, provide sport and recreation facilities and reclaim derelict land;
- opportunities to integrate biodiversity into development planning, alongside encouraging the involvement of residents in conservation and management.

26. The 2016 Submission IIA identified key issues in site selection and potential mitigation or enhancement.

Table 3: Outstanding sustainability issues and potential mitigation or enhancement

Issue(s) Identified by Site Selection Methodology / IIA of Sites	Potential Mitigation or Enhancement
Poor accessibility to formal greenspace.	Ensure good connectivity with planned provision of greenspace and amenity at Bassingthorpe Farm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of Policies CS28 and SP40 to ensure greenspace provision is adequate, whether within the site or in tandem with Bassingthorpe Farm development
Poor accessibility to community services and facilities locally, relative to access to public transport	Application of Policy SP66 for the provision of new community services and facilities where reasonable relative to the scale of development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of Policies CS14 and SP29 to achieve improved sustainable transport opportunities or maximise the benefit of existing public transport accessibility. • Work with partners to ensure it is a priority to preserve good public transport accessibility
Sewerage capacity, water services and highways access	Application of Policies CS32, SP70, CS30 and SP29 to ensure good and timely infrastructure provision, including educational facilities.
Certain settlements have a deficit in schools capacity (as identified by the Infrastructure Study 2012)	Application of Policies SP66 and SP69 for the provision of new schools or other educational facilities where reasonable, relative to the scale of development, including in combination with other allocations or development.

Issue(s) Identified by Site Selection Methodology / IIA of Sites	Potential Mitigation or Enhancement
Flood risk issues	<p>Certain sites will require an appropriate flood risk assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply Policies CS25 and SP50 to ensure flood risk on- and off-site is dealt with robustly, including the timely resourcing and implementation of any required flood risk management measures
Certain sites are within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	<p>Ensure applicants assess air quality in accordance with Policy SP 55 and provide a baseline alongside any planning application, plus evidence that residents will live in an area of good air quality, in order to comply with Policies CS 14 and CS 27 (i.e. to assess the appropriateness / effectiveness of any mitigation).</p>
<p>Certain sites are in close proximity to LWSs and ancient woodland;</p> <p>Certain sites have significant protected species issues;</p> <p>Potential loss of habitat within, or harmful recreational pressure on, Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Policies CS19, CS20, CS28, SP36 and SP 37 are applied rigorously for 'nature conservation sites' and protected species' protection, and seek positive management and enhancement via those policies and others – e.g. Green Infrastructure. • Ensure the Council receives ecologist advice on applications where protected species are potentially at risk or in proximity to important habitats and designated sites, specifically considering recreational pressure / damage to any wildlife site.
Potential harmful recreational pressure or other amenity effects on geological SSSIs ¹⁵ , LGSs, or RIGS	<p>Ensure Policies SP36 and SP37 are applied rigorously for geological conservation sites' protection, and seek positive management and enhancement via those policies and others.</p>
Certain sites contain or are in close proximity to water bodies, which include 'ordinary watercourses' and ponds	<p>Apply appropriate policies, e.g. SP35 and SP50, to ensure water bodies on-site are appropriately preserved and protected.</p>
Certain sites are in proximity to minerals safeguarding areas	<p>Apply policies CS26 and SP52, and aim to avoid the sterilisation of mineral resources.</p>
Sites within landscapes which are highly sensitive to development, in proximity to an Area of High Landscape Value, or contain greenspace or TPO trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed assessment has been conducted on the impact upon Areas of High Landscape Value, which will guide decisions on planning applications in the future. • Planning applications will generally require the assessment, preservation and where not possible, replacement of TPO trees. • Application of Policies CS21 and SP35 to conserve and enhance landscape and townscape quality and character; and CS22 to ensure adequate greenspace is provided. • Application of Policies CS 19, CS20, and SP36 regarding TPO trees and green infrastructure.

¹⁵ The assessment of 'in combination' effects at Stage 3 of the Site Selection Methodology has identified the potential for effects from multiple sites on geodiversity as a result of potential recreational pressure. Every effort has been made to avoid sites which may present a potential significant effect on any SSSI. However, the Council is aware of this potential issue on an on-going basis, and will liaise with Natural England as appropriate.

Issue(s) Identified by Site Selection Methodology / IIA of Sites	Potential Mitigation or Enhancement
Certain sites are in either within or in proximity to designated historic environment features	Application of Policies CS23, SP43, SP44, SP45, SP46, SP47, SP48 and SP49 as may be appropriate towards the conservation and enhancement of nearby heritage features. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to obtain and apply professional archaeologist advice for applications which may affect designated features, including with consideration to any recreational impacts on Scheduled Monuments or other features not under active management. • Via the above policies, it may be possible to create net improvements to the setting of historic environment features, for example, where sites are being redeveloped.
All sites have the potential to encounter buried archaeology of significance	Application of Policies CS23, SP43, SP44, SP45, SP46, SP47, SP48 and SP49 as may be appropriate towards the conservation and enhancement of nearby heritage features.
Some sites (LDF ref: 045, 046 and 047) have poor accessibility to community services and facilities, mainly by foot or cycle.	Application of Policy SP66 for the provision of new community services and facilities where reasonable relative to the scale of development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of Policy SP29 to maximise the benefit of good public transport accessibility for these sites. • Work with partners to ensure it is a priority to preserve good public transport accessibility.
Certain sites are within Groundwater Source Protection Zones	Ensure applicants assess potential impacts on groundwater in accordance with Policy SP55 alongside any planning application.

27. The IIA has been an iterative process alongside Local Plan development, with the first policy recommendations being made in 2013. The IIA Reports produced coincided with the following drafts of the Plan up until submission:

- 2013 IIA Report: Draft Sites and Policies document;
- 2014 IIA Report: Final Draft Sites and Policies document;
- 2015 IIA Report: Publication Sites and Policies document; and
- 2016 IIA Report: Submission Sites and Policies document.

28. The Council has endeavoured to adopt IIA recommendations wherever possible, and where not possible, has identified ways of addressing the key concerns raised by the IIA. The IIA has concluded that in the majority, the policies of the Sites and Policies document are capable of addressing all risks of negative sustainability effects, and achieving net benefits. The Sites and Policies document (pre-submission draft) has been enhanced based on the recommendations of previous revisions of the IIA report, by incorporating changes and improvements identified in the IIA of policies previously conducted. There are no current or outstanding recommendations on the policies.

29. As stated in Volume 1¹⁶ of the IIA Report (Section 3.5), the Sites and Policies document is a subsidiary document to the adopted Core Strategy. The policies of the Sites and Policies document build upon those set out in the Core Strategy, which has been subject to alternatives assessment as part of its own IIA / SA. Over the course of

¹⁶ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 1: Section 3.5

the Sites and Policies document's development, no significantly different, alternative ways of building upon the Core Strategy policies have been identified. Therefore, with one exception (Policy SP60 – Sustainable Construction and Wind Energy - Volume 3), there has been no requirement to assess alternative policies as part of this IIA.

30. The table in Volume 1: Appendix 1-F sets out the requirements to meet the SEA Regulations Compliance Checklist. Information referred to in Schedule 2, as required through Regulation 12-(3) and specifically bullet 6: The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects on issues such as - (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g) water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape; and (m) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (l).
31. As noted in this table the IIA reports on these cumulative and synergistic effects in Volume 2¹⁷: Section 4 and Volume 3¹⁸, Sections 3 through to 16.
32. SA cumulative effects (or combined effects) from different combinations of sites; may lead to the need to consider different groupings of sites as alternatives and this may include sites previously discarded. Therefore criterion H. of Stage 3 - Site Prioritisation considers: SA Cumulative Effects and these are reported in (Section 2-C.5) of volume 2. The Cumulative Score notes the following assessment ratings: Red = SA identifies major adverse cumulative effect(s) in combination with other sites. Amber = SA identifies adverse cumulative effect(s) in combination with other sites which can be reduced or overcome with mitigation. Green = SA does not identify any change to the original SA of this site.
33. The potential effects of selecting an individual site may be significantly different from a specific combination of sites. As a result, proposed allocations and safeguarded land were grouped into clusters, based on their potential for 'in combination' effects on particular issues or features within the borough. These issues or potential effects on receptors within the borough were identified based on experience and professional judgment. Table 4.4 of section 4: Volume 2 outlines the 'in combination' alternatives identified as significant and therefore requiring consideration in the IIA for Rotherham Urban Area. Plans showing each of alternatives R1 to R5 can be found in Appendix 2-D, Section 2-D.1 of Volume 2. The results are presented in Section 4.3.4.
34. Table 4.11 of section 4: Volume 2 outlines the 'in combination' alternatives identified as significant and therefore requiring consideration in the IIA for Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common. Plans showing each of alternatives D1 to D3 can be found in Appendix 2-D, Section 2-D.2 of Volume 2. The results are presented in Section 4.4.4.
35. For all other settlement groupings it was found that individual site assessment provides adequate comparison of sites in the settlement grouping and these has been nothing further to consider under SA/ IIA.

¹⁷ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 2: chapter 4

¹⁸ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 3: chapters 3 to 16

36. Table 7.1 of the Non-Technical Summary September 2015¹⁹, summarises the IIA (and statutory SEA) monitoring recommendations specific to the Local Plan, including Sites and Policies document. Such monitoring may require a change in the way that planning application and/or building control data is collected and collated in order to meet this statutory obligation. Monitoring the need to update the Infrastructure Delivery Study (2012) and the future delivery of infrastructure is essential.
37. The June 2017 SA²⁰ of new housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton Settlement Grouping concluded that: on balance the proposed additional housing site allocations are the most appropriate to meet the identified housing supply deficit in this settlement grouping. They minimise the additional land which would be removed from the Green Belt, bringing forward land which was previously proposed as Safeguarded Land, and include land originally proposed to be retained as Green Space. Re-assessment indicates that allocating these sites for residential use to meet the identified housing supply deficit outweighs the need to retain them for their original proposed allocations.
38. The IIA Addendum²¹ was prepared to accompany the consultation on the Main Modifications in January 2018. This IIA report has assessed the Inspector's proposed Main Modifications. This IIA Report concludes that only a few of the Main Modifications could potentially result in residual effects. These are summarised in Table 4 below.

Table 4: January 2018 IIA of the Proposed Main Modifications to the Publication Sites and Policies Document: Results

IIA Assessment	Potential Residual Effect	Mitigation Required
The majority of MMs relate to the clarification of policies and therefore do not have the potential for residual impacts. This is described by the table in Appendix A of the Report.	Changes to policies are made through Main Modifications to ensure the Plan is sound.	No residual effects on the sustainability of the Plan and no mitigation required.
Main Modifications that provide sustainability improvements to the Local Plan; including boundary changes to development site allocations; refinement to policy wording; deletion of employment land allocation (E16) and Policy SP21 Todwick North, Dinnington; and deletion of residential land allocation (H84) to west of Kiveton Lane, Todwick.	Changes to policies, and deletion of proposed housing and employment site allocations are made through Main Modifications to ensure the Plan is sound.	No residual effects on the sustainability of the Plan and no mitigation required.
A number of Main Modifications proposed by the Inspector required detailed SA assessment as potentially they could give rise to residual effects (Table 3.1 in the IIA Report refers).	Where the Main Modification alters the current IIA assessment, almost all of these Main Modifications result in slightly beneficial or moderately beneficial change, e.g. an improvement to the sustainability of the Plan.	

¹⁹ Rotherham Local Plan: Sites and Policies Document Integrated Impact Assessment Report 2015. Non-Technical Summary (September 2015)

²⁰ Rotherham Local Plan Sites and Policies Document: Integrated Impact Assessment and Site Justification - Wath-upon-Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton Consultation Sites (June 2017)

²¹ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Proposed Main Modifications to the Publication Sites and Policies Document, plus Non-Technical Summary (January 2018)

IIA Assessment	Potential Residual Effect	Mitigation Required
MM1, MM47, MM68 reflecting the preferred route of HS2 - a slight adverse effect on the sustainability of the Plan.	Whilst the Local Plan is neutral on HS2 as it is promoted by Central Government, the safeguarded route now crosses an employment allocation.	Further consultation between the Local Authority and HS2 Ltd will be required as proposals for HS2 are developed further.
MM63: This change removes land from the Green Belt to redefine the site boundary of E23 (Maltby Colliery site) to a defensible Green Belt boundary and to ensure the Core Strategy target on employment land allocations is met.	This removes land from the Green Belt and includes the loss of Ancient Woodland.	The loss of Ancient Woodland cannot be mitigated directly although replacement planting at other locations at a greater scale can go some way to offsetting this loss.

39. Overall, this process has supported decision-making regarding:
- The selection of the most appropriate site allocations at each stage;
 - The revision of policies where necessary; and
 - The establishment of mitigation measures to address certain potentially negative effects and achieve the most sustainable outcome.
40. The SA / IIA process, including identification of environmental baseline and key issues, has assisted in the identification of constraints and allowed the Council to develop policies and promote site allocations which avoid impacts on these constraints or identify appropriate mitigation measures.
41. The final IIA Report²² has concluded that in the majority, the Sites and Policies Local Plan policies are capable of addressing the majority of risks of negative sustainability impacts, and achieving net benefits.

How consultation responses have been taken into account

42. A key component of the Sites and Policies document preparation and SA/SEA process is consultation with stakeholders. Throughout its preparation, the Sites and Policies document has been subject to consultation in line with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement²³ and relevant Regulations (primarily The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, (as amended), and subsequently The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012²⁴).
43. The Council has also complied with the requirements of the SEA Regulations (Regulation 12[6]), which establishes a set period for statutory consultation on the scope and level of detail of the SEA, and effective opportunity for the public and statutory consultees to express their opinions on the results of the SEA. Throughout the process of carrying out the SA / IIA, three statutory consultation bodies are required to be consulted – the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

²² Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016): Addendum 1 to the IIA – Additional Site Changes (June 2017); and Assessment of Main Modifications. (January 2018)

²³ Statement of Community Involvement, Adopted June 2006 and revised in June 2015

²⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

44. The Council has sought to address issues raised through the consultation exercises and to reflect those concerns in the content and wording of the Sites and Policies Local Plan. Changes have been made up to and following the independent examination to take account of comments received and the Inspector's recommendations.

Scoping Reports

45. The General Scoping Report produced in 2006²⁵ set the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal for those Local Development Documents which require it. It was subject to statutory consultation for a five-week period ending 13 January 2006. The Council consulted the Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, English Nature and English Heritage. However, the Council also broadened this statutory consultation and sought comment from any other interested bodies and individuals. A Feedback Report was produced following consultation²⁶. Comments received were taken into account and the scope of the SA amended as appropriate, including:
- The inclusion of additional sustainability issues
 - New decision guiding and making prompts and accompanying indicators
 - Amendments to SA objectives
 - Taking account of additional plans, policies and guidance
46. Due to the period of time since the Scoping Report was created, it was updated in 2011²⁷ and again in 2013²⁸ to reflect guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Consultation was undertaken for a statutory five-week period between March and April 2013. This included current statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England (then English Heritage) and Natural England, following the merger of English Nature and the Countryside Agency), as well as other interested bodies and individuals. Amendments included updates to the baseline situation and the context review to incorporate new and updated guidance provided by the NPPF since 2011. The fundamental elements of the original framework have been retained, which enables ongoing consistency with previous stages of assessment throughout Local Plan preparation.

Core Strategy Revised Options Report 2009

47. A Sustainability Appraisal Report²⁹ was issued for public consultation alongside the Core Strategy Revised Options Report between 29 May and 31 August 2009.
48. Detailed comments received are outlined in the Revised Options Final Feedback Report 2010³⁰.
49. At this stage the Council did not consult on individual development sites in the borough but the boundaries of the sites that were under consideration for possible future allocation and subsequent development were made available on the Council's web site and at stakeholder drop-in sessions. The consultation focused on the implications for particular settlements and how they might potentially grow in the future.

²⁵ Sustainability Appraisal of Rotherham's Local Development Framework: General Scoping Report (2006)

²⁶ Rotherham Borough Council Response to General Scoping Report Consultation (2006)

²⁷ Sustainability Appraisal of Rotherham's Local Development Framework, General Scoping Report – Update (May 2011)

²⁸ Rotherham Local Plan SA Scoping Report (June 2013): consultation undertaken between March and April 2013.

²⁹ Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Core Strategy Revised Options (May 2009)

³⁰ Core Strategy Revised Options. Final Feedback Report (March 2010)

50. Comments received were taken into account and reflected in further SA and Local Plan preparation work, including:
- Updated references to policies and additional documents
 - Need to undertake further Sustainability Appraisal work to ensure that it has considered all possible alternatives for urban extensions
 - Further work to be undertaken to enhance the biodiversity evidence base
 - Consideration of SA scoring in relation to some objectives.

Draft Core Strategy 2011 and Sites and Policies Issues and Options June 2011

51. An Integrated Impact Assessment Report³¹, incorporating SA, SEA, HIA, EqIA and HRA was issued for public consultation alongside the Draft Core Strategy between 4 July and 16 September 2011. Comments received are outlined in a Feedback Report produced in 2012³².
52. The Council surveyed over 650 sites to assess their suitability to meet future sustainable development needs. Each site was assessed for its potential capacity, for constraints that could affect suitability and deliverability, the identification of former uses (if any) and the site's Unitary Development Plan allocation / designation.
53. This initial sites appraisal demonstrated limited opportunities to develop on previously developed land. Whilst there is undeveloped and previously developed land available within the built up areas of settlements in the Borough, this is insufficient to meet the identified development targets.
54. An assessment of the sensitive planning issues affecting sites were noted on a traffic light system: green sites – no reservations to the site's future allocation for development; amber sites where the site has minor reservations and there are some sensitive planning issues that require mitigation and red and pink sites where the site is of a sensitive nature or has major land use policy constraints.
55. At the same time the Council also consulted on a series of issues including consultation on site selection methodology, the use of designations including the identification, expansion and protection of local wildlife sites, regionally important geological sites, conservation areas, green infrastructure corridors and questions on policy directions.
56. Comments received were taken into account and reflected in further IIA and Local Plan preparation work, including:
- Amended assessment of Bassingthorpe Farm as regards potential impact on Wentworth Woodhouse
 - Undertaking a Green Belt review.
57. Specific comments regarding the Sites and Policies Document included:
- Objections or observations regarding the site allocation options methodology;
 - Representations regarding designations in the Local Plan (in particular Local Wildlife Sites and Regionally Important Geological Sites);

³¹ Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's LDF Draft Core Strategy: Integrated Impact Assessment Report (May 2011)

³² Draft Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Issues and Options Consultation: Feedback Report (January 2012)

- Representations regarding the preferred site allocations and other alternative sites;
- Suggestions for future development management policies.

Draft Sites and Policies May 2013

58. IIA incorporating SA, SEA, HIA, EqIA and HRA was issued for public consultation alongside the draft Sites and Policies Local Plan between 20 May and 29 July 2013.
59. Comments received were taken into account and reflected in further IIA and Local Plan preparation work. Consultation responses on the Draft Sites and Policies Document (2013) are included within Appendix M of the IIA Report: Final Draft Sites and Policies Document September 2014. These comments include:
- Detailed comments from English Heritage regarding SA objectives request that these should be amended to reflect NPPF guidance.
 - Concerns regarding a number of the suggested site allocations and the potential impact of their development on designated historic assets (including Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscapes).
 - The level of mitigation offered by Local Plan policies and suggested changes to policy wording is inadequate.
 - Heritage Impact Assessments are required to ensure that the level of harm is properly evaluated and mitigation measures developed. Up to date Conservation Area Appraisals would assist in ensuring that the likelihood of any harm is minimised.
 - English Heritage disagreed with some of the SA assessments and the assumptions that effects can be reduced to slight with respect to Archaeology. Better to leave as uncertain.
 - English Heritage strongly advises that the LA engage with them and South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS) in the preparation of this Local Plan. Comment supported by SYAS.
 - SYPTE (South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Service) raised concern that specific issues such as air quality and industrial development activities are not weighted.
 - Natural England commented that the IIA does not include Habitat Regulation Assessment and requested that a HRA should accompany the next iteration of the Plan.
 - Objections received from nearby residents to the proposed allocation of land at Lathe Road and querying the decision using the SA scoring of the site.

Final Draft Sites and Policies Document 2014

60. The Council undertook consultation on Final Draft Sites and Policies Document between 13 October and 24 November 2014. All stages of consultation on the IIA (including consultation comments on the Scoping Reports 2011 and 2013) are reported in the submission version of the IIA (March 2016) within Volume 1 Appendix 1-D: Consultation Responses on the IIA. Appendix 1-D.3 provides details of consultation responses in 2014.
61. English Heritage commented on the need for development principles to be attached to specific sites to guide future planning applications. Concern was raised that reliance on non-site-specific policies of the plan as the basis for ensuring that development of these areas is delivered in a way which will safeguard the area's natural and historic environment, could potentially result in harm to elements which contribute to the significance of Rotherham's designated heritage assets, landscapes and natural

environment. English Heritage recognised the sensitive nature of some of these locations.

62. English Heritage requested that further site specific information be provided as an integral part of the Plan, to increase the likelihood that sites are developed in a sustainable manner. These guidelines could also address issues such as highways and drainage as appropriate.
 63. One objector promoting development on a site, proposed to be retained as Green Space, asserted that the IIA is inconsistent in the application of the methodology. Queried the credibility and robustness of the evidence base when sites are considered against reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.
 64. Objections received to Todwick North Special Policy Area and to the proposed housing allocation to south of Todwick village. Concerns regarding environmental matters were raised and the level of infrastructure available within the village to support such development.
 65. An alternative site to the east of the village is promoted by the landowner of that site, and their consultant. The representor queries the SA scoring assessment at Stage 2, the application of the methodology at Stage 3, and the subsequent selection of the preferred housing allocation to the south of the village.
 66. A number of representations received objecting to representor sites not being selected for development and allocated as such in the emerging Local Plan. The objector's sought to promote their sites via the site selection methodology and to SA Stage 2 (included within the IIA). Challenge also to the Detailed Green Belt Review.
 67. Commitment provided by the Council to refresh Stage 2 of the SA for inclusion within the Publication Sites and Policies document, and to ensure that the Red Amber Green scoring within stage 2 is credible and robust, to justify its selection of site allocations against the alternate representor sites being promoted.
 68. Queried the scoring of the preferred Gypsy and Traveller site allocation. An alternative representor site promoted for such uses, was excluded at Stage 1. The representor claims that the alternative site scores higher. However the alternative site has not been scored because it was excluded at Stage 1.
 69. Objections to deletion of former Unitary Development Plan housing allocations that have not been delivered since adoption of the UDP in 1999, but are now immediately adjacent to designated Local Wildlife Site and share similar semi-natural characteristics regarding the presence of woodland and scrub that is predominantly undisturbed and not managed.
- Submission Sites and Policies Document Local Plan March 2016***
70. The IIA Report³³ incorporating SA/SEA, was submitted alongside the Publication Sites and Policies Document for independent examination in March 2016. Representations received at the Publication stage were submitted for consideration by the Inspector appointed to examine the Sites and Policies Document in line with the Regulations³⁴.

³³ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016)

³⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

Main Modifications January 2018

71. Following the hearing sessions, the Council consulted on the Inspector's proposed Main Modifications to the Sites and Policies Local Plan. These Main Modifications were accompanied by an Addendum to the IIA Report which included an assessment of their potential environmental effects and impact on the previous IIA. Natural England confirmed that they are satisfied that the IIA complies with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, and that the modifications to the Sites and Policies Local Plan are unlikely to significantly affect an internationally protected nature conservation site.
72. The Inspector took full account of representations made on the proposed two additional housing site allocations to meet the settlement grouping target at Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton; and upon the representations received to draft Main Modifications³⁵. His final report contains the final modifications recommended.
73. In summary, the Council has satisfied the relevant legislation in terms of consultation on its Sites and Policies document and associated IIA, incorporating SA / SEA. This has ensured that consultation responses have helped shape the Sites and Policies document to ensure the most sustainable outcomes.
74. Rotherham is a land-locked borough and the nature of the activities proposed in the Sites and Policies document mean that consultation with other EU member states was not appropriate during its preparation. As such, the requirement at paragraph 4(d) of Regulation 16 of the SEA Regulations regarding consultations entered into with other EU members is not relevant.

Reasons for choosing the final version of the Sites and Policies document (in light of other reasonable alternatives)

75. Regulation 12(2) of the SEA Regulations requires environmental reports (SA / SEA) to consider any reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.
76. The Submission IIA Report³⁶ is split into four volumes and an Addendum:
 - Volume 1: provides introductory and background information to the assessment;
 - Volume 2: contains the assessment of site options / candidate sites, and selection of preferred sites;
 - Volume 3: contains the assessment of policies and overall plan, considering the preferred sites selected; and
 - Volume 4: comprises Site Survey Summary Sheets for each of the candidate sites considered.
 - The Addendum provides an updated assessment for 14 sites which, as a result of public consultation, have been modified in terms of their boundaries, or are being promoted as alternative sites for allocation in the Local Plan. .
77. This IIA, which incorporates SA, identifies risks that significant effects or impacts might occur and outlines potential control mechanisms that can be put in place to avoid,

³⁵ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016): Addendum 1 to the IIA – Additional Site Changes (June 2017); and Assessment of Main Modifications (January 2018)

³⁶ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Sites and Policies Document: Submission Version Volumes 1 to 4, and Addendum (March 2016)

reduce or offset the potential impacts of those risks. The IIA can also be used as a platform for identifying opportunities for beneficial impacts and determining specific policies or proposals which may facilitate or enhance such benefits.

78. This is particularly relevant for the Sites and Policies document, which has developed alongside the IIA and has incorporated within its policies ways of mitigating risks of negative impacts and taking advantage of opportunities for benefits. The IIA also includes an assessment of the potential significant residual effects that may arise as a result of any risks and opportunities that remain even with mitigation in place.
79. The IIA / SA of policy alternatives were mainly conducted as part of the development of the Core Strategy, which is now adopted. As such, it is a relevant and important context that the Sites and Policies document is a subsidiary document to the adopted Core Strategy.
80. In terms of the policies element of the Sites and Policies document, one area of policy alternatives has been considered by the IIA – that for wind farm ‘areas of search’ as part of Policy SP60 – Sustainable Construction and Wind Energy. These alternatives are shown and assessed in Chapter 2 of Volume 3 of the Submission IIA Report.
81. The remaining policies of the Sites and Policies document build upon those policies set out in the Core Strategy, which has been subject to alternatives assessment as part of its own SA. Over the course of the Sites and Policies document’s development, no significantly different, ways of formulating the Local Plan policies have been identified. Therefore, there has been no requirement to assess alternative policies as part of this IIA.
82. SA / IIA informed the Spatial Strategy included within the adopted Core Strategy, comprising the Settlement Hierarchy and targets for each settlement grouping. The key social, economic and environmental features and constraints of different areas were considered at the time of preparation of the Core Strategy. The SA and IIA assessed the effects of the Core Strategy (growth targets, strategic allocation, broad locations for growth, settlement hierarchy and all policies and reasonable alternatives) on a range of topics. This highlighted potential negative effects (risks) and opportunities for beneficial effects and set out recommendations to improve the Core Strategy, subsequently adopted in September 2014.
83. This subsequent and subsidiary Sites and Policies Document seeks to allocate appropriate and sustainable development sites to meet the targets set out in the Spatial Strategy. All reasonable alternatives have been considered in the preparation of the Sites and Policies Document and each site allocation has been assessed according to the three stage Methodology³⁷ developed for this purpose, and against all other sites promoted by landowners received during the “call for sites”; and those sites identified in accordance with the SHLAA methodology, wherein all land within close proximity to the built up areas of the Borough has also been assessed.
84. As already noted the Spatial Strategy for the borough is set out in Policy CS1 of the adopted Core Strategy, The approximate levels of planned development for settlement groupings over the plan period are set out in this policy. A number of alternative approaches to the distribution of development in the borough were considered and discarded early in Local Plan development, having considered their potential

³⁷ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 2: Section 2 and Appendix 2-C: Site Selection Methodology

sustainability implications. Policy CS1 (as adopted) reflects the most sustainable approach to development in the Borough relative to alternatives identified and assessed through the appropriate IIA/SA.

85. The identification of site alternatives began in 2008 as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Employment Land Review³⁸. The SHLAA was updated in 2011 and again in 2012 and has been annually updated since this time. The Employment Land Review was published in 2010, with a subsequent Joint Employment Land Review with Sheffield published in 2015. A SHLAA is a process that identifies land with potential for future housing development, without making any determination as to whether or not such sites should be developed. The initial Employment Land Review in 2008, assessed whether there were any sites that potentially could be released from their existing employment allocation for residential purposes.
86. The SHLAA update (2012) was overseen by a Working Group comprising representatives from a number of key organisations involved in housing delivery or provision of associated infrastructure, such as the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and the Home Builders Federation. The following key steps were undertaken as part of the SHLAA:
 - Existing information on sites held by RMBC was reviewed, including sites suggested by respondents as part of consultation on the emerging Local Plan;
 - Areas of search for potential housing land were defined;
 - Excluded areas were established (e.g. designated nature conservation sites);
 - A 'Call for Sites' was undertaken in 2008, which allowed house builders, developers, land owners and their representatives to make suggestions on where future housing growth could be accommodated;
 - Further site suggestions were considered, sourced from the SHLAA and Local Plan consultations, ongoing "call for sites", developer enquiries and planning applications; and
 - Assessment of suitability for housing development, availability and achievability was carried out.
87. The Employment Land Review similarly identified land with potential for future industrial or commercial development, again without making any determination as to whether or not such sites should be developed.
88. Most of the sites considered in the IIA were identified through the SHLAA and Employment Land Review. The identification of additional alternative sites has formed an ongoing and iterative part of Local Plan development, including consultation and engagement with stakeholders.
89. In addition to these studies a number of other studies have also been prepared to support the identification of site allocations as reported in Stage 3 of the IIA/SA. Each site has been assessed using GIS datasets and in addition further detailed studies have been conducted by specialist officers and/or consultancies. All sites have been assessed from a highways/ transportation access perspective. Archaeological assessments, protected species assessments, surface water flooding assessments and landscape capacity, assessing character and sensitivity have been undertaken for

³⁸ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016): Appendix 2-B: Background to Site Identification

all preferred allocations and sites promoted by land owners, their agents and developers (identified as representor sites) have also been undertaken and the results included within SA stage 2. Further ecological and historic environment assessments have also been carried out for a smaller subset of site allocations and representor sites where it is likely the natural and historic environment may be impacted by any future development proposals. Figure 1-1 of Volume 1: The stages of plan development and sustainability appraisal relative to the Sites and Policies Document,³⁹ refers.

90. To support the Core Strategy a Strategic Green Belt Review was undertaken; subsequently a Detailed Green Belt Review (March 2016) was completed to support the Sites and Policies Document during its Examination. The Detailed Green belt Review assessed all proposed site allocations and representor sites. As a separate study, a review of the impact of the site allocations and representor sites on the Areas of High Landscape Value was also carried out by Landscape Architects within the Council.
91. These studies have enabled the consultants conducting the IIA/SA and the Council to understand the environmental and sustainability issues impacting on each preferred site allocation and the additional sites promoted by land owners their agents and developers. Issues identified by these studies have also enabled the preparation of clear site development guidelines to guide the preparation of future planning applications.
92. As stated above, SEA requires identification of 'reasonable alternatives' to the plan and whilst the SHLAA and Employment Land Review included some inherent tests regarding feasibility of sites for development, a more comprehensive 'reasonableness' test was undertaken as part of site selection. This formed Stage 1 of the Site Selection Methodology: Automatic Site Exclusions – see Appendix 2-C of Volume 2. Section 3.3.3 in Volume 2 of the IIA Report⁴⁰ summarises this process.
93. Following the assessment of sustainability constraints of individual sites, further 'reasonable alternatives' were identified in the form of 'in combination' alternatives.
94. The Sites and Policies document allocates sites for development; it does this in recognition of their positive attributes such as their relationship to the existing built settlement and to meeting the settlements role and targets established in the Spatial Strategy (detailed in policy CS1 of the Core Strategy). Whilst it is acknowledged that there will most likely be identified constraints associated with the allocation of some development sites, it is anticipated that these issues and constraints will be suitably mitigated within any future resolutions to grant planning permission.
95. A number of sustainability factors including known constraints identified as part of the on-going evidence base preparation, have been evaluated to establish each site's suitability to accommodate future development.
96. As already noted Site Selection Methodology was prepared and refined over the course of preparation of the Sites and Policies Document, to guide the decision-making process. The application of the site selection methodology from stage 2 (the Sustainability Appraisal of individual sites) systematically assessed each site and the

³⁹ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 1: Section 1.3 Timeline of Plan and IIA Development; Figure 1-1

⁴⁰ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 2

"likely significant effects" arising and, at stage 3⁴¹, (the prioritisation of sites) its potential suitability for allocation as a development site in the Local Plan. Whilst the site selection methodology aimed to select the most suitable sites, other attributes (including the potential to avoid or mitigate effects identified), have also been taken into consideration; this has, in some circumstances, led to sites which performed well, not being allocated.

97. A red, amber green rating of sustainability indicators has been undertaken as part of this site selection process, and enabled site-by-site comparison. At stage 3, the potential for mitigation to avoid a major adverse effect was taken into consideration. If there were any potential major adverse effects which could not be avoided, these were considered against the alternatives and the potential benefits offered by the site. For each site considered, a summary record has been prepared which clarifies the type of development acceptable on the site or the reason why a site has not been taken forward as a development site allocation. Generally there are no insurmountable issues to the allocation of the development sites but, by its nature, the Site Selection Methodology tends to highlight constraints and this can highlight the potential negatives more than the potential positives.
98. Therefore it should be noted, that some sites, which appear less sustainable, have been allocated for development at the Stage 3 site prioritisation assessment. Predominantly the larger site allocations require greater mitigation and the provision of supporting infrastructure, to bring them forward for future development. However these sites still represent the best alternative sites available to meet the development needs for each settlement grouping, identified within the Core Strategy. Unallocated sites which have been identified as sustainable when measured against these criteria and based on current knowledge of constraints, could still be considered for allocation in the next review of the plan or if circumstances change as a result of the emerging SHMA.
99. For those sites excluded from the Green Belt during the preparation of this Local Plan, a further assessment⁴² has been undertaken in respect of the five Green Belt purposes. This information was used as part of the overall site assessment and in comparing potential Green Belt sites for development, but it did not override broader sustainability considerations.
100. Following the Sustainability Appraisal of all sites, the Council has selected those development sites for allocation it considers are most appropriate to meet the following factors:
 - the future needs of existing communities as set out in the Core Strategy;
 - take best advantage of existing services and facilities including educational, health, social and leisure facilities, good transport links and good accessibility by sustainable transport means including public transport, walking and cycling and good access to potential employment opportunities;
 - allocate sites that relate well in locational terms to existing communities taking into account the impact of site allocations on the openness of the Green Belt, local landscape and topography;
 - as appropriate, enable the development of new sustainable communities;

⁴¹ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 2: Section 2.6

⁴² Detailed Green Belt Review Revision 2016

- allocate employment sites that relate well to the national highway network and to local communities to take advantage of an accessible workforce; and
- provide employment opportunities for the benefit of the local economy.

101. The Inspector took full account of representations made on the proposed two additional housing site allocations to meet the settlement grouping target at Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton; and upon the representations received to draft Main Modifications⁴³.
102. The IIA contains considerable information relating to the potential effects of development of individual sites and in-combination with other sites, as well as detailed assessment of policies. This information is presented in a detailed manner and the reports have made use of Appendices to provide the further detailed information.
103. Finally the Council has listened carefully to the concerns of local people and determined an appropriate policy response, where there is no over-riding physical, social or political constraint or objection to its allocation as a development site. In determining the sites to select the Council has had regard to a number of evidence base studies to supplement professional experience in assessing a site, There have been changes to policy wording arising from the SA/IIA of the policies within the local plan, to ensure they are fit for purpose and robust.
104. Each report in the SA and IIA process demonstrates how sustainability objectives have been taken into account at each stage, and integrated into the development of the Rotherham Local Plan. Overall the IIA concludes that in the majority, the policies are capable of addressing all risks of negative sustainability impacts, and achieving net benefits.

Measures to monitor the significant environmental effects of the Sites and Policies document

105. The Sites and Policies document will be subject to an ongoing programme of monitoring. The Sites and Policies document responds to the strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy contains Monitoring and Implementation chapters which set out how monitoring will be undertaken to measure the effectiveness of the Local Plan against a broad range of indicators and targets. The IIA⁴⁴ also highlights a number of possible indicators (subject to data availability). Monitoring will allow consideration of whether any changes to the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies documents are required if a policy is not working or if the targets are not being met. The Core Strategy identifies a suite of Monitoring Indicators.
106. Monitoring outcomes are normally reported through the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). This will identify any objectives and targets that are not being met and any action to rectify the situation. The Annual Monitoring Reports will be published on the Council's website.

⁴³ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016): Addendum 1 to the IIA – Additional Site Changes (June 2017); and Assessment of Main Modifications (January 2018)

⁴⁴ Integrated Impact Assessment of the Submission Sites and Policies Document (March 2016) Volume 3: Section 17.3 Conclusions and Supporting Detail.

