

11 The SA Framework

The SA Framework

- 11.1 The development of a set of SA objectives (known as the SA Framework) is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared.
- 11.2 The proposed SA Framework for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan is presented in **Table 11.1**, and has been developed from the analysis of international, national and local policy objectives, the baseline information, and the sustainability issues identified for the plan area. It comprises a series of SA objectives, each accompanied by a set of questions that will be used to appraise the performance of the new Local Plan against the SA objectives, including alternative overall spatial strategies for growth being considered by the two Councils for inclusion in the Local Plan.
- 11.3 The SA Framework is supported by a set of draft site assessment criteria and assumptions, which will be used to establish the potential effects generated by development in site options and allocations identified for consideration by the City and District Councils. The performance of sites against the site assessment criteria and assumptions will be used, alongside other technical assessments, to inform the Council's selection of individual site allocations. More detail on the criteria and assumptions to be used is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 11.4 The SA objectives and accompanying questions set out in the SA Framework and the site assessment criteria and assumptions are subject to change following feedback collated during consultation on this SA Scoping Report with the three statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) under Regulation 12(5) of the SEA Regulations.

Table 11.1 SA Framework for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|---|--|---|
| <p>SA 1: To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, well-designed, sustainably constructed and affordable home.</p> | <p>SA 1.1: Does the Plan provide for the local housing need of Greater Cambridge?</p> <p>SA 1.2: Does the Plan deliver the range of types, tenures that Greater Cambridge needs over the plan period?</p> <p>SA 1.3: Does the Plan increase the supply of affordable homes in both urban and rural areas?</p> <p>SA 1.4: Does the Plan provide for the housing needs of both an ageing and young population based on locational needs?</p> <p>SA 1.5: Does the Plan provide for specialist housing needs, including that of the student population and Gypsies and Travellers?</p> | <p>Population, Human Health and Material Assets</p> |
| <p>SA 2: To maintain and improve access to centres of services and facilities including health centres and education.</p> | <p>SA 2.1: Does the Plan support the existing city, district, local, neighbourhood, rural and minor rural centres?</p> <p>SA 2.2: Does the Plan provide for sufficient local services and facilities to support new and growing communities (e.g. schools, employment training and lifetime learning facilities, health facilities, sport and recreation, accessible green space and services in local centres)?</p> <p>SA 2.3: Does the Plan provide for development within proximity to existing or new services and facilities that are accessible for all?</p> | <p>Population, Human Health and Material Assets</p> |
| <p>SA 3: To encourage social inclusion, strengthen community cohesion, and advance equality between those who share a</p> | <p>SA 3.1: Does the Plan facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?</p> <p>SA 3.2: Does the Plan promote developments that benefit and are used by existing and new residents in Greater</p> | <p>Population, Human Health and Material Assets</p> |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|--|---|---|
| protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010) and those who do not. | <p>Cambridge, particularly for Greater Cambridge's most deprived areas?</p> <p>SA 3.3: Does the Plan meet the needs of specific groups in Greater Cambridge, including those with protected characteristics and the needs of a growing and ageing population?</p> <p>SA 3.4: Does the Plan promote the vitality and viability of Greater Cambridge's city, district, local, neighbourhood, rural and minor rural centres through social and cultural initiatives?</p> <p>SA 3.5: Does the Plan help to support high levels of pedestrian activity/ outdoor interaction, where people mix?</p> <p>SA 3.6: Does the Plan remove or reduce disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics?</p> | |
| SA 4: To improve public health, safety and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. | <p>SA 4.1: Does the Plan promote health and wellbeing and encourage healthy lifestyles by maintaining, connecting, creating and enhancing multifunctional open spaces, green infrastructure, and recreation and sports facilities and by providing access to recreational opportunities in the countryside?</p> <p>SA 4.2 Does the Plan promote healthy lifestyle choices by encouraging and facilitating walking and cycling, including provision of dedicated cycleways, as well as permeable and legible streets?</p> <p>SA 4.3: Does the Plan safeguard human health and well-being by promoting climate change resilience through sustainable siting, design, landscaping and infrastructure, particularly green infrastructure?</p> | Population, Human Health and Climatic Factors |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>SA 4.4: Does the Plan provide sufficient access to local health services and facilities (e.g. health centres and hospitals)?</p> <p>SA 4.5: Does the Plan encourage local food growing?</p> <p>SA 4.6: Does the Plan promote mental wellbeing through the design of attractive places and opportunities for social interaction?</p> <p>SA 4.7: Does the Plan promote principles of good urban design to limit the potential for crime in Greater Cambridge?</p> <p>SA 4.8: Does the Plan contribute to a reduction in the fear of crime?</p> | |
| <p>SA 5: To conserve, enhance, restore and connect wildlife, habitats, species and/or sites of biodiversity or geological interest.</p> | <p>SA 5.1: Does the Plan avoid adverse effects on internationally and nationally designated biodiversity and geodiversity assets within and outside Greater Cambridge?</p> <p>SA 5.2: Does the Plan avoid adverse effects on locally designated biodiversity and geodiversity assets within and outside Greater Cambridge, including ancient woodland?</p> <p>SA 5.3: Does the Plan seek to protect and enhance ecological networks, including opportunity areas (buffer and stepping stone opportunities) identified through biodiversity opportunity mapping, promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain, whilst taking into account the impacts of climate change?</p> <p>SA 5.4: Does the Plan provide and manage opportunities for people to come into contact with wildlife whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of biodiversity?</p> | <p>Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Human Health</p> |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|--|--|---|
| <p>SA 6: To conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of Greater Cambridge's landscapes and townscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.</p> | <p>SA 6.1: Does the Plan protect and enhance Greater Cambridge's sensitive, special landscapes, such as fens, and historic settlements?</p> <p>SA 6.2: Does the Plan protect and enhance Greater Cambridge's natural environment assets (including parks and green spaces, common land, woodland and forest reserves) and public realm?</p> <p>SA 6.3: Does the Plan protect the setting of the city of Cambridge, including key views into and out of the city?</p> | <p>Landscape, Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Cultural Heritage</p> |
| <p>SA 7: To conserve and/or enhance the qualities, fabric, setting and accessibility of Greater Cambridge's historic environment.</p> | <p>SA 7.1: Does the Plan conserve and enhance Greater Cambridge's designated heritage assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?</p> <p>SA 7.2: Does the Plan conserve and enhance Greater Cambridge's non-designated heritage assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?</p> <p>SA 7.3: Does the Plan safeguard, and where possible enhance, the historic fabric of the city of Cambridge?</p> <p>SA 7.4: Does the Plan provide opportunities for improvements to the conservation, management and enhancement of Greater Cambridge's heritage assets, particularly heritage at risk?</p> <p>SA 7.5: Does the Plan promote access to, as well as enjoyment and understanding of, the local historic environment for Greater Cambridge's residents and visitors?</p> | <p>Cultural Heritage, Architectural and Archaeological Heritage</p> |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| SA 8: To make efficient use of Greater Cambridge's land resources through the re-use of previously developed land and conserve its soils. | <p>SA 8.1: Does the Plan maximise the provision of housing and employment development on previously developed land?</p> <p>SA 8.2: Does the Plan ensure contaminated land is remediated where appropriate?</p> <p>SA 8.3: Does the Plan minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land to development?</p> | Soil and Material Assets |
| SA 9: To conserve mineral resources in Greater Cambridge. | SA 9.1 Does the Plan ensure that unnecessary or unjustified sterilisation of mineral resources is prevented? | Material Assets |
| SA 10: To achieve sustainable water resource management and enhance the quality of Greater Cambridge's waters | <p>SA 10.1: Does the plan ensure there is sufficient water to serve new growth for the lifetime of the development in a changing climate without negatively impacting on the environment?</p> <p>SA 10.2: Does the Plan seek to improve the water quality of Greater Cambridge's rivers and water bodies?</p> <p>SA 10.3: Does the Plan minimise inappropriate development in Source Protection Zones?</p> <p>SA 10.4: Does the Plan ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate the new development in a changing climate?</p> <p>SA 10.5: Does the Plan promote development which would avoid water pollution due to contaminated runoff from development?</p> <p>SA 10.6: Does the Plan support efficient use of water in new developments, including the recycling of water resources, promoting water stewardship and water sensitive design where appropriate?</p> | Water, Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|--|--|--|
| <p>SA 11: To adapt to climate change, including minimising flood risk.</p> | <p>SA 11.1: Does the Plan minimise inappropriate development in areas prone to flood risk and areas prone to increasing flood risk elsewhere, taking into account the impacts of climate change?</p> <p>SA11.2: Does the Plan promote the use of Natural Flood Management schemes, SuDS and flood resilient design?</p> <p>SA11.3: Does the Plan promote design measures in new development and the public realm to respond to weather events arising from climate change, such as heatwaves and intense rainfall?</p> <p>SA 11.4: Does the Plan provide, enhance and retrofit green infrastructure?</p> | <p>Water, Material Assets, Climatic Factors and Human Health</p> |
| <p>SA 12: To minimise Greater Cambridge's contribution to climate change</p> | <p>SA 12.1: Does the Plan promote energy efficient design?</p> <p>SA 12.2: Does the Plan encourage the provision of energy from renewable sources?</p> <p>SA 12.3: Does the Plan promote the use of locally and sustainably sourced, and recycling of, materials in construction and renovation?</p> <p>SA 12.4: Does the Plan support access to public transport provision?</p> <p>SA 12.5: Does the Plan create, maintain and enhance attractive and well-connected networks of public transport and active travel, including walking and cycling?</p> <p>SA 12.6: Does the Plan support development which is in close proximity to city, district and rural centres, services and</p> | <p>Air, Human health, air and Climatic factors</p> |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| | <p>facilities, key employment areas and/or public transport nodes, thus reducing the need to travel by car?</p> <p>SA12.7: Does the Plan address congestion hotspots in the road network?</p> | |
| <p>SA 13: To limit air pollution in Greater Cambridge and ensure lasting improvements in air quality.</p> | <p>SA 13.1: Does the Plan avoid, minimise and mitigate the effects of poor air quality?</p> <p>SA 13.2: Does the Plan promote more sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel?</p> <p>SA 13.3: Does the Plan contain measures which will help to reduce congestion?</p> <p>SA 13.4: Does the Plan minimise increases in traffic, particularly non-electric vehicles, in Air Quality Management Areas?</p> <p>SA 13.5: Does the Plan facilitate the take up of low / zero emission vehicles?</p> | <p>Air and Human Health</p> |
| <p>SA 14: To facilitate a sustainable and growing economy.</p> | <p>SA 14.1: Does the Plan provide for an adequate supply of land and the delivery of infrastructure to meet Greater Cambridge's economic and employment needs?</p> <p>SA 14.2: Does the Plan support opportunities for the expansion and diversification of businesses?</p> <p>SA 14.3: Does the Plan provide for start-up businesses and flexible working practices?</p> <p>SA 14.4: Does the Plan support the prosperity and diversification of Greater Cambridge's rural economy?</p> | <p>Population and Material Assets</p> |

| SA Objective | Appraisal questions | Relevant SEA Topics |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| | <p>SA 14.5: Does the Plan support stronger links to the wider economy of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc?</p> <p>SA 14.6: Does the Plan support the growth of the knowledge, science, research and high tech sectors?</p> | |
| <p>SA 15: To deliver, maintain and enhance access to diverse employment opportunities, to meet both current and future needs in Greater Cambridge.</p> | <p>SA 15.1: Does the Plan provide for employment opportunities that are easily accessible, preferably via sustainable modes of transport?</p> <p>SA 15.2: Does the Plan support equality of opportunity for young people and job seekers?</p> | <p>Population and Material Assets</p> |

Use of the SA Framework

- 11.5 The SA will be undertaken in close collaboration with the officers from South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils responsible for drafting the Local Plan in order to fully integrate the SA process with the production of the Local Plan.
- 11.6 The findings of the SA will be presented as a colour coded symbols showing a score for each option against each of the SA objectives along with a concise justification for the score given, where appropriate. It may be possible to group the appraisal of strategic and development management policies by theme.
- 11.7 The use of colour coding in the matrices will allow for likely significant effects (both positive and negative) to be easily identified, as shown in **Figure 11.1** below.

Figure 11.1 SA matrix guide

| | |
|------|--|
| ++ | Significant positive effect likely |
| ++/- | Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely |
| + | Minor positive effect |
| +/- | Mixed minor effects likely |
| - | Minor negative effect likely |
| -/+ | Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely |
| -- | Significant negative effect likely |
| 0 | Negligible effect likely |
| ? | Likely effect uncertain |

- 11.8 The dividing line between sustainability scores is often quite small. Where significant effects are distinguished from more minor effects this is because, using the appraisal questions and criteria and applying professional judgement, the effect of the option on the SA objective will be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect compared with other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.
- 11.9 In determining the significance of the effects of the options for potential inclusion in the Local Plan it will be important to bear in mind the Local Plan's relationship with the other documents in the planning system such as the NPPF and other national policy approaches, and regulatory requirements, as these may provide additional safeguards or mitigation of potentially significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

- 11.10 The SA must appraise not only the preferred options for inclusion in the Local Plan but 'reasonable alternatives' to these options. This implies that alternatives that are

not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Part (b) of Regulation 12(2) notes that reasonable alternatives will take into account the objectives of the Plan, as well as its geographical scope. Therefore, alternatives that do not meet the objectives of national policy, or are outside the Plan area are unlikely to be reasonable.

- 11.11 The objectives, policies and site allocations to be considered for inclusion within the Local Plan are in the process of being identified and reviewed. The Councils' reasons for selecting the alternatives to be included in the Local Plan will be reported at a later stage in the SA process.

Assumptions

- 11.12 SA inevitably relies on an element of subjective judgement. However, in order to ensure consistency in the appraisal of the site options, for each of the SA objectives in the SA framework, a clear set of decision-making criteria and assumptions for determining significance of the effects are set out. These assumptions set out clear parameters within which certain SA scores would be given, based on factors such as the distance of site options from features such as biodiversity designations, public transport links and areas of high landscape sensitivity. The assumptions, many of which are applied through the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data, are presented in **Appendix 1**.
- 11.13 It should be noted that it may be necessary to refine the criteria and assumptions during the course of the SA work, for example to respond to consultation comments, or to ensure that they remain appropriate with respect to the evidence base and the alternative options being considered for inclusion in the Local Plan.

Health Impact Assessment

- 11.14 Health Impact Assessment (HIA) aims to ensure that health-related issues are integrated into the plan-making process. As described in **Chapter 1**, the HIA will be incorporated into the SA. SA objective 5 directly addresses health issues, while achievement of SA objectives 2, 3 and 14 would also indirectly benefit people's health.
- 11.15 **Table 11.2** demonstrates how various HIA topics have been included in the SA framework. The HIA topics are drawn from the NHA London Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool²⁹⁵.
- 11.16 The options and later policies for the Local Plan will all be assessed against these objectives as part of the SA. The SA report will make recommendations for how the health-related impacts of the Local Plan can be optimised as the options are developed into detailed policies.

²⁹⁵ <https://www.healthyrurbandevelopment.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HUDU-Rapid-HIA-Tool-3rd-edition-April-2017.pdf>

Table 11.2 Integration of HIA topics in this SA

| HIA topic | Relevant SA Objective |
|---|--|
| Housing quality and design | SA objective 1: Housing |
| Access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure | SA objective 2: Access to Services and Facilities Accessibility is also relevant to this topic (see below). |
| Access to open space and nature | SA objective 2: Access to Services and Facilities SA objective 4: Health and Wellbeing SA objective 5: Biodiversity |
| Air quality, noise and neighbourhood amenity | SA objective 13: Air Quality SA objective 6: Landscape, Townscape and Local Distinctiveness SA objective 12: Climate Change Mitigation |
| Accessibility and active travel | SA objective 4: Health and Wellbeing SA objective 2: Access to Services and Facilities SA objective 12: Climate Change Mitigation |
| Crime reduction and community safety | SA objective 4: Health and Wellbeing |
| Access to healthy food | SA objective 4: Health and Wellbeing considers food growing Other aspects of access to healthy food are not within the scope of the local plan. This issue should be addressed through other means. |
| Access to work and training | SA objective 15: Employment SA objective 14: Sustainable Economy |
| Social cohesion and lifetime neighbourhoods | SA objective 4: Health and Wellbeing SA objective 3: Equality Housing and accessibility (see above) are also relevant to this topic. |
| Minimising the use of resources | SA objective 8: Sustainable Land Use |
| Climate change | SA objective 11: Climate Change Adaptation SA objective 12: Climate Change Mitigation |
| Environmental quality | SA objective 9: Minerals SA objective 10: Water resources and quality |

| HIA topic | Relevant SA Objective |
|-----------|--|
| | SA objective 8: Sustainable Land Use SA objective 5: Biodiversity |

Equalities Impact Assessment

11.17 There are three main duties set out in the Equality Act 2010, which public authorities including South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils must meet in exercising their functions:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.
- To foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

11.18 The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and seeks to protect people from discrimination on the basis of these characteristics. They are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

11.19 The Local Plan will be assessed to consider the likely impacts of the draft policies on each of the nine protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 listed above. SA Objective 3 relates specifically to equalities. For each protected characteristic, consideration will be given to whether the Local Plan is compatible or incompatible with the three main duties set out in the Equality Act 2010. A colour coded scoring system (positive/negative/neutral) will be used to show the effects that the Local Plan policy and site options are likely to have on each protected characteristics.