

Appendix H:

Walsall Site Allocation Document (SAD)

SAD Options Appraisal Summary

Development of Spatial Options 2013 – 2015, Preferred Options for the SAD and Reasons for Choices (January 2016)

Options in Blue Text were identified or modified following Issues & Options Stage (July 2015)

Options in Purple Text were identified or modified following Preferred Options Stage (January 2016)

See SAD Options Appraisal Matrix (Excel Spreadsheet) for Full Details of High Level SA of AAP Options

SAD Options Appraisal Summary - Development of Spatial Options 2013 – 2015, Preferred Options for the SAD and Reasons (January 2016)

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 2. Objectives | | | | | | |
| General Approach Option 1 (Do Not Meet Core Strategy Growth Requirements) | This is the 'do minimum' option, and would mean that limited amounts of land are allocated in the SAD for new development between now and 2026. However, there would be no commitment towards meeting the BCCS requirements through site allocations in the SAD. | This is the alternative to General Approach Option 1 in terms of the provision made for new development and infrastructure in the SAD. Under this Option, greater reliance would be placed on existing/ new enabling policies and the market/ service providers to deliver the BCCS requirements over the remainder of the Plan period, and to determine where new development and new infrastructure is delivered in Walsall. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011, and is also likely to undermine the overall strategy for regeneration of the Black Country as well as the Council's aspirations for the regeneration of the borough. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See SA Report Appendix L for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| General Approach Option 2 (Meet Core Strategy Growth Requirements) | Sufficient land is allocated in the SAD to deliver the BCCS spatial strategy towards sustainable growth and meet the requirements identified for new development in Walsall between now and 2026. | This Option would deliver the requirements for new housing development, industrial land, transport projects, and other infrastructure in the BCCS, and would therefore be consistent with the spatial planning framework already in place for the Black Country. | ++ | The Option is likely to have significant positive effects on the SA objectives overall, as it would be consistent with the existing spatial planning framework for the area provided by the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011. The BCCS has already identified the requirements for future development and growth in Walsall up to 2026, based on an objective evaluation of the area's needs, and having regard to a previous SA which found that the spatial strategy proposed in the BCCS is likely to provide the most sustainable approach towards development in the Black Country. In particular, there are likely to be significant positive effects in terms of delivery of housing to support sustainable communities, industrial land to support sustainable economic growth, and delivery of transport infrastructure. This approach is also likely to encourage the regeneration of vacant and derelict land in areas of deprivation, as most development is expected to take place within the BCCS 'growth network' or on other well-connected previously-developed land, in accordance with the BCCS spatial strategy. Effects on biodiversity, heritage assets and landscape are also likely to be positive overall, as the BCCS seeks to safeguard existing assets by defining an environmental network that links together and safeguards the most important elements of the natural and built environment, including open spaces, inland waterways and greenways. | Preferred Option – see SAD Objectives, All Relevant SAD Policies, SAD Policies Map | This has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. It is the only reasonable Option for the general approach towards most types of new development, as the main purpose of the plan is to deliver the requirements of the BCCS. The appraisal has assumed that the requirements will be delivered either within the BCCS 'growth network' or on other well-connected previously-developed land, in accordance with the BCCS spatial strategy. This approach is likely to provide the most sustainable approach towards development in the SAD, although the SAD will also aim to meet other local needs where they have been identified through further technical work carried out at a local level. The only exception to this is the provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people. The SAD provides fewer pitches and plots than the requirement for Walsall up to 2018 identified in BCCS Policy HOU4, in accordance with more up-to-date evidence of local needs for Walsall – see Options for Homes for Our Communities below for further details of the Options considered for provision of accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 3. Homes for Our Communities | | | | | | |
| Options for General Housing Provision | | | | | | |
| Housing Option 1 (Surplus Employment Land) | Concentrate all new housing allocations on surplus former employment land ('category 4, 5 and 6' land, comprising sites that can be released, or sites that can be considered for release, as defined in the ELR). | Follows strategic objectives for the Growth Network set out in policy CSP1 of Black Country Core Strategy, which included providing new homes built on redundant employment land and other previously-developed sites. | + | Option 1 is likely to have positive effects overall. However, there could be implications for delivery if there is insufficient surplus employment land to meet the BCCS requirements. It could also lead to release of employment land to housing before there is an adequate supply of employment land available elsewhere, contrary to BCCS Policy DEL2. Delivery of affordable homes could be difficult under Option 1, because of the abnormal costs associated with employment sites requiring remediation. However, any affordable homes provided are more likely to be accessible to those in need of this type of housing, who are less likely to have access to a car. Very few of the surplus employment sites identified are in areas affected by air pollution, although some may be at risk from flooding. Using surplus employment land as the sole source of housing allocations may also mean it is more difficult to provide 'aspirational' housing, particularly on smaller sites outside the regeneration corridors, as envisaged by BCCS Policy CSP2. This Option may therefore not support the development of sustainable and inclusive communities. | Rejected | Rejected in favour of Option 4. A detailed analysis of Walsall's employment land supply, potential housing capacity of all previously-developed sites, and possible mechanisms for transforming existing employment land, has shown that the supply of readily available employment land is more limited than the potential supply of housing land, and the process of transformation of redundant former employment land is being achieved on a more piecemeal basis than previously envisaged when the BCCS was prepared. The achievement of sustainable communities requires a balance to be maintained between these two land uses. As a result, the Preferred Option for Housing consists primarily of land included in Option 2, although land included in Option 1 (Consider for Release Sites) will continue to provide a source of some housing land over the Plan period, subject to compliance with BCCS Policy DEL2. |
| Housing Option 2 (Non-Employment PDL and Surplus Open Space) | Retain all existing employment land for employment uses, and allocate new housing on other previously developed land, including areas of surplus open space, instead. | Follows strategic objectives for the Growth Network set out in policy CSP1 of Black Country Core Strategy, which included providing new homes built on redundant employment land and other previously-developed sites. | -- | Option 2 is likely to have significant negative effects overall. Effects on environmental quality are likely to be neutral overall, as the open space to be lost would be relatively poor quality and not well-located. Affordable homes provided under Option 2 are also more likely to be accessible to those in need of this housing, who are less likely to have access to a car. There is potential for some impacts on biodiversity and loss of habitat under Option 2, and some potential housing sites under all of the options could be exposed to air pollution and noise, and may not provide a good standard of amenity, or be affected by flooding. Use of open space land may also discourage remediation of previously-developed derelict sites. | Partly Rejected – see Option 4 | Partly rejected in favour of Option 4, although the Preferred Option includes a number of sites from this Option. Detailed analysis of Walsall's employment land supply, potential housing capacity of all previously-developed sites and possible mechanisms for transforming existing employment land, has shown that the supply of readily available employment land is more limited than the potential supply of housing land, and the process of transformation of redundant former employment land is being achieved on a more piecemeal basis than previously envisaged when the BCCS was prepared. The achievement of sustainable communities requires a balance to be maintained between these two land uses. As a result, the Preferred Option for Housing consists primarily of land included in Option 2, although land included in Option 1 will continue to provide a source of some housing land over the Plan period, subject to compliance with BCCS Policy DEL2. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Housing Option 3 (Greenfield Sites) | Concentrate new housing development on greenfield sites, which would mainly involve sites in the Green Belt. | Several large greenfield sites, mostly in the Green Belt, have been proposed for housing development by developers and land owners in response to the ‘calls for sites’ in 2011 and 2013, and the latest audit of open space also suggests that some poor quality open spaces, surplus to requirements, could be made available for housing development. | -- | Option 3 is likely to have significant negative effects overall. It would lead to loss of open land, would be an inefficient use of land if alternative PDL is available, and is likely to increase car dependency as greenfield sites are likely to be remote from public transport links. Option 3 is also likely to generate more road traffic emissions than the other options, as occupants of the new homes would have to travel further to work, to shop, and for leisure, and would also be disadvantageous to people who rely on public transport. There is also potential for some impacts on biodiversity and loss of habitat under Option 3, as well as potential risks from flooding. | Mostly Rejected – see Option 4 | Mostly rejected in favour of Option 6, although some surplus Open Space sites are included in this Option. However, sufficient previously-developed land and surplus Open Space has been identified to meet Walsall’s housing requirements to the end of the Plan period. Release of peripheral greenfield sites in the Green Belt for housing development would therefore be contrary to the BCCS sustainability principles and spatial strategy which seeks to steer most development towards the ‘growth network’ identified on the main Key Diagram. |
| Housing Option 4 (Surplus Employment Land, Non-Employment PDL and Surplus Open Space) | This is a combination of Options 1, 2 and 3 and would mean allocating a combination of surplus employment land (where no longer required for employment purposes) and other previously developed land, plus areas of surplus open space. | Detailed analysis of Walsall’s employment land supply, potential housing capacity of all previously-developed sites and possible mechanisms for transforming existing employment land, has shown that the supply of readily available employment land is more limited than the potential supply of housing land, and the process of transformation of redundant former employment land is being achieved on a more piecemeal basis than previously envisaged when the BCCS was prepared. The achievement of sustainable communities requires a balance to be maintained between these land uses. As a result, it is necessary for the housing land supply to be made up of elements from each of the Options identified previously. | ++ | Option 4 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It is likely to provide sufficient land to meet the BCCS housing requirements, including for affordable housing, in locations that are consistent with the BCCS spatial strategy, as most of the new housing would be delivered on previously-developed sites within the urban area. Affordable homes provided under Option 4 are also more likely to be accessible to those in need of this housing, who are less likely to have access to a car. While Option 4 would have some effects on environmental quality, the effects overall are likely to be neutral, because the open space to be lost would be relatively poor quality and not well-located, and any negative effects from loss of open space are also likely to be offset by improvements to visual amenity from redevelopment of poor quality industrial land. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policies HC1 and HC2 | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option because it enables the SAD to allocate a sufficient supply of housing land to meet the objectively assessed need in appropriate locations. At the same time this Option also allows the SAD to safeguard existing employment land that is not surplus to requirements, so that the employment land supply will be sufficient to meet Walsall’s future requirements for sustainable economic growth over the Plan period. The Option also includes allocating some areas of poor quality Open Space that are surplus to requirements, where this will not compromise the development of the environmental network. |
| Housing Option 5 (No Housing Allocations) | This is the ‘do nothing’ option, and would mean that no land is allocated for housing development in the SAD, and it would be left to the indicative guidance in the BCCS and the market/ housing providers to decide where new housing development should take place. | Instead of allocating land for housing (for example, from the sources identified in Housing Options 1, 2 and 3), reliance would be placed on the indicative guidance in BCCS Policies HOU1 – HOU3 and the Housing Key Diagram to identify where new housing development should take place in Walsall. | N/A | This is not a ‘reasonable alternative’ and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a ‘reasonable alternative.’ This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 and current national policy guidance on the provision of housing in local plans, and is also likely to undermine the overall strategy for regeneration of the Black Country as well as the Council’s aspirations for the regeneration of the borough. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See SA Report Appendix L for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Options for Affordable and Special Needs Housing | | | | | | |
| Affordable and Special Needs Housing Option 1 (Rely on Existing BCCS and UDP Policy). | Do not include any policy on the location of affordable and special needs housing in the SAD | This option would be consistent with the BCCS Vision, Sustainability Principles, Spatial Objectives and Spatial Strategy, and would contribute to achieving the strategic objectives set out in BCCS Policies CSP1 and CSP2. No significant harmful effects were identified in the "high level" SA of these policies. | - | Many care homes and other specialist housing developments take place on smaller sites that would be too small to specifically allocate for housing in the SAD. Under current policy in the BCCS and UDP, such windfall developments can be appropriate on sites outside the regeneration corridors and centres, including on previously developed land in the Green Belt. However, many such locations can have limited accessibility by public transport, walking or cycling. This can result in residents being isolated and unable to visit nearby services such as shops, and workers and visitors having to be reliant on cars | Rejected | Rejected in favour of Option 3. Specialist housing by its nature is occupied by residents who, if they have any mobility at all, are unlikely to drive so will be reliant on walking or public transport. Specialist housing is also usually staffed by care workers, who are often on low incomes, so will also be reliant on public transport. Many residents will have visitors who are often themselves elderly and/or disabled. This option therefore scores badly against a number of objectives, including those relating to air quality (because of the likely number of car movements to such developments that are generally higher density than general housing), communities and centres, and economy and centres |
| Affordable and Special Needs Housing Option 2 (Encourage provision in locations that would also be suitable for general housing) | Do not include any site specifying policy that is any more stringent than that for general housing | This option would be consistent with the BCCS Vision, Sustainability Principles, Spatial Objectives and Spatial Strategy, and would contribute to achieving the strategic objectives set out in BCCS Policies CSP1 and CSP2. No significant harmful effects were identified in the "high level" SA of these policies. However, specialist housing such as care homes tends to be of a higher density than general housing, so locations outside centres might not be appropriate in accordance with table 8 under BCCS Policy HOU2 | ? | Similar to Option 1, in that a very wide range of sites might be suitable under this option. Some of these might be highly sustainable. However, because of this wide range, the score against several of the objectives is uncertain | Rejected | Rejected in favour of Option 3. Specialist housing by its nature is occupied by residents who, if they have any mobility at all, are unlikely to drive so will be reliant on walking or public transport. Specialist housing is also usually staffed by care workers, who are often on low incomes, so will also be reliant on public transport. Many residents will have visitors who are often themselves elderly and/or disabled. Specialist housing such as care homes tends to be higher density than general housing so is more suitable for locations in and close to centres |
| Affordable and Special Needs Housing Option 3 (Require specialist housing to be in locations with good public transport access) | Sites in or close to centres will be particularly encouraged | This option would be consistent with the BCCS Vision, Sustainability Principles, Spatial Objectives and Spatial Strategy, and would contribute to achieving the strategic objectives set out in BCCS Policies CSP1 and CSP2. No significant harmful effects were identified in the "high level" SA of these policies. Specialist housing such as care homes tends to be of a higher density than general housing, so locations within or adjacent to centres might be more appropriate in accordance with table 8 under BCCS Policy HOU2 | + | This Option scores positively against the majority of objectives, and scores strongly positive against equality and diversity, health and wellbeing, and transport and accessibility. | Preferred Option: See Policy HC3 | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option because it enables specialist housing, including proposals that may come forward involving sites that are too small to allocate in the SAD, to be encouraged in locations that are accessible by residents, workers and visitors who do not have access to their own transport. It also encourages higher density residential development in and close to centres, and the regeneration of such centres, in accordance with the existing objectives of the BCCS. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Options for Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people (GTTS) | | | | | | |
| GTTS Option 1 (No Allocations for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Show-people)¹ | This is the 'do nothing' option, and would mean that no land is allocated for gypsy, traveller or travelling show-people sites in the SAD, and it would be left to the guidance in the BCCS and the communities themselves to decide where new sites are developed. | Instead of allocating land for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people (for example from the sources identified in Housing Options 1, 2 and 3), reliance would be placed on existing BCCS Policy HOU4 to deliver new sites for these communities. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 which identifies specific requirements for these communities to be met at a local level, and current national policy guidance which requires local plans to identify land suitable to meet the long-term needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| GTTS Option 2 (Rely on windfall sites): No sites are allocated for Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Show-people, but criteria are listed in the SAD to assess any proposals that may come forward through the development management process for the development of sites on previously developed land | This is similar to the 'do nothing' option, except that criteria would direct any proposals that come forward to appropriate locations. | Only sites where there is interest from a developer would come forward. This would not address the needs of those in the community who are unable to buy sites, and in any case they would have to compete with developers seeking to use the land for other purposes, such as general housing. Nevertheless, it is possible that some sites (especially small sites for individual families) may come forward this way in addition to sites identified under options 3 and 4 | - | Option would fail to fully address need | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 which identifies specific requirements for these communities to be met at a local level, and current national policy guidance which requires local plans to identify land suitable to meet the long-term needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD. |
| GTTS Option 3 (Identify general housing sites that may also be suitable as Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Show-people sites) | This proposed a range of potential sites with a total capacity well in excess of that required to meet identified need. Most of the sites would be allocated for general housing if not required for gypsy, traveller or travelling show-people sites. | Provided a choice of potential sites to allow consultation with gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people and the wider community. | 0 | Several of the sites attracted significant objection from the existing settled community, so scored badly against SEA topic 4 (communities and population). Representatives of the travelling community also expressed the view that the 'dual allocation' of sites for either general housing or traveller use would result in non-delivery of traveller sites since general housing would always be more attractive to developers. | Rejected | This Option was proposed as the 'Preferred Option' but has now been rejected for the reasons stated. |
| GTTS Option 4 (Identify sites specifically for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Show-people) | A reduced number of sites would be allocated solely for gypsies, travellers or travelling show-people with a total capacity equal to that identified in a revised accommodation assessment which updates the targets in the BCCS. | Provides certainty about which sites are to be developed for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people, and removes the community concern surrounding the potential use of other sites that have been identified previously. | + | Overall effect of proposal is positive and it is the only option that would appear to fully address the identified need. | Revised Preferred Option – see SAD Policy HC2 and Policies Map | This Option would appear to be the one that is most likely to ensure that the identified needs are met, whilst having minimal negative effects, and has therefore been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. |

¹ This was identified as Housing Option x in the SAD Issues & Options Report (April 2013)

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reasons |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 4. Providing for Industrial Jobs and Prosperity | | | | | | |
| Land for Industry Option 1 (Existing Employment Land Supply) | Continue to try to find readily available land from the present supply and do not use land currently allocated for other purposes. | To continue to try to provide for industrial land needs from within the current supply, although it is acknowledged that there is unlikely to be enough readily available land from this Option on its own. | - | Option 1 is likely to have negative effects overall. It would involve relying on the existing employment land supply only for opportunities for new industrial development, and not identifying any other land for industry. This is likely to have negative effects on the local economy as it is likely to encourage industry and jobs to relocate elsewhere, because of continuing lack of readily available land in the borough. However it is likely to have positive effects on objectives to make efficient use of land, provided that industry does not move out of the borough because of lack of opportunities, which could create more vacant and derelict industrial land. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3, because relying on this Option by itself is unlikely to provide for readily available opportunities, as well as meeting the needs of industry into the medium and long term. There is a need to explore other Options. |
| Land for Industry Option 2 (Existing Employment Land Supply and Additional Non-Employment PDL) | As well as Option 1, expand the total readily available employment land supply by allocating extra previously-developed land that is not currently allocated for employment purposes. | To expand the total supply of employment land by allocating extra previously-developed land that is not currently allocated for employment purposes, some of which could be short-term development opportunities. | ? | The overall effects of Option 2 are uncertain as there would be some positive effects and some negative effects. It would involve identifying other previously-developed land not currently in employment land use, in addition to the existing employment land supply. This would increase the amount of industrial land available, and is therefore also likely to increase energy consumption and road traffic, including the movement of freight by road (as would Option 4 to a greater extent). Increases in road traffic (including freight) would increase harmful emissions of NO2 and CO2 without mitigation and effects on air quality could be significant if NO2 emissions increase further in areas where the limit values are already exceeded. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3. While we need to allocate several sites from this Option, and the opportunities identified are likely to be will be medium to long term, we will not use all the proposed sites identified in this Option because some sites have been taken up for other uses, and because on other sites, the existing use is likely to remain in place for the remainder of the Plan period. |
| Land for Industry Option 3 (Existing Employment Land Supply, Additional PDL and Surplus Open Space) | As well as Options 1 and 2, expand the total readily available supply by allocating urban open space where there is no local deficiency and suitable for industry | To provide more industrial land opportunities than Option 2, including areas of poor quality open space which are surplus to requirements, if this is necessary to provide a sufficient supply of employment land. | + | Option 3 is likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve identifying surplus areas of open space and other previously-developed land not currently in employment land use, in addition to the existing employment land supply. This would increase the amount of industrial land available, and is therefore also likely to increase energy consumption and road traffic, including the movement of freight by road (as would Option 4 to a greater extent). Increases in road traffic (including freight) would increase harmful emissions of NO2 and CO2 without mitigation and effects on air quality could be significant if NO2 emissions increase further in areas where the limit values are already exceeded. Some areas of open space and other greenfield sites may be important for biodiversity as well as helping to absorb emissions of CO2, so if Option 3 is taken forward, consideration of impacts on biodiversity and climate change mitigation will play an important role in the site selection process. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policies IND1 – IND5 | The Preferred Option for the SAD is based on this Option, and involves identify existing employment land, some surplus PDL sites and two surplus open space sites for industry. It is proposed to allocate two sites from this Option. The first site (Moxley Tip, IN122) already has the principle of industrial land established through an outline planning permission (now expired), the second (North of Hughes Rd, IN341) is poor quality and unlikely to be improved. However, it is not proposed to use another site (Green Lane, IN343) as this would be detrimental to local provision in an area where many types of accessible open space are lacking. It is also proposed to designate two areas of open space that are currently included in the employment land supply: Bentley Road Playing Fields (OS4060) and Bescot Triangle North (IN54.5). |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reasons |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Land for Industry Option 4 (Additional PDL, Surplus Open Space and Greenfield Sites) | As well as Options 1, 2 and 3, expand the total employment land supply by bringing in extra land, including Green Belt/ greenfield as well as other previously-developed land, if necessary. | To provide more industrial land opportunities than Option 3, including other greenfield sites, and land that could be released from the Green Belt, if this is necessary to provide a sufficient supply of employment land. | -- | Option 4 is likely to have significant negative effects overall. It would involve identifying greenfield sites, surplus areas of open space and other previously-developed land not currently in employment land use, in addition to the existing employment land supply. This would increase the amount of industrial land available, but would also provide land in areas less accessible to public transport links. It could lead to loss of open land, inefficient use of land (particularly if alternative PDL is available), and would increase car dependency. The Option is also likely to significantly increase energy consumption and road traffic, including the movement of freight by road. Increases in road traffic (including freight) would increase harmful emissions of NO2 and CO2 without mitigation and effects on air quality could be significant if NO2 emissions increase further in areas where the limit values are already exceeded. Option 4 would be potentially disadvantageous to employees living in the inner urban areas who rely on public transport than the other options. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as sufficient land has been identified from Options 1, 2 and 3, so it is not necessary to identify further greenfield sites to meet Walsall's future requirements for industrial land over the remainder of the Plan period. Only one of the sites considered under this Option (Bentley Lane, IN404) was previously-developed land in the Green Belt, but it is not likely to be deliverable, and in any case, release from the Green Belt would need to be justified in accordance with other local plan policy and national Green Belt objectives. |
| Land for Industry Option 5 (No Industrial Land Designations or Allocations) | This is the 'do nothing' option and would mean that no existing industrial land is designated for protection in the SAD, and no land is allocated for new industrial development, and it would be left to the indicative guidance in the BCCS and the market/ businesses to decide where new industrial and commercial development should take place. | Instead of designating existing employment land for protection and allocating land for new industrial development in the SAD (for example, from the sources identified in Options 1, 2, 3 or 4), reliance would be placed on BCCS Policy DEL2, EMP1 – EMP4 and the Economy Key Diagram to ensure that there will be adequate supplies of industrial land available to meet the needs of investors over the Plan period, and to determine where new industry is developed. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 which identifies specific requirements for these communities, and current national policy guidance which requires local plans to support sustainable economic growth and development. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| 5. Strengthening Our Local Centres | | | | | | |
| Options for Local Centres | | | | | | |
| Local Centres Option 1 (No Change to UDP Policy) | This is the 'do nothing' option, as it would mean not reviewing the existing UDP policies on Local Centres. This would mean keeping the current development opportunities identified in the UDP and addressing issues of local need on an individual basis. | Under this Option there would be no need to amend the existing UDP policy on Local Centres (Policy S5), or to change any of the existing Local Centre boundaries shown on the 'saved' UDP Proposals Map. | - | The effects are likely to be negative overall rather than neutral, because the Option would not help to promote sustainable communities and sustainable economic growth, as the SAD would not be identifying any opportunities for investment in Local Centres. Centre uses could locate elsewhere as the centre fails to provide a realistic boundary where centre uses should be directed. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 2, because the current Local Centre boundaries and development opportunities identified in the UDP are out-of-date. This could mean that some communities would be poorly served in the future and that the Council would have less control over future development in centres. Allocating development opportunities also provides more evidence against inappropriate out-of-centre development as it provides allocated sequentially preferable sites. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Local Centres Option 2 (Review to Reflect New Housing Proposals) | Review Local Centres as a result of new housing locations in order to ensure they are of the appropriate scale and form to meet their catchments needs. | This would provide up-to-date Local Centre boundaries and development opportunities. This means the Council is in a stronger position to defend against out-of-centre development which is a key principle of the BCCS. It also means that development opportunities are allocated to meet the future needs of communities. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects overall, and is much more likely to have positive effects than Option 1. There would be greater opportunities for enhancement of the built environment of Local Centres, and to improve the range of services they provide, so that people will have less far to travel to access basic services such as shops and health centres, and are more likely to be able to access them using active travel modes such as walking and cycling. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policy SLC1 | This Option has been included in the Preferred Option for the SAD, which is a combination of Options 2 and 4. A review of Local Centres has been carried out and it is proposed to change the boundaries of some of the Local Centres to reflect this. It is also proposed to identify an additional Local Centre in the SAD (LC22: Blackwood Road, Streetly) which is not currently identified in the UDP or shown on the UDP Proposals Map. |
| Local Centres Option 3 (Do Not Allocate Development Opportunities) | Option 3 is the 'do minimum' option and would mean identifying up-to-date Local Centre boundaries in the SAD, but not allocating any opportunity sites within them. | This Option would leave it to the market to bring forward developments in Local Centres as, when and where opportunities arise. There are no BCCS targets for Local Centres, so it would not be contrary to the strategy to not allocate new development opportunities. | - | Option 3 is likely to have negative effects overall. This option could result in vacant sites and opportunities not being developed and centres missing out in investment. This could have a potential negative impact on the economy of centres and on communities who miss out on new homes, jobs or services. It could also have a negative impact of the townscape of centres as vacant sites remain undeveloped for longer, impacting on the visual amenity of the centre. Furthermore development may instead locate in less accessible locations impacting on air quality, communities' access to facilities and accessibility by public transport. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4, as a review of the Local Centres has identified opportunities for development of an appropriate type and scale in a significant number of the Local Centres. |
| Local Centres Option 4 (Allocate Development Opportunities) | The Local Centres are reviewed to identify potential development opportunities for 'town centre' development of an appropriate scale, to be allocated in the SAD. | This is a more pro-active approach – as well as defining the Local Centre boundaries, the SAD would allocate sites for new 'town centre' development or other complementary development that could help support or regenerate a centre, and maintain its function as a focus for local shopping and social infrastructure, where suitable sites can be identified. | ++ | Option 4 is likely to have positive effects overall. Identifying opportunities makes it easier for investors to find sites in Walsall and can also help defend against out-of-centre developments as the Council has identified sites which should be considered in the first instance. It also ensures that development comes forwards in centres first and as these are accessible this has a positive impact on communities who can access facilities as well as the centre as investment is concentrated. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policy SLC2 | This Option has been included in the Preferred Option for the SAD, which is a combination of Options 2 and 4. A review of Local Centres has been carried out and this has identified a number of opportunities for development in some of the Local Centres. It is therefore proposed to allocate these opportunities in the SAD. |
| Options for Out-of-Centre Development | | | | | | |
| Out-of-Centre Developments Option 1 (No Change to Existing Sites) | This is the 'do nothing' option which would allow out-of-centre development to remain as it is, and deal with any proposed change of use on an individual proposal basis. | There is a saved policy with the UDP which allows for this to happen, so it would be possible to manage the situation in this way. | -- | Option could have significant negative effects overall, because it would mean that all existing out-of-centre developments will continue to remain in place and could therefore be in a position to attract further retail and other 'town centre' uses to relocate from existing centres. This effect is likely to worsen going forward, as the prosperity of town centres declines due to increasing internet shopping and other economic changes. | Rejected | Rejected as it would mean Walsall couldn't allocate the land for alternative uses such as housing or employment. Not considering this land could result in land for other uses such as open space or Green Belt being considered for reallocation as housing or employment land. Also out-of-centre developments may decline over time or become vacant without a positive allocation for alternative uses. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Out-of-Centre Developments Option 2 (Allocate Declining Sites for Other Uses) | Reallocate declining out-of-centre development sites for industry or housing development. | This option involves a more efficient use of vacant out-of-centre retail sites, where it is unlikely that new retail outlets will re-occupy them. There are a number of out-of-centre allocations that are declining which could be used for alternative uses such as employment or housing. These allocations would help meet the BCCS targets but also support the strategy of focussing centre use investment within the established centres. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects overall, as it would involve re-allocating declining out-of-centre retail developments, for example, where there are a lot of vacancies, to other uses such as industry or housing. This would enable the sites to be more beneficially used, which would support objectives towards the promotion of sustainable communities and sustainable economic growth. There could also be benefits in terms of investment in the Town Centre and the District Centres if it means that the existing 'town centre' developments displaced from these sites were to relocate there, although this is not necessarily going to happen - uses displaced could also go to other out-of-centre sites to be retained, or to centres/ out-of-centre locations outside the borough, which would be even less accessible to Walsall residents. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policy IND5 | This Option has been identified as part of the Preferred Option for the SAD. Some sites have been identified for change of use from retail or leisure use to industry and are identified as such within Draft SAD Policy IND5. However, not all of the sites identified at Issues & Options stage have been taken forward as sites for industry, because some sites have been taken up for other uses, and on others, the existing use is likely to remain in place for the duration of the plan period. |
| 6. Open Space, Leisure and Community Facilities | | | | | | |
| Options for Open Space | | | | | | |
| Open Space Option 1 (Increase Provision in Areas of Deficiency) | Allocate extra open space sites in areas of the Borough that currently have deficiencies in provision. | This option has been identified because it would enable the Council to address existing deficiencies in open space provision in some areas of the borough, as identified in the latest audit of open space carried out in 2011, where feasible. | + | Option 1 is likely to have positive effects overall, as it would enable the Council to address existing deficiencies in open space provision in some areas of the borough, as identified in the latest audit of open space carried out in 2011, where feasible. | Incorporated into Option 5 | This Option has been included in the Preferred Option for the SAD, which includes elements of Options 1, 2 and 3. In the current economic climate the Council does not have the resources to commit to providing and maintaining additional Open Space sites. However, some additional Open Space sites have been added to the supply as a result of the plan-making process having reviewed the existing supply, and having identified sites previously used for other purposes that have come back into the supply, and sites that were previously missed. |
| Open Space Option 2 (Safeguard Existing Sites Only) | Maintain the current level of open space sites proposed for allocation as shown in Map 6.1 and Appendix 6a (see main SAD Issues & Options Report). | This option has been identified because it would enable the Council to maintain current levels of open space provision, while at the same time not further exacerbating existing quantitative deficiencies as identified in the latest audit of open space carried out in 2011. | + | Option 2 is likely to have positive effects overall, as it would enable the Council to maintain current levels of open space provision, while at the same time not further exacerbating existing quantitative deficiencies as identified in the latest audit of open space carried out in 2011. | Incorporated into Option 5 | This Option has been included in the Preferred Option for the SAD, which includes elements of Options 1, 2 and 3. There are some areas of the Borough where Open Space deficiencies exist. However, generally the existing Open Space network is extensive. The Council's Green Space Strategy (2012) provides a framework by which top level spaces are prioritised and continued to be improved (subject to capital funding) and revenue resources being redirected to maintain standards. Sites that do not feature highly in this hierarchy are subject to review with respect to grounds maintenance and are unlikely to be improved, or might not be maintained to their existing condition. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | + | | | This option would put pressure on the Council's resources to maintain open space that might be underperforming or low quality, whilst the maintenance of others might be scaled back and result in reduced open space quality. |
| Open Space Option 3 (Re-allocate certain Open Space for Other Uses) | Remove open space allocations on some sites that have limited value for open space or where there are not sufficient resources available to maintain the site for the open space functions set out in 6.1.5 of the Issues & Options Report. | This option has been identified because it could provide low quality open space land to meet other development needs in the borough, although it is acknowledged that it could also lead to deficiencies in open space provision in some local areas that would have to be mitigated through improving the quality of other important open spaces in the borough. | + | Option 3 is likely to have positive effects overall, as it would involve releasing low quality open space land for development, to meet the for other development needs in the borough, although it is acknowledged that it could also lead to deficiencies in open space provision in some local areas that would have to be mitigated through improving the quality of other important open spaces in the borough. | Incorporated into Option 5 | This Option has been included in the Preferred Option for the SAD, which includes elements of Options 1 and 3. While the existing Open Space network in Walsall is extensive, in some areas there are quantitative and qualitative deficiencies, and these tend to be the most deprived areas, where there is prevalence of health problems linked to inactivity. It would be inappropriate to re-allocate open spaces in such areas for other uses without mitigating the effects, through replacing areas lost, or upgrading existing open spaces to improve their overall quality and accessibility to local communities. |
| Open Space Option 4 (No Open Space Designated for Protection) | This is the 'do nothing' option and would mean that no open space, sports and recreational facilities are designated for protection in the SAD, and it would be left to the indicative guidance in the 'saved' UDP open space policies and the BCCS to determine which areas of open space in Walsall are included in the environmental network, and should therefore be retained and protected. | Instead of designating an open space network for protection in the SAD through Open Space Options 1, 2 or 3, reliance would be placed on 'saved' UDP Policies ENV7, LC1 – LC6 and BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4, ENV6 and the Environment Key Diagram to identify which areas of open space in Walsall are included in the Black Country environmental network, and should therefore be retained and protected. The BCCS environmental network is indicative only, so this Option may allow more flexibility for open space to be redeveloped for housing or industry. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 which identifies an environmental network across the Black Country that includes open spaces, and current national policy guidance which requires local plans to make appropriate provision for social infrastructure and protect open space, sports and recreational facilities and areas of natural greenspace of value to local communities. The BCCS environmental network is indicative only, and it is necessary to define the extent of the network at a local level through the SAD, otherwise there is a risk that the integrity of the network could be undermined by incremental loss of key areas of open space. It is therefore not a reasonable approach for the SAD and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details for rejecting this Option. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Open Space Option 5 (Increase Open Space Provision where Appropriate, Safeguard existing Open Space sites with the exception of low quality sites re-allocated for other uses) | Allocate additional open space where suitable sites can be identified, safeguard the majority of existing open spaces, and re-allocate open space with limited value or where there are not sufficient resources available to upgrade it for other uses. | This Option combines the benefits of Options 1, 2 and 3 without compromising the integrity of the Open Space network. Under this Option, low value open spaces would be proposed for redevelopment to help meet other development needs in the borough, but the vast majority of the Open Space network would be safeguarded for the future, and new areas of Open Space would also be provided where opportunities arise, to compensate for the areas lost. | + | Option 4 is likely to have positive effects overall, as it would involve allocating additional open space for protection where appropriate, safeguarding the majority of existing open space, and the re-allocation of a limited number of low value open space to meet the development needs of the borough. Although it is acknowledged that the option could exacerbate existing quantitative deficiencies of open space provision in some areas this would have to be mitigated through improving the quality of other open spaces in the borough in accordance with BCCS policy ENV6, UDP policy LC1 and the Urban Open Space SPD (2006). The re-allocation of low quality open space would provide opportunities to raise open space quality, improve the environment and aspirations of communities, and support the delivery of urban regeneration. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policy OS1, see also SAD and AAP Technical Appendices | This Option has been taken forward as the Preferred Option for open space in the SAD. There are significant resource challenges in respect of Open Space provision facing the authority. There are insufficient resources (and it is not envisaged that going forward there will be sufficient resources) to bring the lowest quality Open Spaces up to a desirable standard. This Option therefore prioritises investment in the ‘strategic hierarchy’ of sites identified in the Council’s Green Space Strategy (2012). The loss of some lower quality open space will help generate funding to maintain and improve existing areas of Open Space as well as helping to meet other requirements of the SAD, such as providing jobs and new homes. |
| Options for Community and Leisure Facilities | | | | | | |
| Community and Leisure Facilities Option 1 (No Site Allocations) | This is the ‘do nothing’ option, which would be not to allocate any land for community and leisure facilities in the SAD, and to deal with applications for such uses on an individual basis in accordance with existing local plan policies and national policy guidance. | This option has been identified because in practice most new community and leisure facilities will be delivered by providers other than the Council. | 0 | The overall effects of Option 1 are likely to be neutral overall, although there are uncertainties about some effects. As this is the ‘do nothing’ option no sites would be allocated for new community and leisure facilities in the SAD, and applications for such uses would be dealt with on an individual basis, in accordance with existing local plan policies and national policy guidance. The ‘status quo’ would be maintained, but there are questions over whether existing facilities meet the needs of all communities in Walsall and are accessible to the people they are intended to serve. | Preferred Option – see Updated UDP Policies LC5 and LC11 | This is the current preferred option as no new proposals for community and leisure facilities have been proposed. The Preferred Option is therefore to retain and where necessary, update the existing ‘saved’ UDP policies on community and leisure facilities only. The only ‘saved’ UDP policies that require updating are Policies LC5 and LC11 on Greenways and Bentley Road Cemetery Extension. |
| Community and Leisure Facilities Option 2 (Allocate Sites for Planned New Facilities) | This option would involve allocating sites for community and leisure facilities in the SAD where evidence has been submitted by a provider or community group to support a local need in that area that can be delivered. | This option has been identified because it would enable the Council to reserve suitable sites for new community and leisure infrastructure where a specific proposal for such infrastructure has been identified, which is likely to be deliverable within the plan period. | + | Option 2 is likely to have positive effects overall as it would involve allocating sites for community and leisure facilities in the SAD where evidence has been submitted by a provider or community group to support a local need in that area that can be delivered. The main uncertainty is whether any sites identified by local communities or service providers will be appropriately located where they are accessible to the communities they are intended to serve (SA13). | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 1, as no new proposals for leisure and community development have come forward that need to be provided for in the SAD. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Options for University of Wolverhampton Walsall Campus | | | | | | |
| University Campus Option 1 (No Change to UDP Policy LC10) | This is a 'do nothing' option, which would be to rely on the existing 'saved' UDP Policy LC10 to guide future development within the University Campus, including proposals to improve and expand the existing facilities, without making any further changes to the policy. | There is a need to consider whether any change needs to be made, as the UDP policy may already provide adequate guidance for proposals for new development within the University Campus. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' The existing UDP policy only covers part of the campus and it is therefore not a reasonable approach to retain the existing UDP policy as it is without any change. This Option has therefore not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| University Campus Option 2 (Replace 'saved' UDP Policy LC10) | Replace 'saved' UDP Policy LC10 with a new policy providing more comprehensive guidance on development across the whole of the University Campus. | The UDP policy may be out-of-date, so there is merit in reviewing the policy, to ensure that it addresses all the issues likely to be relevant to proposals for future development within the University Campus site. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It would enable the Council to update the existing UDP policy and provide a single comprehensive policy to guide all future development across the entire University Campus, including the outstanding UDP housing allocation on part of the campus ('saved' UDP Policy H2, Site H2.20). The policy is designed to reflect the proposals to create a new access from the Broadway and manage the needs of the University with the environment. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policy LC10 which is intended to update the existing 'saved' UDP policy | This Option has been identified as the Preferred Option for the SAD. This Option would enable the Council to update the existing UDP policy and provide a single comprehensive policy to guide all future development across the entire University Campus, including the outstanding UDP housing allocation on part of the campus ('saved' UDP Policy H2, Site H2.20). |
| University Campus Option 3 (Replace 'saved' UDP Policy LC10 based on representation received from the University's planning agent) | Replace policy with a new policy from the University's planning agent covering the whole of the University Campus. | The agent for the University submitted a representation in response to the Issues & Options consultation in 2013 proposing a revised policy that allows for a more comprehensive approach towards development across the campus. It is therefore necessary to consider whether the policy needs to be updated to reflect these comments. | + | Option 3 is likely to have positive effects overall. It would provide a single policy to guide all future development across the University Campus, including the outstanding UDP housing site allocation on part of the Campus ('saved' UDP Policy H2, Site H2.20). The policy is designed to reflect the proposals to create a new access from the Broadway and manage the needs of the University with the environment. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 2. While it would have advantages in terms of allowing for more comprehensive development, the amendments proposed do not fully take into account the environmental, landscape and amenity value of the campus and it is unclear whether the green and open aspect presented to the Broadway could be safeguarded. |
| 7. Environmental Network | | | | | | |
| Options for Environmental Network – General Approach | | | | | | |
| Environmental Network Option 1 (Enhancement Where Opportunities Arise) | The expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure (linking designated nature sites with other open space sites, watercourses and features of the historic environment) should take place wherever opportunities arise. | This option has been identified because it would provide opportunities to expand and improve the Environmental Network at every opportunity. | + | Option 1 is likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve the expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure (linking designated nature sites with other open space sites, watercourses and features of the historic environment) wherever opportunities arise, and would therefore support the delivery of the environmental network in Walsall in line with the Black Country spatial strategy. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3, which combines the benefits of Options 1 and 2. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Environmental Network Option 2 (Target Areas of Deficiency) | The expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure should be targeted at areas of natural green space deprivation or places where the network is deficient. | This option has been identified because it would enable the Council to focus Environmental Network expansion and improvements within areas of green space deficiency. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It would involve the expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure in areas of natural green space deprivation or places where the network is deficient. It is therefore likely to be particularly beneficial to local communities who currently do not have good access to open space and are affected by other related indicators of social and economic deprivation. It would also enable the expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure (linking designated nature sites with other open space sites, watercourses and features of the historic environment), and would therefore support the delivery of the environmental network in Walsall in line with the Black Country spatial strategy. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3, which combines the benefits of Options 1 and 2. |
| Environmental Network Option 3 (Enhancement Where Opportunities Arise and Targeted Investment) | This is a combination of Options 1 and 2, and would involve a strategy for improving and enhancing all areas of the environmental network where opportunities arise, while also prioritising investment in areas where there is a quantitative or qualitative deficiency in access to green spaces. | This Option has been identified following further technical evaluation of the extent and quality of natural and built environmental assets in Walsall, including natural greenspace, and requirements for housing, industry and other development, following the Issues & Options consultation in 2013. | ++ | Option 3 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It is a combination of Options 1 and 2, and would involve a strategy for improving and enhancing all areas of the environmental network where opportunities arise, while also prioritising investment in areas where there is a quantitative or qualitative deficiency in access to green spaces. This will include the allocation of land of ecological value as Open Space (where possible) as well as targeted investment in the development of the environmental network and enhancement of environmental infrastructure (where possible) in 'multiple benefit priority areas' identified in the Black Country Core Strategy Environmental Infrastructure Guidance. To rule out areas of surplus green space completely from any enhancement could result in missed opportunities. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies Map and Policies GB1, GB2, EN1 – EN7 and SAD and AAP Technical Appendices | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. It combines the benefits of Options 1 and 2, and enables priority to be placed on areas where investment in the Environmental Network will achieve the best possible results. Following the Issues & Options consultation, further Options relating to specific aspects of the Environmental Network (Green Belt, Natural Environment, Canals, Flood Risk and Heritage Assets) have also been identified, and these have been evaluated below. |
| Options for Green Belt Boundary | | | | | | |
| Green Belt Policy Option 1 (Review Green Belt Boundary and Release Land for Development) | Review Green Belt boundary, and identify sites for release/ allocation for housing and industrial development. | This Option has been identified because a number of sites in the Green Belt have been suggested for allocation in the SAD, mainly for housing development, in response to two 'calls for sites' in 2011 and 2013. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as sufficient deliverable previously-developed land and surplus poor quality open space has been identified to accommodate Walsall's requirements for new housing, industry and other development up to 2026. Releasing land from the Green Belt would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011, as it would undermine the BCCS 'brownfield first' principle and the spatial strategy for the regeneration of the Black Country as well as the Council's aspirations for the regeneration of the borough. It is also contrary to national policy guidance on Green Belts, which advises that they should only be altered in 'exceptional circumstances.' |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | N/A | | | This Option is not considered to be a reasonable approach and has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Green Belt Boundary Option 2 (No Green Belt Review) | This is the 'do nothing' option and would mean no change to the Green Belt boundary currently defined on the 'saved' Walsall UDP Proposals Map. | It is not necessary to release land from the Green Belt to meet the requirements for development in Walsall identified in the BCCS or to meet other local needs, as sufficient previously-developed land and surplus poor quality open space has been identified to meet the requirements. | ++ | | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy GB1 | This Option has been identified as the Preferred Option for the SAD, as recent technical evidence has demonstrated that there is sufficient viable and deliverable previously-developed land and surplus poor quality open space to accommodate Walsall's requirements for new housing, industry and other development up to 2026. It has not been demonstrated that 'exceptional circumstances' exist that would justify amending the existing Green Belt boundary to accommodate new development. It is therefore proposed that the Green Belt boundary defined on the 'saved' UDP Proposals Map will be carried forward unchanged into the SAD and will be identified on the SAD Policies Map. |
| Options for Green Belt Policy | | | | | | |
| Green Belt Policy Option 1 (Rely on Existing Local Plan Green Belt Policy) | This is the 'do nothing' option, which would be to rely on existing 'saved' UDP policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 and relevant national policy guidance on development in the Green Belt to evaluate the 'appropriateness' of new development proposals on Green Belt sites. | There are existing local plan policies in place on development in the Green Belt which are currently being applied ('saved' UDP Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4). These policies can be applied in combination with current national policy guidance on development in the Green Belt (NPPF paragraphs 87 - 92). | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' National policy guidance on the Green Belt has changed significantly since the Walsall UDP was adopted, meaning that the existing UDP policies are out-of-date and inconsistent. Relying on existing UDP Green Belt policies is therefore not a reasonable approach so this Option has not been subject to SA. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Green Belt Policy Option 2 (New Green Belt Policy) | Replace existing 'saved' UDP Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 with new Green Belt policies which are consistent with the current national policy guidance in the NPPF, and provide up-to-date guidance on the types of development likely to be proposed in the Green Belt in Walsall. | This will enable the local plan policy to be updated and brought into conformity with current national policy guidance on development in the Green Belt. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It would involve replacing the existing 'saved' UDP Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 with new policies which are more consistent with the current national policy guidance in the NPPF on development in the Green Belt, and provide up-to-date guidance on the types of development likely to be proposed in the Green Belt in Walsall. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy GB2 | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, as while there is no need to release any land from the Green Belt to meet the BCCS requirements for housing, industry and other development, the existing local plan policies on the Green Belt are out-of-date and are not consistent with current national policy guidance. This option would allow the UDP policies to be replaced with new Green Belt policies in the SAD which are fully in conformity with national policy guidance, while also providing appropriate guidance on the types of development likely to be proposed locally. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Options for Natural Environment | | | | | | |
| Natural Environment Option 1² (Designated Sites Not Identified) | This is the 'do nothing' option - sites within the borough that are important for biodiversity and geological conservation, which have been designated for protection outside of the planning system, would not be identified in the SAD, and would therefore not be protected when allocating land for new development. | Designation of sites of importance for nature conservation and geological conservation happens outside the planning system, and there is national policy guidance in place aimed at protecting the natural environment which can be applied. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This approach would be contrary to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011, which includes as part of the spatial strategy, the development of an environmental infrastructure network across the Black Country, including areas of importance for biodiversity and geological conservation, which will be protected from development (Policies CSP3, CSP4, ENV1 and Environment Key Diagram). This is not a reasonable approach so the Option has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Natural Environment Option 2 (Rely on Existing Local Plan Natural Environment Policies and Designations) | This is the 'do minimum' option, which would be to rely on existing local plan policy and relevant national policy guidance to protect designated nature conservation sites and the natural environment. | There are existing local plan policies in place on development affecting the natural environment, including sites which have been designated for their importance for biodiversity and geological conservation, which are currently being applied ('saved' UDP Policies ENV18, ENV23 and ENV24, 'saved' UDP Figure 3.2 and Proposals Map, and BCCS Policy ENV1 and Environment Key Diagram). These policies can be applied in combination with current national policy guidance on protecting the natural environment (NPPF paragraphs 109, 111, 117 - 119). | - | Although Option 2 is the 'do minimum' option, it is likely to have negative rather than neutral effects overall. It would involve relying on existing BCCS Policies CSP3 and ENV1 and the Environment Key Diagram, 'saved' UDP Policies ENV18, ENV23 and ENV24 and the designations on the 'saved' UDP Figure 3.2 and Proposals Map to guide the evaluation of development proposals affecting trees and woodland, designated nature conservation sites, and wildlife corridors. The effects of doing so on the majority of the SA objectives would be neutral, however, the effects of not including SLINCs and ancient woodland, and updating the designations is considered to have a negative effect on SA2, SA5 and SA9, and therefore negative effects overall. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because the BCCS Environment Key Diagram is indicative only and the information shown on the 'saved' UDP Proposals Map is out-of-date. There have been changes to SSSIs and SINCs since the UDP was adopted, the UDP does not identify SLINCs or Ancient Woodland, and there is also a need to review the Wildlife Corridors identified on UDP Figure 3.2 in the light of these changes. Failure to provide up-to-date and comprehensive guidance on designated sites in the SAD would potentially undermine the spatial strategy and aspirations for the positive environmental transformation of the Black Country in the BCCS. |
| Natural Environment Option 3 (Update Natural Environment Policies and Designations) | Update UDP nature conservation policies and designations shown on the UDP Proposals Map. | The designations shown on the UDP Policies Map are out-of-date and incomplete – some SSSI and SINC boundaries have changed and the UDP also does not show SLINCs or areas of Ancient Woodland. | ++ | Option 3 is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It would involve updating the existing UDP Policies ENV18, ENV23 and ENV24 on the natural environment, and showing the most up-to-date boundaries of designated nature conservation sites and wildlife corridors on the SAD Policies Map. This should ensure that the policy framework for conservation of the natural environment is robust, and that opportunities to conserve important elements of the natural environment and sites of importance for biodiversity and geological conservation are identified, as well as providing opportunities for climate change resilience measures, and for development of greenway | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because as well as updating the designations on the Policies Map, there is a need to clarify how existing local plan policy will be applied alongside current national policy guidance on the natural environment. |

² This Option was formerly identified as Environmental Networks Option 3 at the Issues & Options stage in 2013 – see Appendix 12a of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) which lists the 'Unreasonable' options identified at this stage.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | ++ | networks for walking and cycling to improve access to active transport modes and improve health and well-being of local communities. However, there may be some uncertainties for developers (SA6) if the SLINCs and areas of Ancient Woodland are not shown on the SAD Policies Map. | | |
| Natural Environment Option 4 (Update Natural Environment Designations and refer to existing policy) | Update UDP nature conservation designations shown on the UDP Proposals Map and include cross-references to relevant ‘saved’ UDP and BCCS policies. | The designations shown on the UDP Policies Map are out-of-date and incomplete – some SSSI and SINC boundaries have changed and the UDP also does not show SLINCs or areas of Ancient Woodland. There is also a need to clarify how existing local plan policy on the natural environment will be applied alongside current national policy guidance. | ++ | Option 4 is likely to have similar effects to Option 3 and to have significant positive effects overall, the main difference being that showing the SLINCs and areas of Ancient Woodland is likely to provide greater certainty for developers over where these constraints exist. The Option would involve showing the most up-to-date boundaries of designated nature conservation sites, areas of Ancient Woodland and wildlife corridors on the SAD Policies Map. This should ensure that the policy framework for conservation of the natural environment is robust, and that opportunities to conserve important elements of the natural environment and sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity are identified, as well as providing opportunities for climate change resilience measures, and for development of greenway networks for walking and cycling to improve access to active transport modes and improve health and well-being of local communities. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies EN1 and EN2 and SAD and AAP Technical Appendices | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD because some of the nature conservation designations in Walsall have changed since the UDP was adopted, and SLINCs and areas of Ancient Woodland are not currently shown on the UDP Proposals Map. It is therefore proposed to show the updated boundaries of all of the designated nature conservation sites, areas of Ancient Woodland and Wildlife Corridors on the SAD Policies Map. While it is not proposed to replace the existing UDP policies, the SAD will include policies linked to the designations on the Policies Map to explain how existing local plan policies will be applied when considering new development affecting these sites. N.B. The Draft SAD Policies Map does not currently include Wildlife Corridors, pending a review of the baseline evidence, but it is intended that they will be shown on the final version of the SAD Policies Map. |
| Options for Mitigation of Effects on Cannock Chase SAC | | | | | | |
| Cannock Chase SAC Option 1 (Adopt 15km as a default area) | Adopt 15km ZOI as the default area from which all residential development is required to undertake HRA | Reflects the position Walsall might find its self in should 15km be the ZOI and an acceptable strategic mitigation package does not come forward. | - | Option 1 is likely to have adverse effects on the SA Objectives overall, as it would require all residential development proposals (of 1 dwelling or more) to be subject to HRA, and if necessary, undertake ‘appropriate assessment’ and provide or contribute towards mitigating any likely significant effects. The option presents an administrative burden with additional costs to developers and the Council in respect of all residential applications. The administrative costs are particularly high in respect of development in Walsall, due to many of the SAD housing allocations being of a small or modest size. Also, it has the potential to result in delays or the refusal of planning applications if proposals cannot be ‘screened out’ through HRA and are required to progress to ‘appropriate assessment.’ Many of the SAD’s residential allocations are brownfield sites with several constraints to development. The Deliverability and Viability Studies commissioned by the Council from DTZ in 2015 indicate that development constraints, along with other factors affecting land values in the area, result in some SAD | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because of harmful effects on SA Objectives and delivery of new development in accordance with the BCCS spatial strategy. In addition, in light of more recent HRAs the Council is of the view that the requirement for a strategic mitigation package in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure no longer exists. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | - | <p>housing allocations within the proposed 15km ZOI being potentially unviable. In this context, if developer contributions were to be required from residential developments to overcome impacts to Cannock Chase SAC, a European protected site, and viability evidence indicates that no contributions can be secured, according to NPPF paragraphs 118 and 119, planning permission should be refused. In this scenario, Walsall Council would be forced to abandon urban regeneration in order to allocate viable greenfield / Green Belt sites that are likely to be in closer proximity to Cannock Chase SAC, and the Cannock Chase Extension Canal SAC. The effects associated with attempting to protect Cannock Chase SAC, according to the proposed 15km ZOI of the SAC Partnership's MOU, have the potential to result in adverse effects upon the majority of the SA Objectives, as a sustainable pattern of development could not be delivered. Also, there is likely to be strong adverse effects on SA12 as brownfield land would remain un-remediated as development shifts to greenfield land, impacting on the Green Belt and agricultural land.</p> | | |
| <p>Cannock Chase SAC Option 2 (Sign the SAC Partnership MOU)</p> | <p>Sign up to the MOU accepting the SAMM, 15km as the ZOI, and the proposed 8km Payment Zone (subject to change)</p> | <p>Option represents an approach that has been agreed by members of the SAC Partnership and has the support of Natural England.</p> | - | <p>Option 2 is likely to have adverse effects on the SA Objectives overall. Although the 2015 Cannock Chase SAC Partnership MOU exclusively seeks developer contributions from within 8km of the SAC boundary these contributions supposedly also mitigate the adverse effects of recreational pressure from a net increase in housing development between 8 - 15km of the SAC. Whilst an 8km payment zone has no affect on the housing allocations made within the SAD at present, the MOU is scheduled to be reviewed within the plan period (circa 2020). Consequently the Council cannot rule out the possibility of this payment zone being extended as a result of the MOU 5 yearly review and must take into account the effect this would have on the delivery of the SAD and other DPDs. The Deliverability and Viability Studies commissioned by the Council from DTZ in 2015 indicate that development constraints, along with other factors affecting land values in the area, result in some SAD housing allocations within the proposed 15km ZOI being potentially unviable. In this context, if developer contributions were to be required from residential developments to overcome impacts to Cannock Chase SAC, a European protected site, and viability evidence indicates that no contributions can be secured, according to NPPF paragraphs 118 and 119, planning permission should be refused.</p> | <p>Rejected</p> | <p>This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because of harmful effects on SA Objectives and delivery of new development in accordance with the BCCS spatial strategy. In addition, in light of more recent HRAs the council is of the view that the requirement for a strategic mitigation package in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure no longer exists.</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | - | In this scenario, Walsall Council would be forced to abandon urban regeneration in order to allocate viable greenfield / Green Belt sites that are likely to be in closer proximity to Cannock Chase SAC, and the Cannock Chase Extension Canal SAC. The effects associated with attempting to protect Cannock Chase SAC, according to the proposed 15km ZOI of the SAC Partnership's MOU, have the potential to result in adverse effects upon the majority of the SA objectives, as a sustainable pattern of development could not be delivered. Also, there is likely to be strong adverse effects on SA12 as brownfield land would remain un-remediated as development shifts to greenfield land, impacting on the Green Belt and agricultural land. | | |
| Cannock Chase SAC Option 3 (Adopt 8km as the ZOI) | Adopt an 8km ZOI as an alternative ZOI based on the visitor survey findings | 8km provides a Zone from the SAC which encompasses around 75% of the visitors who can be described as regular visitors visiting the area weekly or more frequently (P46 Cannock Chase Visitor Impacts Mitigation Report). This is an approach consistent with ZOIs for SPAs and SACs in other areas of the country. These are the types of visitors that can more reasonably be expected to result in a definite impact on the SAC. | + | Option 3 is likely to have a positive effect on most of the SA Objectives as an 8km ZOI would not have the potential to result in the refusal of planning applications where viability dictates that no developer contributions can be sought. This would ensure the delivery of housing on brownfield sites first rather than greenfield sites. The benefits of a sustainable pattern of development are wide ranging, but in general, the brownfield sites allocated for housing in the SAD are in sustainable locations with access to a multitude of sustainable transport options, are near to social infrastructure, and this Option will ensure that previously developed land is remediated and bring investment into deprived areas. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because Option 4 is more likely to generate benefits in terms of delivery of development on brownfield sites and regeneration of urban areas in line with the BCCS spatial strategy. In addition, in light of more recent HRAs the council is of the view that the requirement for a strategic mitigation package in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure no longer exists. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Cannock Chase SAC Option 4 (Adopt findings and conclusions of more recent HRA) | Adopt the findings and conclusions of most recent HRA work undertaken by the AONB Partnership | This Option has been identified having regard to the Defra guidance on ‘competent authority’ co-ordination, which the Council is obliged to have regard to. It reflects the findings and conclusions of recent HRA work by the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership in respect of mitigating the effects associated with increased recreational pressure on the Cannock Chase AONB and SAC. | + | Option 4 is likely to have a positive effect on most of the SA Objectives as more recent HRA work by the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership has ‘screened out’ likely significant effects associated with increased recreational pressure. This removes the potential to result in the refusal of planning applications where viability dictates that no developer contributions can be sought. This would ensure the delivery of housing on brownfield sites first, in accordance with the BCCS sustainability principles, rather than greenfield sites. The benefits of a sustainable pattern of development are wide ranging, but in general, the brownfield sites allocated for housing in the SAD are in sustainable locations with access to a multitude of sustainable transport options, are near to social infrastructure, and this option will ensure that previously developed land is remediated and bring investment into deprived areas. | Preferred Option | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, as it will not adversely affect the delivery of brownfield land. This will enable the authority to regenerate its urban areas resulting in a sustainable pattern of development. Also, regulation 65(2) of the Habitats Regulations states that “ <i>Nothing in regulation 61(1) or 63(2) requires a competent authority to assess any implications of a plan or project which would be more appropriately assessed under that provision by another competent authority.</i> ” In light of this provision, Walsall Council considers the HRA work of the AONB Partnership, particularly in respect of screening out the effects of recreational pressure on the SAC’s qualifying features, as having been made by the competent authority best placed to make such an assessment. Consequently, Walsall Council considers that the mitigation measures to be delivered through the AONB Management Plan and Visitor Management Strategy (implemented by the AONB Partnership under the avoidance of deterioration of Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive) as sufficient to mitigate the effects from the proposed new housing development of its SAD and AAP. |
| Cannock Chase SAC Option 5 (Extend scope of development required to make contributions) | Extend the scope of developer contributions to fund the strategic mitigation approach to include leisure developments as well as residential | Represents a fairer option requiring other types of development (e.g. hotels, retail and leisure), which are also likely to increase recreational pressure to the SAC, to potentially contribute towards mitigating effects from increased recreational pressure. | ? | Option 5 is likely to have an uncertain effect on the SA Objectives as the resulting impact on the proposed ZOI of taking into account contribution from other types of development (e.g. Hotels, Out-of-Centre retail and leisure) has not been explored fully. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as the implications of having taken into account other types of development in developing a strategic mitigation package have not been explored. In addition, in light of more recent HRAs the council is of the view that the requirement for a strategic mitigation package in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure no longer exists. |
| Cannock Chase SAC Option 6 (Restrict or stop active promotion) | Restrict or stop the active promotion of Cannock Chase for recreation and leisure | The option was developed as the SAC is contained within an AONB, as such, unlike a National Park; there is no obligation to promote as an area for recreation. Considered not to be a reasonable alternative as Walsall Council could not deliver this option. | N/A | Option 6 is not a ‘reasonable alternative’ for the SAD, as none of Cannock Chase is in Walsall Borough so the Council does not have any influence over the delivery of this option through the SAD or through any other mechanisms. Furthermore, much of Cannock Chase is common land so scope to restrict access to it is limited. Also, neither is it realistic, considering the number of stakeholders involved with a vested interest in the area as a tourist attraction, to expect that it will not continue to be advertised nationally for tourism. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a ‘reasonable alternative,’ being outside the scope of the Council’s powers and outside the scope of the Walsall SAD and AAP to deliver. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <p>Cannock Chase SAC Option 7 (Identify a ZOI based on activities such as walking and dog walking)</p> | <p>Identify a ZOI based on effects associated with activities that can more reasonably be linked to a generic increase in development (e.g. walking and dog walking)</p> | <p>This option was developed having had regard to the CIL regulations as activities such as whilst walking and dog-walking can reasonably be described as having a real risk to the SAC, mountain biking and horse riding cannot as they present only hypothetical risks. This is thought to be the case as it is reasonable to assume that whilst most able-bodied occupants of the average household might walk recreationally, the same cannot be said for each household in respect of mountain bike or horse riding. Consequently, it is challengeable as to whether developer contributions throughout the entire proposed ZOI can be sought legitimately.</p> | - | <p>Option 7 is likely to have adverse effects on the SA Objectives overall. Although the 2015 Cannock Chase SAC Partnership MOU exclusively seeks developer contributions from within 8km of the SAC boundary these contributions would also mitigate the adverse effects of recreational pressure from increased housing development within 8-15km of the SAC. Whilst taking into account only walking and dog walking (activities that can be taken part in by most able-bodied people), based on the current interpretation and application of the findings of the Cannock Chase Visitor Survey by Natural England and other authorities, it is likely this Option would reduce the proposed ZOI by 2-3km. At present an 8km payment zone has no affect on the housing allocations made within the SAD. However the MOU is scheduled to be reviewed within the plan period (circa 2020). Consequently the Council cannot rule out the possibility of this payment zone being extended as a result of the MOU 5 yearly review and must take into account the effect this would have on the delivery of the SAD and other DPDs. Many of the SAD's residential allocations are brownfield sites with numerous constraints to development. The Deliverability and Viability Studies commissioned by the Council from DTZ in 2015 indicate that development constraints, along with other factors affecting land values in the area, result in some SAD housing allocations within the proposed 15km ZOI being potentially unviable. In this context, if developer contributions were to be required from residential developments to overcome impacts to Cannock Chase SAC, a European protected site, and viability evidence indicates that no contributions can be secured, according to NPPF paragraphs 118 and 119, planning permission should be refused. In this scenario, Walsall Council would be forced to abandon urban regeneration in order to allocate viable greenfield / Green Belt sites that are likely to be in closer proximity to Cannock Chase SAC, and the Cannock Chase Extension Canal SAC. The effects associated with attempting to protect Cannock Chase SAC, according to the proposed 15km ZOI of the SAC Partnership's MOU, have the potential to result in adverse effects upon the majority of the SA Objectives, as a sustainable pattern of development could not be delivered. Also, there are likely to be strong adverse effects on SA12 as brownfield land would remain un-remediated as development shifts to greenfield land, impacting on the Green Belt and agricultural land.</p> | <p>Rejected</p> | <p>This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 4 because of harmful effects on SA Objectives and delivery of new development in accordance with the BCCS spatial strategy. In addition, in the light of more recent HRA work carried out by the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership, the Council is of the view that the requirement for a strategic mitigation package in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure from housing development in Walsall no longer exists.</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Options for Flood Risk | | | | | | |
| Flood Risk Option 1³ (Flood Risk Areas Not Identified) | This is the 'do nothing' option – areas at risk from flooding would not be identified in the SAD and AAP, and the risk of flooding to new development, and the impacts on flood risk elsewhere arising from new development, would therefore not be considered when allocating land for new development. | There are existing local plan policies in place on flood risk which are currently being applied 'saved' UDP Policy ENV40, BCCS Policy ENV5 and Environment Key Diagram). These policies can be applied in combination with current national policy guidance on the approach towards evaluating and managing risks from flooding arising from new development proposals (NPPF paragraphs 17, 93, 94, 99 – 104, 156, 162 and NPPG on Flood Risk and Coastal Change), and the latest maps published by the Environment Agency showing areas at risk from fluvial and surface water flooding in Walsall. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' The existing local plan policies on flood risk pre-date the latest national policy guidance on the 'sequential approach' and sustainable urban drainage management systems (SuDs), so there is a need for further guidance in the SAD and AAP to clarify how this will be applied in Walsall. For this reason it is not considered a 'reasonable option' to rely on existing local plan policy and national policy guidance alone to guide new development in areas of flood risk, and the Option has therefore not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Flood Risk Option 2 (Update Local Plan Flood Risk Policies) | Expand on existing BCCS and UDP policies and evidence on flood risk to provide more up-to-date guidance on potential risks to new development reflecting national policy requirements to apply the 'sequential test' and consider sustainable urban drainage management systems (SuDs) when considering new development in areas at risk from flooding. | The existing local plan policies on flood risk pre-date the latest national policy guidance on the 'sequential approach' and sustainable urban drainage management systems (SuDs) so there is a need for further guidance in the SAD and AAP to clarify how this will be applied in Walsall. | + | Option 2 is likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve expanding on UDP Policy ENV40 in the SAD, and updating the current evidence on risks from flooding in Walsall, to provide more up-to-date guidance on the extent of flood risk in Walsall and the application of the 'sequential test' and guidance on sustainable urban drainage management systems (SuDs) in line with current national policy guidance in the NPPF and NPPG. It is therefore likely to have positive effects on SA2, SA3, SA4, SA8 and SA14 as there would be increased protection from flood risk sources, and opportunities to integrate this into the environmental/ green infrastructure network, resulting in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and water quality improvements. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy EN3 and AAP Policy AAPI7 and SAD and AAP Policies Maps and SAD and AAP Technical Appendices | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD and has also been reflected in the Preferred Options for the AAP, as the existing local plan does not define areas of greatest risk from fluvial flooding in Walsall (Flood Zone 3a) in line with current national policy guidance. There is also a need for the SAD to explain how the Council will apply the 'sequential test' when considering proposals for new development, and the circumstances where sustainable urban drainage management systems (SuDs) will be required within major development schemes. N.B. The Draft SAD and AAP Policies Maps do not currently show Flood Zones 3a and 3b, as the baseline evidence for flood risk is currently being reviewed, but it is intended that this will be shown on the final version of the SAD and AAP Policies Maps. |

³ This Option was formerly identified as Environmental Networks Option 4 at the Issues & Options stage in 2013 – see Appendix 12a of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) which lists the 'Unreasonable' options identified at this stage.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Options for Canals | | | | | | |
| Canals Option 1 (Rely on Existing Local Plan Canal Policies) | This is the 'do nothing' option and would involve relying on existing local plan policies to evaluate the impact of new development adjacent to canals and within canal corridors in Walsall, including development affecting canal buildings and infrastructure such as bridges and locks. | There is existing local plan policy in place on canals and the built environment, which is currently being applied (BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4 and ENV4) when considering development in canal corridors. This is supplemented by the design guidance in the Designing Walsall SPD which includes guidance on design of new canalside development. | + | While Option 1 is the 'do nothing' option, it is likely to have positive effects rather than neutral effects overall, as the existing BCCS policies already provide guidance on development adjacent to canals, and can continue to be applied as now. It would involve relying on existing BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4 and ENV4 to evaluate the impact of new development adjacent to canals and within canal corridors in Walsall, including development affecting canal buildings and infrastructure such as bridges and locks. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 2 as the BCCS policy is not locally specific enough to guide new development within canal corridors in Walsall. |
| Canals Option 2 (Additional Policy on Canals) | Provide additional, more locally specific guidance in the SAD for new development within canal corridors and adjacent to canals in Walsall, identifying buildings and structures of importance for local character and requirements to conserve and enhance these assets and maintain water quality, amenity and public access. | There is scope to provide more locally-specific guidance in the SAD and AAP on development in canal corridors in Walsall, reflecting the key priorities for the canal network in the borough. | ++ | Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects, and greater benefits than Option 1. It would involve providing additional, more locally specific guidance in the SAD for new development within canal corridors and adjacent to canals in Walsall, identifying buildings and structures of importance for local character and requirements to conserve and enhance these assets and maintain water quality, amenity and public access. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy EN4 and AAP Policy AAPLE4 and SAD and AAP Policies Maps, see also SAD and AAP Technical Appendices | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD and has also been reflected in the Preferred Options for the AAP. The existing BCCS policy on canals does not fully reflect local considerations for development adjacent to canals and in canal corridors in Walsall. This Option would provide an opportunity to include more locally specific guidance in the SAD. |
| Options for the Historic Environment | | | | | | |
| Historic Environment Option 1 (Rely on Existing Local Plan Historic Environment Policies and Designations) | This is the 'do nothing' option and would mean relying on existing local plan policies including the designations on the 'saved' UDP Proposals Map to evaluate the impact of new development on heritage assets in Walsall, including Great Barr Hall and Estate, archaeology, historic buildings and conservation areas. | There is existing local plan policy in place on new development and the historic environment which is currently being applied (BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4 and ENV2, 'saved' UDP Policies ENV25 – ENV30 and 'saved' UDP Proposals Map). | + | While Option 1 is the 'do nothing' option, it is likely to have positive effects rather than neutral effects overall, as the existing BCCS and UDP policies already provide guidance on the historic environment and can continue to be applied as now. This Option is therefore likely to have largely positive effects, as applying existing local plan policies on the historic environment would ensure that heritage assets are appropriately conserved, protected and enhanced, that the design of new buildings and spaces is of a standard that would respond positively to local character and distinctiveness, and would also encourage the re-use of existing buildings and building materials wherever possible, and the efficient use of land and buildings. It is also likely to have consequential positive effects on the amenity, and wellbeing of local communities, as it is likely to encourage well-designed developments. While there is some uncertainty about the effects on other SA objectives because the option is not site-specific, effects are likely to be neutral overall, given that there are existing policies in place to control other effects from new development. | Rejected | This option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 2 as there is a need to identify heritage assets in the SAD, as most of them are not currently shown on the UDP Proposals Map. There is also a need to provide up-to-date guidance on development opportunities that would help to conserve heritage assets currently at risk in Walsall, including Great Barr Hall and Estate. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <p>Historic Environment Option 2 (Update Historic Environment Policies and Designations)</p> | <p>Update the existing UDP Policies ENV8 and ENV25 - ENV30 on the historic environment and show the most up-to-date boundaries of designated heritage assets on the SAD Policies Map.</p> | <p>There is a need to identify heritage assets in Walsall in the SAD, as most of them are not currently shown on the UDP Proposals Map. There is also a need to provide up-to-date guidance on development opportunities that would help to conserve heritage assets currently at risk in Walsall, including Great Barr Hall and Estate.</p> | <p>++</p> | <p>Option 2 is likely to have significant positive effects, and greater benefits than Option 1, as by showing all of the main heritage assets in Walsall on the Policies Map and providing more up-to-date guidance for development affecting these assets, it is more likely that the design of new developments affecting such assets will have regard to all of the relevant issues, including features that are important for local distinctiveness, and will have positive effects on local character. It is also likely to have similar effects to Option 1 in terms of encouraging the re-use of existing buildings and building materials wherever possible, and the efficient use of land and buildings and encouraging well-designed developments that will benefit the health and well-being of local communities who value heritage assets and local character. As with Option 1, effects on other SA Objectives are likely to be neutral overall, given that there are existing policies in place to control other effects from new development.</p> | <p>Preferred Option based on this Option – see SAD Policy ENV6 and AAPLV5 EN7 and SAD and AAP Policies Maps, see also SAD and AAP Technical Appendices</p> | <p>A modified version of this Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. There is a need to identify heritage assets in Walsall in the SAD, as most of them are not currently shown on the UDP Proposals Map. There is also a need to provide up-to-date guidance on development opportunities that would help to conserve heritage assets currently at risk in Walsall, including Great Barr Hall and Estate. It is therefore proposed to replace ‘saved’ UDP Policy ENV8 with a new policy. It is also proposed to include a new policy on another important heritage asset currently vulnerable to risk, the former Highgate Brewery, and to provide updated guidance on development in conservation areas, to reflect current national policy guidance. However, it is not possible to replace UDP Policy ENV29 completely, as this policy must be retained to provide guidance on development in conservation areas in the District Centres, which are not covered by the SAD. It is also proposed that the AAP will include a separate policy on the historic environment in Walsall Town Centre (see Draft AAP Policy AAPLV5).</p> |
| <p>8. Sustainable Waste Management</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Options for Waste Recovery Targets</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Waste Recovery Targets Option 1a (General Recovery Targets)</p> | <p>The SAD would set general waste management targets for delivery of new municipal waste recovery capacity for paper, card, cans, glass, plastics, food waste, and/ or green garden waste, which could be met through delivery of any recycling, composting or energy recovery facilities.</p> | <p>The Option is consistent with the approach in the BCCS which sets indicative landfill diversion targets for LACW and C&I waste in Policy WM1, Table 15 and Appendix 6. The Option would also provide maximum flexibility for the waste industry, and greater likelihood that the targets would be met, as any type of municipal waste recovery infrastructure would be able to contribute.</p> | <p>+</p> | <p>Option 1a is likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve basing the SAD waste management targets on delivery of new municipal waste recovery capacity for paper, card, cans, glass, plastics, food waste, and/ or green garden waste, which could be met through delivery of any type or combination of municipal waste recovery infrastructure, including facilities for re-use, recycling, composting or energy recovery. This would be in accordance with the current BCCS waste capacity targets and would also support economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources and generation of energy from renewable sources. Effects on other SA Objectives would be neutral, as the Option relates to targets only and is not site-specific, and any effects can be addressed through application of other existing local plan policies and national policy guidance, and through regulation.</p> | <p>Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policy W1 and SAD Waste Technical Appendix 2</p> | <p>A combination of this Option and Option 1b has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, because current national policy guidance expects the SAD to address the wider objectives of driving waste as far as possible up the ‘waste hierarchy’ and meeting the municipal waste re-use and recycling targets in the Waste Framework Directive, as well as diverting more waste away from landfill in line with the BCCS.</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Waste Recovery Targets Option 1b (Waste Recycling Targets) | The waste management targets in the SAD would be based on delivery of new municipal waste recycling and composting capacity only, for the same waste types as Option 1a. Such a target would help Walsall to meet the Waste Framework Directive for re-use and recycling of municipal waste. | This Option could help drive waste further up the Waste Hierarchy, as only recycling and composting capacity would contribute towards the target. It would also ensure that any new capacity delivered would contribute towards the Landfill Directive target for municipal waste re-use and recycling as well as towards the BCCS target for landfill diversion. | + | Option 1b is likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve basing the SAD waste management targets on delivery of new municipal waste recycling and composting capacity for paper, card, cans, glass, plastics, food waste, and/ or green garden waste – energy recovery capacity would not count. This would help Walsall to meet the Waste Framework Directive for re-use and recycling of municipal waste, and would support economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources. Effects on other SA Objectives would be neutral, as the Option relates to targets only and is not site-specific, and any effects can be addressed through application of other existing local plan policies and national policy guidance, and through regulation. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policy W1 and SAD Waste Technical Appendix 2 | A combination of this Option and Option 1a has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. While this Option does embrace the need to encourage recycling and composting, it also takes into account an existing commitment for significant energy recovery capacity at Fryers Road (Potential Waste Site WP2). It also recognises that any new waste management projects that come forward will be delivered by the market, and there are no guarantees that new recycling and composting capacity will come forward during the plan period. |
| Waste Recovery Targets Option 1c (Additional Target for CD&EW Recycling) | This would be in addition to Option 1a or 1b. Such a target could be included if additional CD&EW capacity is needed to meet the Waste Framework Directive target for re-use and recycling of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste. | The Option would support movement of waste further up the ‘waste hierarchy,’ and encourage delivery of the infrastructure needed to meet the C & D waste recycling targets in the Waste Framework Directive. Having the capacity to recycle more of the C & D waste generated locally would also be more sustainable than having to transport the material to recycling sites in other areas. Walsall could also produce more recycled aggregate locally, helping to reduce reliance on other areas for the supply of construction aggregates. | + | The overall effects of Option 1c would be positive. Assuming it is feasible to set such a target, the Option is likely to support economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources. Effects on encouraging generation of renewable energy are uncertain, as this would depend on whether targets for other wastes were for recycling only. Effects on other SA Objectives would be neutral, as the Option relates to targets only and is not site-specific and any effects can be addressed through application of other existing local plan policies and national policy guidance, and through regulation. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected. It is not feasible to include such targets in the SAD because of the difficulty of identifying measurable targets, given the limitations of the data available on CD&EW generation and management at a local level and the lack of robustness of current CD&EW projections. However, additional capacity coming forward at new ‘fixed’ recycling facilities can (in theory) be measured and is already being monitored. The Preferred Option is therefore not to set any minimum or maximum targets for CD&EW recycling, but to give general support to proposals for new recycling facilities in appropriate locations. |
| Waste Option 1d (No Local Waste Management Targets) | Option 1d is the ‘do nothing’ option, and would involve relying on existing waste capacity targets in the BCCS as a basis for monitoring the delivery of new waste infrastructure in Walsall. No local waste management targets in support of meeting the targets identified in the BCCS and Waste Framework Directive would be identified in the SAD. | There is existing local plan policy in place which sets targets for development of new waste management capacity in the Black Country and in Walsall (BCCS Policies WM1 and WM3). These policies are already being applied alongside relevant national policy guidance (NPP for Waste, paragraphs 1 – 3). | N/A | This is not a ‘reasonable alternative’ and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a ‘reasonable alternative.’ While it would not necessarily be inconsistent with existing BCCS policies on waste management (BCCS Policies WM1 and WM3) which would continue to apply, it is potentially contrary to national policy guidance which requires local plans to plan positively for waste management infrastructure (NPPF for Waste, paragraph 1). Not setting local targets means less encouragement for delivery of new waste infrastructure in Walsall, and re-usable, recyclable and recoverable municipal waste will continue to be exported to other areas, contrary to the principles of ‘proximity’ and ‘self-sufficiency.’ As this is not a reasonable approach, this Option has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Options for Existing Waste Infrastructure | | | | | | |
| Existing Waste Infrastructure Option 2a (Prioritise Safeguarding of Strategic Sites) | This would involve showing the boundaries of Strategic Sites on the Policies Map for Walsall, but not other waste sites. There would be a linked site allocation policy in the SAD explaining how BCCS Policy WM2 will be applied. | This Option would give priority to safeguarding the most important waste sites in Walsall, whose loss would have significant effects on the borough's waste management capacity. Many of these facilities also have a wider than local role, and manage significant amounts of waste from other parts of the West Midlands, and in some cases from all over the country. | + | Option 2a is likely to have positive effects overall. The Option would have positive effects on economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources, as safeguarding Strategic Waste Sites should help Walsall to retain existing waste capacity that is important to local industry, including some major waste recycling and recovery facilities that are diverting significant amounts of waste away from landfill. Effects on other SA Objectives would be mostly neutral, as the Option relates to safeguarding of existing Strategic Waste Sites only, so any impacts on local communities or the environment can in most cases be addressed through application of other existing local plan policies and national policy guidance, and through regulation. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policy W2 and Policies Map, see also SAD Waste Technical Appendix 3 | A combination of this Option and Option 2b has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, because BCCS Policy WM2 seeks to safeguard all existing waste infrastructure, although it is implicit that the policy gives priority to Strategic Waste Sites, and that the Strategic Waste Sites in Walsall will need to be identified on the SAD Policies Map. However, it is not possible to show the boundaries of any of the existing waste sites (including Strategic Waste Sites) on the Policies Map because of overlapping with industrial land designations. |
| Existing Waste Infrastructure Option 2b (Safeguard All Existing Waste Sites) | As well as Strategic Sites (site boundaries), the location of non-strategic sites would be shown on the Policies Map for Walsall (symbols only). There would be a linked site allocation policy in the SAD explaining how BCCS Policy WM2 will be applied. | There would be greater scope to protect smaller waste management sites which could be important for local communities and businesses or may be providing a specialist service and accepting waste from outside the Black Country. Developers seeking to build other types of development near these sites would be aware of them, and be better able to identify and deal with potential issues of conflict early on. This would give maximum protection for Walsall's waste infrastructure, minimising the need to develop new facilities. | ++ | Option 2a is likely to have significant positive effects overall. This option is likely to have significant positive effects on economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources, as safeguarding all existing permitted waste management sites should help Walsall to retain existing waste capacity that is important to local industry and local communities, including some major waste recycling and recovery facilities that are diverting significant amounts of waste away from landfill, as well as smaller facilities of more local importance. Effects on other SA Objectives would be neutral, as the Option relates to safeguarding of existing waste management facilities only, so any impacts on local communities or the environment can in most cases be addressed through application of other existing local plan policies and national policy guidance, and through regulation. | Part of Preferred Option – see SAD Policy W2 and Policies Map, see also SAD Waste Technical Appendix 3 | A combination of this Option and Option 2a has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, because BCCS Policy WM2 seeks to safeguard all existing waste infrastructure. It is therefore necessary for the policy to explain how Walsall Council will apply the BCCS policy to non Strategic Waste Sites, and for them to be identified on the Policies Map. However, it is not possible to show the boundaries of any of the existing waste sites on the Policies Map because of overlapping with industrial land designations. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Options for Sustainable Waste Management Locations | | | | | | |
| Suitable Waste Management Locations Option 3a (Rely on BCCS Policies and SAD Allocations and Designations) | This is the 'do minimum' option. The SAD Policies Map will define the areas of Existing and Potential High Quality and Local Quality industrial land to which BCCS Policies EMP2, EMP3 and WM4 apply. The Policies Map will also define 'Consider for Release' industrial sites, areas of Urban Open Space, and the extent of the Green Belt where open air operations could go. However, there will be no locally-specific guidance on where different types of waste facilities could be located within the borough. | The Option would be consistent with BCCS Policies EMP2, EMP3 and WM4, which already provide guidance on the types of location that would be appropriate for different types of waste facility. However, the BCCS does not identify specific areas for waste management development in Walsall, other than the 'broad locations' for employment land identified on the Economy and Waste Key Diagrams. As these are only intended to be indicative and are not defined in detail, the SAD will have to define the extent of retained employment areas in Walsall, as well as other areas where there is more flexibility, such as the 'Consider for Release' category of sites identified in the Walsall Employment Land Review. The SAD will also identify areas that could accommodate facilities requiring an open site, such as areas of Urban Open Space and the Green Belt. | ? | The overall effects of Option 3a are uncertain, as the implications for open air waste facilities are unclear. The Option would have positive effects on economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources, as it would help clarify where new waste infrastructure could be developed in Walsall. However, there will be no locally-specific guidance on where different types of waste facilities could be located within the borough. Any potential harmful effects on the environment, health and amenity from waste management development on such sites are likely to be localised, but as all proposals would be expected to comply with BCCS Policy WM4 which requires harmful effects to be minimised, the effects are considered to be net neutral. However, effects on landscape and townscape character and soil quality/ ground conditions are uncertain, as there is potential for waste treatment or disposal to take place on open land in inappropriate locations, with consequential impacts on land, soils and ground conditions, without further guidance. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3b. It is not appropriate to rely on the BCCS policy and SAD employment land, Green Belt and Open Space designations alone, because there is a need for clearer local guidance on which employment areas in Walsall are suitable for different types of waste management facility, and on where facilities that require an open site should be located. There is also a need to identify potentially suitable sites in the SAD, to demonstrate that the remaining BCCS waste capacity requirements for Walsall (see SAD Policy W1) are capable of being met. |
| Suitable Waste Management Locations Option 3b (SAD to Provide Additional Guidance) | As well as defining the areas of Existing and Potential High Quality, Local Quality and 'Consider for Release' industrial sites, areas of Urban Open Space, and the extent of the Green Belt on the Policies Map for Walsall, the SAD will provide guidance on the types of waste facilities considered suitable on these types of site allocations/ designations. The SAD will also identify specific locations in Walsall which would be suitable for particular types of facility. | This Option would provide greater certainty for the waste industry because it would give clear indications as to which types of waste facility would be considered suitable – in principle - on different types of land in Walsall, including types of land not specifically identified in the BCCS such as the 'Consider for Release' employment sites and open land. Identifying specific locations in the borough for specific types of waste facility would also be of potential assistance to waste operators seeking to find a suitable site in the area. Applications in such locations would still have to be assessed against the criteria in BCCS Policy WM4, and would be expected to demonstrate compliance with local and national objectives, including the requirement to apply the Waste Hierarchy, avoid harm to health and the environment, and safeguard the amenity of neighbouring communities. | ++ | Option 3b is likely to have significant positive effects overall. It is likely to have significant positive effects on economic objectives and objectives towards sustainable use of resources, as the SAD would identify opportunities for delivery of new waste infrastructure where possible and would also provide more locally-specific guidance aimed at reducing potential conflicts between waste operations and other industrial land uses. Effects on landscape and townscape character and soils/ ground conditions are also likely to be positive overall, as the SAD would provide clearer guidance on the types of operation suitable on open land. Any other potential harmful effects on the environment, health and amenity from waste management development on such sites are likely to be localised, but as all proposals would be expected to comply with BCCS Policy WM4 which requires harmful effects to be minimised, the effects are considered to be net neutral. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies W3 and W4 and Policies Map, see also SAD Waste Technical Appendices 4 and 5 | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD, because providing further guidance on suitable locations for the development of new waste management infrastructure would give greater certainty to the waste industry about where waste facilities should be developed in Walsall, while also providing an appropriate degree of flexibility. In addition to the specific location at Fryers Road identified in BCCS Policy WM3, it is proposed that the SAD should identify other employment locations in Walsall which are likely to be suitable for development with enclosed waste treatment or transfer facilities, based on the evidence from recent viability and delivery studies commissioned from consultants. The SAD also needs to provide more specific guidance on the types of location in Walsall likely to be most suitable for other types of facilities which would require an open site – at present the BCCS guidance on this is very general. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 9. Sustainable Use of Minerals | | | | | | |
| Options for Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 1a: Minerals Safeguarding Area (Single MSA) | One MSA, including all minerals of local and national importance to be shown on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, with an Appendix to the SAD containing supplementary maps showing the extent of different mineral types. | This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three Options for the minerals safeguarding area (MSA). Map M1 of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) identified the extent of mineral resources of ‘local and national importance’ in Walsall and the red hatched line on the map indicated the extent of a potential single MSA. Defining a single MSA covering most of Walsall Borough on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps would minimise the complexity of the information shown on the Policies Maps, given that they also have to show a large number of other site allocations and designations. | + | Option 1a is likely to have positive effects overall. The effects of the BCCS MSA and mineral safeguarding policy (BCCS Policy MIN1) have already been subject to SA and no harmful effects were identified. The effects of this Option would be very similar to Option 1b and would be mostly neutral or positive. While the designation of a MSA is a potential constraint on all types of non-mineral development within the area it covers, BCCS Policy MIN1 adopts a pragmatic approach towards non-mineral development in the MSA which would not prevent essential development from taking place, hence the effects on local communities and businesses are considered to be neutral overall. The only difference between Options 1a and 1b would be the way the MSA(s) are presented on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, and how easy it is for people to identify where minerals can be found - each option has its pros and cons. | Preferred Option based on this Option - see SAD Policy M1 and AAP Policy AAP17 and SAD and AAP Policies Maps, see also SAD Minerals Technical Appendix 2 | This Option is the basis for the Preferred Option for the SAD and also for the AAP, as it provides as much clarity as possible, given the amount of other information that has to be shown on the Policies Maps, and would be consistent with the approach towards presentation of the MSA in the BCCS. The main change from Option 1a is that the Preferred Option for the MSA boundary includes mudstones from the Alveley (formerly Keele) and Enville Members (also included in the Black Country MSA in the BCCS), in line with the recommendations of the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015 - see Figure 3.4). |
| Minerals Option 1b: Minerals Safeguarding Area (Multiple MSAs) | Separate MSAs, one covering each mineral type, to be shown on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps. The individual coloured areas on Map M1 of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) indicate what separate MSAs might look like. | This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three Options for the minerals safeguarding area (MSA). Under this Option, there would be separate MSAs for each mineral type shown on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps. This would provide more specific information to the public and to prospective developers on where different types of minerals can be found, as recommended in current good practice guidance on minerals safeguarding. | + | Option 1b is likely to have positive effects overall. The effects would be very similar to Option 1a and would be mostly neutral or positive. While the designation of a MSA is a potential constraint on all types of non-mineral development within the area it covers, BCCS Policy MIN1 adopts a pragmatic approach towards non-mineral development in the MSA which would not prevent essential development from taking place, hence the effects on local communities and businesses are considered to be neutral overall. The only difference between Options 1a and 1b would be the way the MSA(s) are presented on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, and how easy it is for people to identify where minerals can be found - each option has its pros and cons. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 1a, due to the complexity of the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, and the difficulty of showing different mineral commodities with any clarity. It is likely to be difficult for people to interpret the SAD Policies Map if it shows a number of different MSAs, particularly where they overlap with each other and with other designations shown. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Minerals Option 1c: Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA Buffers) | As Option 1a or 1b, but the MSA(s) would also include 'buffers' around the resource areas, as shown on Maps MC1 – MC3 in BCCS Appendix 7. There would be a 50m buffer zone around brick clay (Etruria marl) resources, a 250m buffer zone around sand and gravel and fireclay and coal resources and a 500m buffer zone around limestone and dolerite resources. | This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three Options for the minerals safeguarding area (MSA). Under this Option, the MSAs shown on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps would include 'buffers' around the mineral resource areas (see Figure 4 of Black Country Minerals Study (2008), RPS), to protect the resources against proposals for non-mineral development near to mineral resource areas, as recommended in current good practice guidance on minerals safeguarding. | + | Option 1c is likely to have positive effects overall. As this Option includes 'buffers' it would increase the area covered by the MSA and therefore increase the extent of the constraint to non-mineral development. However, BCCS Policy MIN1 adopts a pragmatic approach towards non-mineral development in the MSA, which would not prevent essential development from taking place. On the other hand, 'buffers' may provide a degree of protection to potential future non-mineral development near to the MSA, if mineral extraction takes place. The effects on delivery of the BCCS requirements for housing, industry and other development are therefore uncertain. Effects on other SA Objectives are likely to be neutral overall. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 1a, as 'buffers' are not considered to serve any practical purpose. In the urban areas of Walsall, any mineral resources present are already 'sterilised' by non-mineral development or are severely constrained by it, and in the Green Belt, there are already strict controls over the types of non-mineral development that can take place. The scope for non-mineral development to further 'sterilise' these resources or further compromise future mineral working is therefore limited as the damage is already largely done, and the addition of 'buffers' around mineral commodities would add little if any value in safeguarding Walsall's mineral resources. |
| Minerals Option 1d: Minerals Safeguarding Area (No MSA) | This Option would be not to define any minerals safeguarding areas (MSAs) on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps. | This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) Appendix 12a, and also in the SA Options Appraisal Report, Appendix F as an 'unreasonable' Option. | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' This Option would be contrary to national and local policy on the safeguarding of mineral resources of potential local and national importance (BCCS Policy MIN1, NPPF paragraph 143). Opportunities to safeguard minerals through 'prior extraction' are likely to be missed if there is no MSA, because there would be nothing on the SAD Policies Map to show people where mineral resources could be found in Walsall, leading to potential sterilisation and waste of resources. As this is not a reasonable approach, it has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Minerals Option 1e: Minerals Safeguarding Area (No Further Refinement of BCCS MSA) | This Option would be to replicate the Black Country MSA boundary shown on the BCCS Minerals Key Diagram on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, without seeking to refine the MSA boundary further, but instead, to identify more refined Areas of Search for each mineral commodity in the SAD where it is considered more likely for mineral development proposals to come forward. | This Option was identified in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015 – see Section 3.4) as a potential alternative to Options 1a – 1c identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013). | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option was identified following the Issues & Options stage, in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) but has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' The 'saved' UDP Proposals Map is out-of-date and still shows four former MSAs which have technically been replaced by the MSA identified on the BCCS Minerals Key Diagram. However, the BCCS MSA is indicative only. It is therefore necessary to address these anomalies by defining the boundaries of the MSA in Walsall on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps, as well as identifying the extent of each mineral commodity type separately, as recommended in current good practice guidance on minerals safeguarding. As this is not a reasonable approach, it has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Minerals Option 1f: Minerals Safeguarding Area (No Non-Mineral Development Allowed in MSAs) | This Option would be for the SAD and AAP to include policies that do not allow any non-mineral development to take place within the MSAs defined on the Policies Maps. | This Option was identified by the Council following the Issues & Options during the evaluation of the other Options for the MSA. It reflects current national policy guidance which advises that mineral planning authorities should 'not normally permit other development proposals in minerals safeguarding areas where they would constrain potential future use for these purposes' (NPPF paragraph 144). | N/A | This is not a 'reasonable alternative' and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option was identified following the Issues & Options stage but has been rejected as it is not a 'reasonable alternative.' It would be contrary to BCCS Policy MIN1 and to the BCCS spatial strategy (BCCS Policies CSP1 – CSP5) for the SAD and AAP not to permit non-mineral development in the Black Country MSA. The indicative MSA shown on the BCCS Minerals Key Diagram covers nearly all of the administrative areas of each of the Black Country Authorities, so there is nowhere else for non-mineral development to go. BCCS Policy MIN1 therefore adopts a proportionate approach which allows non-mineral development to take place in the MSA where it is essential to the delivery of the spatial strategy and would not needlessly sterilise potentially winnable mineral resources, while at the same time expecting large-scale developments to justify their approach towards safeguarding mineral resources. As this Option is not a reasonable approach in Walsall it has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – General | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 2: Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements - General (No Mineral Extraction Areas) | No land is identified in the SAD for potential mineral extraction – there would be no Areas of Search or specific sites where mineral extraction could take place in Walsall during the plan period. | This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) Appendix 12a, and also in the SA Options Appraisal Report, Appendix F as an ‘unreasonable’ Option. The Option was given further consideration in relation to sand and gravel extraction in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015) – it is ‘Option C’ for sand and gravel Areas of Search in the Study (see Section 6.5). | N/A | This is not a ‘reasonable alternative’ and has therefore not been subject to appraisal. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected as it is not a ‘reasonable alternative.’ This would be contrary to current national policy guidance on making adequate provision for the production of raw materials needed to support economic growth (NPPF paragraphs 143, 145 and 146), as well as being contrary to the minerals policy in the BCCS which indicates that Walsall will make provision for sand and gravel and brick clay production (BCCS Policies MIN2 – MIN3 and Minerals Key Diagram). As this is not a reasonable approach, it has not been subject to sustainability appraisal. See table of Unreasonable Options for further details of the reasons for rejecting this Option. |
| Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Aggregates Recycling⁴ | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 3a: Aggregates Recycling (Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy on Aggregates Recycling) | This is the ‘do nothing’ option for aggregates recycling provision and would mean relying on existing local plan policy and national policy guidance to guide the location of new aggregate recycling facilities in Walsall, and the evaluation of the suitability of any new proposals that come forward. | This is one of two new Options for Aggregates Recycling identified in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015). There is an existing local plan policy in place on suitable locations for recycling of construction and demolition waste into aggregates, which is currently being applied (BCCS Policy WM4). No alternative Options for Aggregates Recycling were identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013). | ? | Although the effects of Option 3a are likely to be largely neutral, the overall effects are uncertain. The Option would have neutral effects on most SA Objectives, as it would not involve any change to existing policy, although this approach is less likely to deliver any new recycling capacity than a more proactive approach as in Option 5d, therefore impacts on supply of aggregate minerals to meet Walsall’s future requirements for development are uncertain. | Rejected | The approach of this Option would be in accordance with the existing local plan. However, this Option has been rejected in favour of Option 3b, as there is a need for clearer local guidance on which locations in Walsall are likely to be suitable for open air aggregates recycling operations. |
| Minerals Option 3b: Minerals Site Allocations (Site Allocations and/ or Additional Locational Guidance) | Provide additional guidance in the SAD on where aggregates recycling operations (including operations in the open air) could take place in Walsall, and allocate suitable sites, where feasible. | This is one of two new Options for Aggregates Recycling identified in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015). Although no alternative Options for Aggregates Recycling were identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013), two potential Mineral Infrastructure Options were identified in the report, as possible aggregates recycling sites. | + | The effects of Option 3b are likely to be positive overall, although effects on most SA objectives would be neutral. Assuming that it is feasible to allocate suitable sites or to provide further guidance on suitable locations, the Option is likely to have positive effects on supply of aggregate minerals to meet Walsall’s future requirements for development, as it would encourage delivery of new facilities for producing aggregates from alternative sources to quarried products in appropriate locations, and would therefore also contribute towards infrastructure needed to support the local economy. The Option is likely to have neutral effects on other SA Objectives, provided that the guidance gives adequate protection to ‘sensitive receptors’ and environmental assets, and that any sites allocated for aggregates recycling in the SAD are appropriately located. | Preferred Option for Aggregates Recycling – see Draft SAD Policies W3, M2 and M3 and Draft Policies Map | This is the Preferred Option for Aggregates Recycling in the SAD as it would provide greater certainty to the public and to the waste and minerals industry on where aggregates recycling could take place within Walsall. The Preferred Option has been reflected in the draft policies on waste and minerals, which seek to safeguard existing permitted recycling sites and identify suitable types of location for aggregates recycling operations, and the main considerations such proposals will be expected to address, over and above those already identified in BCCS Policies WM4 and MIN5. However, it has not been feasible to identify any suitable new sites for allocation. A number of potential site Options were evaluated as part of the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015). |

⁴ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 5c and 5d.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | However, none were considered appropriate for allocation, because of the potential site constraints, and the lack of certainty that any of them would be viable or deliverable. |
| Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Sand and Gravel Extraction⁵ | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 4a: Sand and Gravel Extraction (BCCS Areas of Search Only) | <p>This is the ‘do minimum’ option – the SAD would designate the two Areas of Search (AoS) for sand and gravel extraction at Birch Lane (MXA1) and Branton Hill (MXA2) identified in the BCCS only (BCCS references MA1 and MA2), and no other Areas of Search would be identified. There would be policies linked to the AoS designations to provide more specific guidance than the BCCS on the key issues for future sand and gravel working proposals in these areas.</p> | <p>This was the proposed approach towards sand and gravel extraction in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013), although it was not specifically identified as an Option and no alternative options were identified. The boundaries of the proposed Areas of Search were shown as black dashed outlines on Map 9.2 and on Minerals Inset Map 1 of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) (MXA3). This is one of three potential Options for sand and gravel provision identified and evaluated in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), and is identified as ‘Option A’ (see Section 6.5). It is the only one of these options to have been identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013).</p> | -- | <p>Option 4a could have significant negative effects overall. Although both AoS have been a focus for sand and gravel extraction in recent years, each includes as yet unexploited sand and gravel resources. The SA has taken into account the requirement to complete restoration of areas already worked, and the potential effects of further mineral extraction. Effects would be mixed. On the one hand, there would be positive effects on the supply of aggregate minerals, but on other hand, due to its proximity to residential properties, the Birch Lane AoS could have significant harmful effects on the amenity and wellbeing of residents from noise, dust and traffic generated by further quarrying, as well as impacts on visual amenity and landscape character. There is also potential for harmful impacts on the local highway infrastructure and the local highway authority has identified a possible need for junction improvements. However, conditions for people living near to Branton Hill AoS would probably improve, as the remaining unworked areas are further away from residential areas, and permission has been granted for a new access road that would take quarry traffic away from residential areas. Effects on energy consumption and generation are likely to be net neutral in both cases, although any potential impacts on the overhead power line crossing the Branton Hill AoS will need to be evaluated. There is uncertainty about the effects on other SA Objectives, as much depends on how proposals are implemented and what mitigation is put into place to address potential harmful effects.</p> | <p>Preferred Option based on this Option – see SAD Policies M4 and M5 and Policies Map, see also SAD Minerals Technical Appendices 4 and 5</p> | <p>The Preferred Option for sand and gravel supply in the SAD is based on this Option, as both AoS have been the focus for sand and gravel extraction in the recent past, and there is no evidence of any serious interest in working any of the sand and gravel resources elsewhere in Walsall. As the AoS are only shown indicatively on the BCCS Minerals Key Diagram, the Option involves defining the boundaries on the SAD Policies Map, and including linked policies to provide further specific guidance on the key issues that sand and gravel extraction proposals in these areas will be expected to address. This option is considered preferable to the alternatives considered in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015) (see Minerals Options 4b and 4c below). ‘Option B’ (Additional/ Alternative Areas of Search - Minerals Options 4b and 4c) has been rejected because sand and gravel extraction is less likely to be viable and deliverable in the other potential areas identified. ‘Option C’ (No Areas of Search) has also been rejected, because it is effectively part of Minerals Option 2 (No Mineral Extraction Areas). The latter Option is not considered to be a ‘reasonable alternative,’ because it would be contrary to current national policy guidance (NPPF paragraphs 143, 145 and 146) as well as being in conflict with BCCS Policy MIN2.</p> |

⁵ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 2a – 2d.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Minerals Option 4b: Sand and Gravel Extraction (Additional Areas of Search) | SAD to identify other potential Areas of Search (AoS) elsewhere in Walsall, additional to the Birch Lane and Branton Hill AoS (MXA1 and MXA2) identified in the BCCS. Four other potential AoS within the sand and gravel (bedrock) resource area have been identified by the Council (indicative only) based on areas where there has been some interest in the past and areas where sites have been put forward for development in response to the 'calls for sites' in 2011 and 2013. There would also be policies linked to the new AoS designations to provide more specific guidance than the BCCS on the key issues for future sand and gravel working proposals in these areas. | This is one of three potential Options for sand and gravel provision identified and evaluated in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), and is identified as 'Option B' (see Section 6.5). It was identified following the Issues & Options stage, in response to objections from Staffordshire County Council, who expressed concern about undue reliance on sand and gravel resources in Staffordshire to meet future requirements for aggregate minerals in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area. | -- | Option 4b is likely to have significant negative effects overall. The net additional effects of this Option over and above the effects of Option 4a are to a large extent uncertain, as this would depend on which of the potential additional AoS identified were designated in the SAD. While identifying additional AoS could have significant positive effects on the supply of aggregate minerals, the viability and deliverability of working in these areas was questioned in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), given the constraints in the areas identified, and the lack of any interest from the aggregates industry at the present time. Some of the potential additional AoS could also affect existing businesses, which is likely to reduce the positive effects on objectives towards sustainable economic growth. As with Option 4a, the effects on some SA Objectives would depend on how proposals are implemented and what mitigation is put into place to address potential harmful effects. One potential additional AoS considered (Sandhills) is likely to have significant harmful effects on a number of SA Objectives because it is adjacent to the congested A461/ A452 junction which is also affected by air pollution, and is also near to residential properties, so the combined negative effects of working in this area and at the existing Shire Oak Quarry are likely to be significant. The effects of working within other potential additional AoS further to the south (Daniel's Lane, Druid's Heath and Hob's Hole Lane) are likely to be less severe, although there are likely to be harmful effects on people living near to the potential working areas, who are currently not affected by these types of operations. There would also be negative effects on the local landscape and potentially on alternative uses of land including agriculture. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 4a. The viability and deliverability of sand and gravel extraction in the four potential additional AoS was evaluated as part of the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), and none was found to be without significant constraints. On balance it is considered that these areas are likely to be less viable and deliverable than the areas identified in the BCCS and that there is no justification for identifying additional AoS at the present time. Furthermore, BCCS Policy MIN2 already provides sufficient flexibility for working elsewhere if extraction is unlikely to take place within the AoS within a reasonable timeframe. |
| Minerals Option 4c: Sand and Gravel Extraction (Alternative Areas of Search to Birch Lane) | SAD to identify other potential Areas of Search (AoS) elsewhere in Walsall as an alternative to the Birch Lane AoS (MXA1) indicated in the BCCS. Four other potential AoS within the sand and gravel (bedrock) resource area have been identified by the Council (indicative only) based on areas where there has been some interest in the past and areas where sites have been put forward for development in response to the 'calls for sites' in 2011 and 2013. | This is one of three potential Options for sand and gravel provision identified and evaluated in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), and is identified as 'Option B' (see Section 6.5). It was identified following the Issues & Options stage, in response to objections from residents to the proposed Birch Lane Area of Search (MXA1) on the grounds of the proximity of the area boundary to residential properties, and requests that the Council consider alternative sand and gravel extraction areas further away from residential areas. | -- | Option 4c is likely to have significant negative effects overall. The effects of this Option compared to Option 4a are to a large extent uncertain, as this would depend on which of the potential alternative AoS identified were designated in the SAD instead of Birch Lane. While identifying alternative AoS could have similar positive effects on the supply of aggregate minerals to Option 2a (SA10), the viability and deliverability of working in these areas was questioned in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), given the constraints in the areas identified, and the lack of any interest from the aggregates industry at the present time. Some of the potential additional AoS could also affect existing businesses, which is likely to reduce the positive effects on objectives towards sustainable economic growth (SA6). | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 4a. The viability and deliverability of sand and gravel extraction in the four potential alternative AoS was evaluated as part of the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), and none was found to be without significant constraints. On balance it is considered that these areas are likely to be less viable and deliverable than the areas identified in the BCCS and that there is no justification for identifying alternative AoS at the present time. Furthermore, BCCS Policy MIN2 already provides flexibility for working elsewhere if extraction is unlikely to take place within the AoS within a reasonable timeframe. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | There would also be policies linked to the new Area of Search (AoS) designations to provide more specific guidance than the BCCS on the key issues for future sand and gravel working proposals in the new Areas of Search identified. | | -- | As with Options 4a and 4b, the effects on some SA Objectives would depend on how proposals are implemented and what mitigation is put into place to address potential harmful effects. One potential additional AoS considered (Sandhills) is likely to have significant harmful effects on a number of SA Objectives because it is adjacent to the congested A461/ A452 junction which is also affected by air pollution, and is also near to residential properties, so the combined negative effects of working in this area and at the existing Shire Oak Quarry are likely to be significant. The effects of working within other potential alternative AoS further to the south (Daniel's Lane, Druid's Heath and Hob's Hole Lane) are likely to be less severe, although there are also likely to be harmful effects on people living near to the potential working areas, who are currently not affected by these types of operations. There would also be negative effects on the local landscape and potentially on alternative uses of land including agriculture. | | |
| Minerals Option 4d: Sand and Gravel (No Areas of Search – Identify Resource Areas Only) | No Areas of Search (AoS) for sand and gravel would be defined in the SAD, but it would include either a MSA for sand and gravel or a Technical Appendix showing the extent of sand and gravel resources. In the absence of defined Areas of Search there would also need to be an 'enabling' policy in the SAD explaining how relevant BCCS policies will be applied when considering future proposals for sand and gravel extraction in Walsall. | This is a further Option which was identified in response to a representation from one resident living near to the proposed Birch Lane Area of Search (MXA1) who suggested that no Areas of Search should be identified in the SAD, and that instead the plan should simply identify the sand and gravel resource areas. This would either involve the designation of a sand and gravel MSA in the SAD (Option 1b), or the identification of sand and gravel resource areas in the SAD Technical Appendices (Option 1a), and leaving it to the market to decide where, if and when further sand and gravel extraction should take place in Walsall during the plan period. | - | Option 4d is likely to have negative effects overall. The effects of this Option on maintaining mineral supplies to meet sustainable economic growth are likely to be negative, as the lack of certainty over where sand and gravel extraction could take place is likely to outweigh the flexibility of approach. There is also potential for more residential areas to be affected by sand and gravel extraction during the plan period, than if specific AoS were identified, which could also have negative effects on local communities, as in theory working could take place anywhere where a viable resource exists, rather than in a specific location. Effects on the environment and highway infrastructure are uncertain but could be negative, as much of the resource area is within groundwater source protection zones, some areas are at risk from surface water flooding, and some of the potential haulage routes (in particular the A461 corridor) are affected by congestion and air pollution, although effects on energy consumption and generation are likely to be neutral. Effects on all other SA Objectives are uncertain as this would depend on where sand and gravel extraction took place, and could only be determined once a proposal came forward. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of a modified version of Option 4a, as there is insufficient justification for departing from the BCCS proposal for two Areas of Search around the former Aldridge and Branton Hill Quarries. These are the areas where sand and gravel is most likely to take place in Walsall during the plan period. BCCS Policy MIN2 already provides sufficient flexibility for working outside the identified Areas of Search if there is evidence that sand and gravel extraction proposals are unlikely to come forward in the Areas of Search within a reasonable timeframe. The SAD Technical Appendix will also identify the sand and gravel resource areas, in preference to showing separate MSAs for each mineral commodity on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps (see Option 1a). |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Brick Clay Extraction⁶ | | | | | | |
| <p>Minerals Option 5a: Brick Clay Extraction (Stubbers Green Area of Search and Permitted Sites Only)</p> | <p>This is the ‘do minimum’ option – the SAD would identify an Area of Search (AoS) for brick clay (Etruria Marl) at Stubbers Green (MXA3), as identified in the BCCS (BCCS reference MA5), and identifying all existing and former Permitted Minerals Sites for brick clay extraction (MP2: Atlas Quarry, MP6: Highfields South, MP7: Sandown Quarry, MP8: Vigo/ Utopia and MP9: Highfields North), but no other AoS would be identified. There would be policies linked to the SAD designations to provide more specific guidance than the BCCS on the key issues for future brick clay extraction in the AoS, or changes to existing mineral permissions. The ‘dormant’ minerals permission at Highfields North is the only planning permission for brick clay extraction in Walsall not to have been implemented. It was believed to have been revoked in the late 1990s at the time the BCCS was prepared, but it has since become clear that the revocation order was never made and the permission still has effect.</p> | <p>This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) and a proposed boundary was identified on the Minerals Inset Map 3. It is one of three potential Options identified for supplying clay to Sandown Brickworks in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015) and is identified as ‘Option A’ in the project report (see Section 7.5). The Option would be consistent with existing local plan policy on brick clay supply in the Black Country and national policy guidance on supply of clay to brickworks (see BCCS Policy MIN3 and Minerals Key Diagram and NPPF paragraphs 143 and 146).</p> | <p>--</p> | <p>For the purpose of the SA it has been assumed that the Option would mean expansion of brick clay extraction at Stubbers Green to include areas not currently permitted, and implementation of the ‘dormant’ permission at Highfields North (MP9), which is the only permitted site outside the Stubbers Green AoS which has not yet been worked. The overall effects of this would be very detrimental. While effects on SA6 and SA10 would be very positive, as it would increase production of brick clay, and there would be greater likelihood that the requirements of all three of Walsall's brickworks could be met, the benefits of this would be outweighed by the significant negative effects on SA2, SA9 and SA12. There would be significant impacts on the local landscape, as land would be subject to mineral extraction for a very long period of time, without any prospect of restoration taking place until long after the end of the plan period, because a typical clay extraction site would be in operation for at least 20 years. Extraction in both areas would also result in the destruction of the Stubbers Green SINC, and much of the Jockey Fields SSSI and SLINC, as well as having indirect harmful effects on other designated sites which are hydrologically linked, such as Swan Pool and The Swag SSSI and Stubbers Green Bog SSSI. As the SAD cannot override the existing mineral permission at Highfields North or prevent its implementation, significant harmful effects on this area would be unavoidable. While increasing production of brick clay in Walsall would potentially reduce the distance clay might have to travel to Sandown Brickworks, there is uncertainty about the extent to which this factory's needs would be met, because the sites where new extraction could take place are in separate ownership. Any clay that is exported from Highfields North would also have to travel via the A461, a route that is affected by congestion and is identified as a NO2 Area of Exceedance and a Noise Action Area (Important Area) - effects on SA1 and SA13 are therefore uncertain. Other uncertainties include the extent to which impacts on the amenity of people living near to the working areas or along haulage routes for exported clay and risks to soils, agricultural land (including Grade 2 and 3a land), hydrology, archaeology, and risks from surface water flooding can be mitigated (SA3, SA4, SA5, SA7, SA8, SA14).</p> | <p>Preferred Option – see SAD Minerals Policies M7 and M8 and Policies Map</p> | <p>This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option. While significant harmful effects will be unavoidable if brick clay extraction at Stubbers Green is expanded and the ‘dormant’ permission at Highfields North is implemented, the brick clay resources in Walsall are limited to these areas, so they are the only options likely to be available for providing a 25-year supply of brick clay to each of Walsall’s brickworks. The most harmful effects – potential destruction of much of the Jockey Fields SSSI – would arise from the implementation of an existing ‘dormant’ mineral permission which the SAD cannot override. The effects would therefore flow from the existing permission, rather than from the plan which would only be reflecting what has already been granted permission. There is scope for some mitigation of these effects through the plan, by identifying the issues that applications for new working conditions at Highfields North would be expected to address.</p> |

⁶ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 3a – 3c.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <p>Minerals Option 5b: Brick Clay Extraction (Additional Area of Search North of A461)</p> | <p>The Option would involve designating an Area of Search (AoS) for brick clay (Etruria Marl) at Stubbers Green (MXA3), as identified in the BCCS (BCCS reference MA5) and identifying a second Area of Search to the north of the A461 (MXA9) around the Permitted Minerals Site at Highfields North (MP9), as well as identifying all existing and former Permitted Minerals Sites. There would be policies linked to the SAD designations to provide more specific guidance than the BCCS on the key issues for future brick clay extraction in the AoS, or changes to existing mineral permissions. The 'dormant' minerals permission at Highfields North is the only planning permission for brick clay extraction in Walsall not to have been implemented. It was believed to have been revoked in the late 1990s at the time the BCCS was prepared, but it has since become clear that the revocation order was never made and the permission still has effect.</p> | <p>The identification of a second AoS in this location was identified as a possible Option in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) as this is the only other resource area for Etruria Formation clays, which could meet the long-term needs of Sandown Brickworks once the permitted reserves at Sandown Quarry become exhausted. It was also recommended in the SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015), to allow greater flexibility over where extraction could take place in this resource area, allowing a possible alternative to working within the Jockey Fields SSSI, which would be unavoidable if the 'dormant' permission is implemented.</p> | -- | <p>Option 5b is likely to have significant negative effects overall although there would be some significant positive effects, and some effects are uncertain. As the Option has the potential to increase production of brick clay, sufficient to provide a long-term supply of clay to all three of Walsall's brickworks, it is likely to have significant positive effects on economic and mineral supply objectives. However, there would be significant negative effects on biodiversity and landscape character, because in addition to the loss of Stubbers Green SINC, this Option is likely to result in the loss of at least part of Jockey Fields SSSI and SLINC. There would also be significant negative effects on agricultural land as some of the land within the Highfields North site is classified as Grade 2 and 3a. Effects on several other SA Objectives would also be negative as working within the second AoS would involve a net increase in HGV movements in the A461 corridor, which is affected by congestion and air pollution. The net increase in traffic in addition to the effects from noise and dust generated by the mineral extraction process could have negative effects on the health, wellbeing and amenity of people living in the A461 corridor and along other haulage routes, as well as on people living near any new working areas. Other effects are less certain, because the areas that could be worked include areas at risk from flooding and the archaeological potential of MXA9 has not been evaluated. Overall, while this Option would have significant negative effects, minerals can only be worked where they are found, and identifying a wider AoS around the Highfields North site may also provide an alternative to working within the SSSI.</p> | <p>Originally Preferred Option (2015) but subsequently rejected in favour of Option 5a – see SAD Policy M8 and Policies Map and SAD Minerals Technical Appendix 4</p> | <p>This Option has been rejected in favour of the revised Option 5a. The Draft SAD identified a possible indicative AoS around the Highfields North permitted site, as proposed in this Option. The reasons for identifying the potential indicative AoS were that this is the only remaining resource area for Etruria Formation clays in Walsall that could meet the long-term requirements of Sandown Brickworks. Furthermore, allowing working on land outside the Highfields North permitted site would be the only possible way of avoiding the significant harm to the Jockey Fields SSSI that would arise if the 'dormant' permission was implemented. The Draft Plan was subject to public consultation between September and November 2015. An objection was received to the proposal for a new AoS from a major land owner in this area (Holford Farm Group), on the grounds that the proposal would have a significant detrimental effect on their farming business and could also cause significant harm to land being managed for nature conservation. Objections were also received from the Environment Agency and Natural England on the grounds of impacts on the Jockey Fields SSSI and impacts on hydrology. As the land owner also owns the mineral rights and is unwilling to support mineral extraction on the land in their ownership, there is little point identifying a second AoS in this location. The Option has therefore been rejected as it is no longer a 'reasonable alternative.'</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <p>Minerals Option 5c: Brick Clay Extraction (Rely on Imports to Supply Sandown Brickworks)</p> | <p>This Option is effectively a 'do nothing' or 'do minimum option, as it reflects the current 'status quo' following the grant of planning permission in September 2015 to vary one of the planning conditions attached to the permission for Sandown Brickworks, allowing it to import up to 95% its annual brick clay requirements.</p> | <p>The Option was originally identified in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015) and is one of three Options identified for supplying clay to Sandown Brickworks – it is identified as 'Option C' in the project report (see Section 7.5). 'Option A' and 'Option B' are Mineral Options 5a and 5b respectively, although Option 5a has subsequently been modified as indicated above.</p> | - | <p>For the purpose of the SA it is assumed that under this Option, Sandown Brickworks will continue to rely on Sandown Quarry only to meet its future requirements for Etruria Marl, supplemented by imports from outside Walsall. The remaining Etruria Marl resources at Stubbers Green outside Sandown Quarry are only expected to meet the future supply requirements for Aldridge and Atlas Brickworks, and would not be expected to meet the long-term supply requirements of Sandown Brickworks. This factory will therefore become more and more reliant on Etruria Marl imported from outside Walsall once the resources at Sandown Quarry are exhausted, which is allowed for in BCCS Policy MIN3. Although it is a 'do minimum' option, it is likely to have negative effects overall. This is because the positive effects on SA6 and SA10 in terms of maintaining long-term supplies to all three brickworks and allowing them to remain in production and the jobs to be retained for as long as possible, are likely to be outweighed by the negative effects on a significant number of other SA Objectives. For example, in addition to the negative effects on biodiversity and open space due to the progressive loss of Stubbers Green SINC (SA2, SA9) if working at Stubbers Green is expanded, there would be significant negative effects on SA13, as importing more clay from outside Walsall means that it would have further to travel, leading to increased HGV movements. This would also have negative effects on SA1, SA4, SA7, SA8 and SA11 due to increased fuel consumption and traffic emissions, and consequential effects on the amenity, health and wellbeing of people living near to the haulage routes. Effects on SA3 and SA14 are uncertain, because the remaining resources at Stubbers Green is at risk from flooding, although it may be possible to manage the risks if effective mitigation measures are put into place. Effects on SA5 and SA12 are likely to be neutral overall, as there would be no further effects on heritage assets, soils or land use if future brick clay working in Walsall is restricted to the Stubbers Green area only.</p> | Rejected | <p>This Option has been rejected as it has now been overtaken by events - in September 2015, permission was granted to allow up to 95% of the clay used at Sandown Brickworks to be imported. Evidence on the remaining brick clay resource within the Stubbers Green AoS (permitted and unpermitted) indicates that there are sufficient resources to provide a 25-year supply to Aldridge and Atlas Brickworks, but probably not sufficient resources to provide a 25-year supply to Sandown Brickworks as well. It is therefore anticipated that over the plan period, as the reserves at Sandown Quarry become increasingly depleted, the factory will become increasingly reliant on imports of clay from outside Walsall. This is already allowed for in BCCS Policy MIN3, and is permissible under the terms of the existing planning permission for the factory. However, Option 5a, which has been chosen as the Preferred Option, identifies a 'dormant' mineral permission at Highfields North in Walsall, which could provide an alternative local source of supply if it is feasible to implement the permission during the plan period.</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Fireclay Extraction⁷ | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 6a: Fireclay Extraction (Wyrley Estates Option) | <p>This Option would involve identifying an Area of Search (AoS) for fireclay at Yorks Bridge, as indicated in the BCCS. Under this option, the boundary of the Area of Search would be based on that put forward by Wyrley Estates during consultation on the BCCS. This is shown as a blue dashed outline on Map 9.2 and on Minerals Inset Map 3 (MXA4 (a)).</p> | <p>This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three alternative boundaries for the AoS for fireclay at Yorks Bridge identified in the BCCS (see BCCS Policy MIN3, Minerals Key Diagram). This area is part of the surface coal resource area but investigations by operators (not provided to the Council) indicate that it also contains fireclay which is a nationally scarce resource used by Potters Clay & Coal Company, a manufacturer of pot clay blends with a factory in Brownhills (Swan Works) as well as by brickworks in Walsall. The Option would involve basing the boundary of the AoS on that put forward originally by Wyrley Estate in its representation on the BCCS in 2007.</p> | <p>--</p> | <p>Option 6a is likely to have significant negative effects overall. The SA has evaluated the effects of the AoS in combination with the existing ‘dormant’ permission for clay and coal extraction covering part of Brownhills Common (MP5). There could be positive effects in terms of providing a source of nationally scarce clay to the ceramics industry. However, at present, Swan Works is the only business with a known demand for the fireclay, and the annual supply requirement is relatively low, so it is questionable whether there is a market for the rest of the fireclay, and there is also no interest from the coal industry in working the coal resources at the present time. There would be unavoidable harmful effects on biodiversity because working within the proposed AoS and/ or at Brownhills Common would result in the loss of at least part of the Brownhills Common and the Slough SINC, and there could also be indirect effects on other nearby designated sites and the wider ecological networks that they form part of. Working within both areas would have significant harmful effects on the local landscape, at least for a temporary period until restoration is completed, and working within the proposed AoS is also likely to lead to loss of some of the ‘best and most versatile’ agricultural land. Opencast clay and coal working within the AoS would also have some harmful effects on the amenity of people living nearby from dust, noise and increased traffic, and working within the ‘dormant’ site would also restrict access to Brownhills Common and the public rights of way that cross it. Working in either area or both could also have harmful impacts on highway infrastructure as access to this area is poor. Effects on other SA Objectives are likely to be either neutral or uncertain and would require assessment.</p> | <p>Rejected</p> | <p>This Option has been rejected in favour of new Option 6d identified through the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), which is not to identify an AoS for fireclay extraction in the SAD. Realistically, there is little prospect of fireclay being worked anywhere in Brownhills other than in association with coal. There is no evidence of any current interest in the working of coal in such a constrained area as Brownhills, and it is also not proposed to identify an AoS on the other side of the boundary in the emerging Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan. The evidence therefore does not support the designation of an AoS for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge at the present time, although the indicative proposal in the BCCS remains in place and until such time as the BCCS is reviewed, will guide future proposals for mineral extraction in this area.</p> |

⁷ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 4a – 4e.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Minerals Option 6b: Fireclay Extraction (Potters Clay & Coal Company Option) | This Option would involve identifying an Area of Search (AoS) for fireclay at Yorks Bridge, as indicated in the BCCS. Under this option, the boundary of the Area of Search would be based on that put forward by Potters Clay & Coal Company Ltd at the BCCS Examination. This is shown as a green dashed outline on Map 9.2 and on Minerals Inset Map 3 (MXA4 (b)). | This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three alternative boundaries for the AoS for fireclay at Yorks Bridge identified in the BCCS (see BCCS Policy MIN3, Minerals Key Diagram). This area is part of the surface coal resource area but investigations by operators (not provided to the Council) indicate that it also contains fireclay which is a nationally scarce resource used by Potters Clay & Coal Company, a manufacturer of pot clay blends with a factory in Brownhills (Swan Works) as well as by brickworks in Walsall. The Option would involve basing the boundary of the AoS on that put forward by Potters Clay & Coal Company (based on an area identified by British Coal in a prospecting notice of 1990) at the BCCS Examination in 2010. | -- | The effects of Option 6b would be similar to Option 6a, and are likely to be significantly negative overall. The SA has evaluated the effects of the AoS in combination with the existing 'dormant' permission for clay and coal extraction covering part of Brownhills Common (MP5). As with Option 4a there could be positive effects in terms of providing a source of nationally scarce clay to the ceramics industry, but the benefits are likely to be limited because at present Swan Works is the only business with a certain demand for the fireclay and their annual supply requirement is relatively low. In the absence of any interest from the coal industry and brick industry it is questionable whether it is economic to bring forward a clay and coal extraction proposal in this area at the present time. Although this Option would involve identifying a slightly different area, the overall effects of opencast clay and coal extraction on local amenity, the environment and transport infrastructure would be very similar to the effects of Option 6a. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of new Option 6d identified through the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), which is not to identify an AoS for fireclay extraction in the SAD. Realistically, there is little prospect of fireclay being worked anywhere in Brownhills other than in association with coal. There is no evidence of any current interest in the working of coal in such a constrained area as Brownhills, and it is also not proposed to identify an AoS on the other side of the boundary in the emerging Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan. The evidence therefore does not support the designation of an AoS for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge at the present time, although the indicative proposal in the BCCS remains in place and until such time as the BCCS is reviewed, will guide future proposals for mineral extraction in this area. |
| Minerals Option 6c: Fireclay Extraction (Include Brownhills Common and Land at Yorks Bridge) | This Option would involve identifying an Area of Search (AoS) for fireclay at Yorks Bridge, as indicated in the BCCS. Under this option, the boundary of the Area of Search would be based on a combination of Minerals Option 3a and Minerals Option 3b, and would also be extended to include the 'dormant' site at Brownhills Common (MP5) and the Potential New Mineral Extraction Site/ 'Choices Site' at Yorks Bridge (Mineral Site MXP4, Choices Site CH93). This is shown as a red dashed outline on Map 9.2 and on Minerals Inset Map 3 (MXA4 (c)). | This Option was identified in the Issues & Options Report (2013) as one of three alternative boundaries for the AoS for fireclay at Yorks Bridge identified in the BCCS (see BCCS Policy MIN3, Minerals Key Diagram). This area is part of the surface coal resource area but investigations by operators (not provided to the Council) indicate that it also contains fireclay which is a nationally scarce resource used by Potters Clay & Coal Company, a manufacturer of pot clay blends with a factory in Brownhills (Swan Works) as well as by brickworks in Walsall. The Option would involve basing the boundary of the AoS on the widest possible area, combining Options 4a and 4b, and also including the site covered by a 'dormant' old mineral permission at Brownhills Common (MP5) and the Land at Yorks Bridge site (MXP4). | -- | The effects of Option 6c would be similar to Options 6a and 6b although there are some differences as the Option for the AoS would cover a wider area including 'Choices Site' Land at Yorks Bridge (CH93, Potential Mineral Extraction Site MXP4). Working across a wider area could allow production of more fireclay and coal resources but would affect more land and more people. Otherwise the effects would be similar to Options 6a and 6b. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of new Option 6d identified through the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), which is not to identify an AoS for fireclay extraction in the SAD. Realistically, there is little prospect of fireclay being worked anywhere in Brownhills other than in association with coal. There is no evidence of any current interest in the working of coal in such a constrained area as Brownhills, and it is also not proposed to identify an AoS on the other side of the boundary in the emerging Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan. The evidence therefore does not support the designation of an AoS for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge at the present time, although the indicative proposal in the BCCS remains in place and until such time as the BCCS is reviewed, will guide future proposals for mineral extraction in this area. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <p>Minerals Option 6d: Fireclay Extraction (Do Not Identify Yorks Bridge Area of Search - Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy)</p> | <p>This is a ‘do nothing’ option – under this Option the Area of Search (AoS) at Yorks Bridge identified in the BCCS would not be defined in the SAD, although the plan would include an ‘enabling’ policy explaining how BCCS Policies MIN3 and MIN4 and the indicative area shown on the BCCS Minerals Key Diagram will be applied to future proposals for fireclay and coal working in the Brownhills area, in the absence of a defined AoS.</p> | <p>This is a new Option for fireclay supply identified in the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) (see Section 8.5), as an alternative to identifying an AoS at Yorks Bridge. There is already a local plan policy in place to guide future proposals for fireclay and coal extraction in the Yorks Bridge area (BCCS Policies MIN3 and MIN4 and Minerals Key Diagram). This Option was therefore identified in response to concerns by Staffordshire County Council and Cannock Chase District Council about the potential cross-boundary impacts of the proposal, which is on the boundary between Walsall and these authorities. Concerns were also expressed by the County Council and other respondents, including the Environment Agency, about the possible impacts on designated nature conservation sites in the area, including the Cannock Extension Canal SAC.</p> | - | <p>Option 4d is likely to have negative effects overall. However, not designating an AoS at Yorks Bridge in the SAD does not override the identification of an indicative AoS in this location in the BCCS (MA6). However, it does mean there is greater flexibility over where working could take place. It also has no effect on the ‘dormant’ permission on part of Brownhills Common (MP5). The effects of this Option would therefore be similar to Options 4a - 4c, although the extent of harmful effects on amenity, the environment and transport infrastructure is less certain, as it is less clear where working could take place, and which areas could potentially be affected by the operations and traffic impacts.</p> | <p>Preferred Option – see SAD Policy M9 and Policies Map</p> | <p>This the Preferred Option for the SAD for fireclay extraction. There is insufficient justification for identifying an AoS for fireclay at Yorks Bridge on the basis of the evidence currently available. The viability and deliverability of fireclay and coal extraction in the Brownhills area, including ‘Yorks Bridge’ and the permitted site at Brownhills Common (MP5), was evaluated as part of the Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015). The Study concludes that given the lack of interest from the coal industry in working the coal resources in this area, there is unlikely to be any prospect of fireclay being worked during the plan period, as it is only generally economically feasible to extract fireclay as part of an opencast coal extraction scheme. The emerging Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan, published for public consultation in July 2015, also does not identify an AoS in this location on the other side of the boundary, so there would be an inconsistency of approach if the SAD were to define an AoS at Yorks Bridge in Walsall. However, the existing BCCS policy provides a basis for evaluating any proposals that come forward in this location during the plan period.</p> |
| <p>Options for Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Fireclay Stockpiling⁸</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Minerals Option 7a: Fireclay Stockpiling (Strategic Stockpiling at Yorks Bridge and/ or Birch Coppice)</p> | <p>Identify proposed Yorks Bridge Area of Search (AoS) and/ or Birch Coppice as potential locations for ‘strategic’ stockpiling of fireclay, to provide a long term supply to brick manufacturers and other potential end users. There would also be a linked policy providing guidance on how BCCS Policy MIN3 will be applied to future proposals for clay stockpiling in this area.</p> | <p>This potential approach towards clay stockpiling was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) although it was not specifically identified as an Option. The potential of this option was explored in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) (see Section 8.5).</p> | -- | <p>Option 7a is likely to have significant negative effects overall. A ‘strategic stockpile’ is effectively a ‘virtual quarry’ and would operate in a similar way to a brick clay extraction site. While a clay stocking site may not necessarily cover the whole of the area from which the clay has been extracted, and would probably be less severe than the effects of the mineral extraction itself, it is likely to delay the completion of the final restoration of the existing Birch Coppice Site (MP3), and/ or to delay the restoration of any future clay and coal extraction sites where clay is subsequently stockpiled. This would have significant harmful effects on the landscape and ground conditions, and is also likely to be harmful to the amenity of people living in the area as it could further restrict access to areas of open space. It is also likely to prolong the negative effects on biodiversity and the highway network from mineral extraction. Other environmental effects are less certain but need not be negative provided that appropriate mitigation is in place.</p> | <p>Rejected</p> | <p>This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 7b. The Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) has evaluated the potential for ‘strategic stockpiling’ at Yorks Bridge (MXP4) and at the Birch Coppice site where there is already a stockpile of fireclay (MP3). The Study has concluded that a new ‘strategic stockpile’ is unlikely to be acceptable anywhere in Brownhills, including at Yorks Bridge or Birch Coppice, given the likely impacts this would have on existing housing, and the significant environmental and nature conservation constraints of the area, although as the possibility is allowed for in the BCCS, the Draft SAD acknowledges this.</p> |

⁸ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 4e and 4f.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Minerals Option 7b: Fireclay Stockpiling (Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy on Stockpiling of Clays) | This is a 'do nothing' option and would mean not identifying any specific locations for 'strategic stockpiling' of fireclay in the SAD. Instead the Council would rely on the existing BCCS Policy MIN3 on Stockpiling of Clays to guide future proposals for clay stockpiling in Walsall. | This is a new Option identified through the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015), which explored the potential for identifying suitable locations for strategic stockpiling of fireclay in the Brownhills area (see Section 8.5). There is already a local plan policy in place to guide future proposals for stockpiling of fireclay in the Black Country (BCCS Policy MIN3). This option was identified as an alternative to the suggestion in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) to identify Yorks Bridge as a location for 'strategic stockpiling' of fireclay. | 0 | The effects of Option 7b are likely to be neutral overall as the Option would rely on existing local plan policy as a basis for evaluating the suitability of future proposals for long-term stockpiling of fireclay in Walsall. Although no preferred locations would be identified in the SAD, making it less likely that a future proposal for clay and coal extraction will also include a proposal for stockpiling following the working phases, the possibility is not ruled out, and BCCS Policies MIN3 and MIN5 provide a basis for assessing the suitability of any proposals that come forward during the plan period. The overall effects of this Option are therefore neutral as they would not add or subtract anything from the existing BCCS policy. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy M9 | This the Preferred Option for the SAD for fireclay stockpiling. There is insufficient justification for identifying specific locations for 'strategic stockpiling' of fireclay in Walsall on the basis of the evidence currently available. The Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) has evaluated the potential for identifying suitable locations for 'strategic stockpiling' in the SAD, and concluded that this is unlikely to be acceptable anywhere in the Brownhills area, given the likely impacts this would have on existing housing, and the significant environmental and nature conservation constraints of the area. While the possibility of 'strategic stockpiling' is allowed for in the BCCS and should therefore be acknowledged this in the SAD, it is not proposed to go any further than this or to identify any preferred locations for 'strategic stockpiling.' |
| Options for Minerals Site Allocations⁹ | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 8a: Minerals Site Allocations (Allocate Sites for Mineral Extraction) | Allocate specific sites for mineral extraction where, following evaluation, there is evidence that an acceptable scheme can be brought forward within the plan period. The four Potential New Mineral Extraction Sites identified by the Council (MXP1 – MXP4) are listed in Table M5 and are shown on Map 9.2, on Minerals Inset Maps 1 – 3, and on the Ward Maps of the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013). A further site (MXP5) was identified in response to the second 'call for sites' in 2013. | This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) as an alternative to Option 5b. Under this Option, specific sites would be allocated for mineral extraction in addition to Areas of Search where feasible. This would provide as much certainty as possible over where mineral extraction could take place during the plan period. | - | Option 8a is likely to have negative effects overall. These sites would be new and in addition to the two sites at Brownhills Common (MP5) and Highfields North (MP9) which are subject to 'dormant' mineral permissions that have not been implemented. The combined effects of allocating all five of the potential site options identified sites would be negative, although there would be positive effects in terms of providing some certainty over where mineral extraction is most likely to take place to meet local requirements for raw materials. The effects of mineral working on the surrounding area would vary, for example, three sites are near to residential areas where mineral extraction could have significant harmful effects on amenity and wellbeing of residents, four sites have poor or inadequate access and could therefore have significant harmful effects on transport networks without mitigation. Potential effects on environmental assets also vary, for example, there would be some impacts on the local landscape in all cases, one site is designated as a SINC and one site includes Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural land. Effects on other SA Objectives are uncertain, for example, effects on air quality and archaeology would need to be evaluated in each case, three sites are within groundwater source protection zones, and all five sites are in areas at risk from flooding. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policy M7 and Policies Map | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for Site Allocations in the SAD, although only one of the sites considered is proposed for allocation: the Recordon Land (MXP3). This was one of two Options considered for sand and gravel Site Allocations in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) (see Section 6.5) and is identified in the Study as 'Option A.' The Study evaluated the viability and deliverability of five potential Site Allocation options but given the doubts about the viability and deliverability of the others, the Recordon Land (MXP3) is the only one recommended for allocation. This site is currently owned by Ibstock and is proposed by them in response to the second 'call for sites' (2013) as an extension to the adjacent Atlas Quarry (MP2) for the purpose of providing a longer-term supply of clay to their two factories in Walsall, Aldridge and Atlas. There is a current planning application for expansion of the quarry onto this site, which includes an environmental statement on the likely effects. As there is no evidence that the constraints affecting the development cannot be overcome, and the development is likely to be viable and deliverable, it is proposed to allocate this site. |

⁹ These Options were previously identified in the Issues & Options and Preferred Options as Minerals Options 5a and 5b.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Minerals Option 8b: Minerals Site Allocations (No Site Allocations) | <p>This is the ‘do minimum’ option and would involve not identifying any specific site allocation policies for mineral extraction in the SAD. Instead the Council would rely on identifying Areas of Search (AoS) to indicate where mineral extraction could take place within the plan period. Suggested boundaries for potential AoS at Aldridge, Branton Hill and Stubbers Green (MXA1 – MXA3) and alternative options for a potential AoS at Yorks Bridge (MXA4) are identified on Map 9.2, on Minerals Inset Maps 1 – 3 and on the Ward Maps in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013).</p> | <p>This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) as an alternative to Option 5a. Under this Option the SAD would not allocate any specific sites for mineral extraction, and reliance would be placed on Areas of Search to identify the locations where mineral extraction may take place during the plan period. This would provide flexibility over where mineral extraction could take place during the plan period.</p> | - | <p>Option 8b is likely to have negative effects overall, although there would be some positive effects and uncertain effects. As it would rely on AoS to identify where mineral extraction could take place during the plan period, this Option would provide greater flexibility than Option 5a - each proposal would be considered on its merits, and evaluated against current local plan policy and national policy guidance. However, no allocations does not necessarily mean no mineral extraction, as working could take place anywhere within the AoS provided that the proposal is acceptable, including on the sites considered for allocation in the SAD. In practice therefore, the effects of this Option on the SA Objectives are likely to be similar to Option 5a. For example, relying on AoS would still give some certainty over where mineral extraction is likely to take place and would have some benefits in terms of provision of minerals supply. As all of the potential AoS are constrained to an extent, for example, by proximal residential development, environmental assets, and the limitations of the existing highway network, some negative effects on biodiversity, the amenity and wellbeing of local communities, the local landscape, agricultural land, and highway capacity would be inevitable. As with Option 5a, effects on air quality, archaeology and hydrology/ flood risk would also be uncertain and would depend on where working actually took place.</p> | Rejected | <p>The Option has been rejected in favour of Option 8a, as the Preferred Option is to allocate one site, the Recordon Land (MXP3). It was one of two Options considered for sand and gravel Site Allocations in the SAD & AAP Minerals Study (2015) (see Section 6.5) and is identified in the Study as ‘Option B.’ The Study evaluated the viability and deliverability of five potential Site Allocation options: the four identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013), and a fifth site put forward by a land owner in response to the second ‘call for sites’ in 2013. The Study recommends allocating Recordon Land (MXP3), but does not recommend allocating any of the other sites, because they are significantly constrained by proximal development and/ or environmental constraints, and none of them is being actively promoted by mineral operators, so there is no certainty that any of them will come forward for sand and gravel extraction during the plan period.</p> |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Options for Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction¹⁰ | | | | | | |
| Minerals Option 9a: Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction (Phasing Policy) | Control the cumulative effects of mineral extraction on the local environment, businesses, communities, and infrastructure, through a phasing policy which would prevent new extraction schemes in areas already significantly affected by mineral extraction until certain conditions are met or 'triggers' reached. | This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) as an alternative to Option 6b. The reason for identifying this Option is to prevent too many mineral extraction sites from operating in the same area at the same time, to minimise the potential effects on the highway network and on the amenity of people living near to the potential mineral extraction areas. | + | The effects of Option 9a would be positive overall, although there would be some negative and uncertain effects. On the positive side, this approach may help reduce the cumulative effects of mineral extraction on particular areas and may therefore have positive effects on protecting environmental assets, reducing pollution and dereliction and safeguarding local communities from the cumulative effects of mineral working. However, minerals can only be worked where they are found, so it is inevitable that working will be concentrated in areas where the best quality or most easily winnable resources are located. A phasing policy could therefore restrict the supply of raw materials needed to support the economy and society. Effects on other SA Objectives are less certain, for example, if raw materials have to travel further there could be harmful effects on transport networks, and consequential effects on fuel consumption and traffic emissions, and also on the cost of raw materials needed to build new homes. | Rejected | This option has been rejected in favour of Option 9c. There are already local plan policies and national policy guidance in place which aim to prevent unacceptable cumulative effects from mineral extraction, so the need for a phasing policy is questionable. Furthermore, as mineral extraction sites could be in the control of a number of different mineral operators, and may be serving different markets and end users, it is unlikely that a phasing policy could be applied effectively. However, generic policies are unlikely to capture all of the complex issues affecting individual mineral development sites, so it is considered preferable for the SAD to include site-specific guidance to supplement that already included in the BCCS, on the key issues future mineral development proposals on existing permitted sites and elsewhere within the Areas of Search will be expected to address. |

¹⁰ These Options were previously identified in the Preferred Options as Minerals Options 6a and 6b.

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Minerals Option 9b: Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction (No Phasing Policy) | This is the 'do nothing' option – the SAD would not include any phasing policy and instead the Council would rely on existing local plan policy and national policy guidance to control the cumulative effects of mineral extraction on particular areas. | This Option was identified in the SAD Issues & Options Report (2013) as an alternative to Option 6a. The reason for identifying this Option is that there is existing local plan policy and national policy guidance in place aimed at preventing unacceptable harmful effects from mineral development (BCCS Policy MIN5, NPPF paragraphs 143 - 144, NPPG on Minerals), which is already being applied. It also may not be practical to apply a phasing policy to different types of mineral sites. | 0 | The effects of Option 9b are likely to be neutral overall. While a 'do nothing' option does not always have no effect or minimal effect, in this case it is probably so, because as now, each mineral extraction proposal would be considered on its merits. This would mean that the cumulative effects of each proposal combined with the effects of schemes already operating, would be taken into account. Nearly all mineral extraction schemes require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and a transport assessment (TA), which will include an evaluation of effects on the environment, including cumulative effects as well as more specific effects on environmental assets and 'sensitive receptors' including people living near to a proposed extraction site, and an evaluation of the effects of traffic generation on existing/ planned transport networks. The overall effects of this Option on all SA Objectives are therefore likely to be neutral. | Rejected | This option has been rejected in favour of Option 9c. This is the 'do nothing' option, which would involve application of existing local plan policies to minimise the effects of mineral extraction on the environment, health and amenity as far as possible. As now, each mineral extraction proposal would be considered on its merits, which would mean that the cumulative effects of each proposal combined with the effects of schemes already operating, would be taken into account. Many mineral extraction schemes also require an environmental impact assessment (EIA), which would include an evaluation of cumulative effects. However, generic policies are unlikely to capture all of the complex issues affecting individual mineral development sites, so it is considered preferable for the SAD to include site-specific guidance to supplement that already included in the BCCS, on the key issues future mineral development proposals on existing permitted sites and elsewhere within the Areas of Search will be expected to address. |
| Minerals Option 9c: Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction (Area/ Site- Specific Guidance) | Include specific guidance on new mineral development proposals at each existing permitted site and within the Areas of Search, to supplement the existing guidance in BCCS Policies MIN2 – MIN5. | This is a new Option identified following the Issues & Options stage of the plan. The reason for identifying this Option is that Walsall has nine permitted mineral extraction sites each at different stages of progress, and there are also a number of proposed Areas of Search. Each site and area has a different set of constraints and issues which will need to be addressed to avoid harmful effects on the environment and on existing development in the vicinity. The SAD could identify the key issues for each site or area, to provide applicants with clearer guidance on the information that future mineral development applications will be expected to include in each case. | ++ | Option 9c is likely to have significant positive effect overall. While the inclusion of specific guidance in the SAD is not in itself likely to eliminate all of the negative effects of mineral extraction, it will at least make clear to applicants what the main issues, constraints and opportunities are, and the information they will be expected to provide with a planning application to demonstrate that the design of the working programme, the restoration programme and the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures is based on a full evaluation of all the relevant environmental, social and economic effects. The Option is likely to have positive effects on all SA Objectives, and significant positive effects on the amenity, health and wellbeing of local communities, provided that the guidance provided in the SAD for each site identifies the most significant issues and constraints that should be addressed in future planning applications relating to mineral extraction, to prevent, reduce or minimise harmful effects and maximise the potential for positive effects. | Preferred Option – see SAD Policies M4 – M9 | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction in the SAD. Although it is considered impractical to include a phasing policy in the SAD (Option 6a), the 'do nothing' option (Option 6b) is also considered inappropriate, because the existing generic policies in the BCCS and NPPF are unlikely to capture all of the complex issues affecting mineral development sites in Walsall. The Preferred Option is therefore to provide prospective applicants with further guidance on each existing and proposed mineral extraction site and each proposed Area of Search, identifying the main constraints and issues that a planning application for mineral development on the site/ in the Area of Search will be expected to address. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 10. Transport and Infrastructure | | | | | | |
| Options for Transport | | | | | | |
| Transport Option 1 (Safeguard Land) | Safeguard the Walsall – Brownhills rail formation and land for the DSDA Access project, and land for park and ride to serve Aldridge. | To ensure that land for transport infrastructure will be protected from encroachment by other types of development, in order to improve the transport network serving Walsall and the wider Black Country. | + | Option 1 is likely to have positive effects overall. It involves safeguarding land for transport facilities, both public and private. Effects on the SA objectives would therefore be either positive or neutral, in that safeguarding the land is an essential first step to enable the improvement of the transport network, to enable regeneration in the Darlaston area and to improve public transport between Walsall and Lichfield. It provides the opportunity to improve the rail network between Walsall and Brownhills, as part of the wider rail network. The Darlaston Strategic Development Area (DSDA) Access Project will unlock industrial employment sites that currently have poor access to M6 junction 10. | Preferred Option – see Draft SAD Policies T1 – T5 and Draft Policies Map | This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for the SAD. It is proposed that the SAD will continue to retain the Walsall to Brownhills railway line alignment due to support for reinstatement of rail services from West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (WMITA). The Darlaston Strategic Development Area (DSDA) Access Project is also now under construction and therefore a commitment, which should be recognised in the SAD. However, it is not proposed to safeguard Park and Ride sites as these can be brought forward through the planning application process. It is also proposed to update some of the 'saved' UDP policies on transport, so that they are consistent with the transport strategy for the Black Country in the BCCS and national policy guidance. |
| Transport Option 2 (Do Not Safeguard Land) | This is the 'do minimum' option – SAD would not safeguard any land for transport purposes. This is not a 'do nothing' option because land is currently safeguarded for transport proposals in the UDP. | To relinquish transport safeguarding so that the land could be used for something else. | - | The overall effects of Option 2 are likely to be negative. This Option would effectively remove all safeguarding of land for future transport projects. The main negative effects are that the opportunity to improve the rail network between Walsall and Brownhills, as part of the wider rail network, is likely to be lost, although it would not have any effect on the Darlaston Strategic Development Area (DSDA) Access Project which is already underway. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 1. The Council does not propose to pursue this option as it would damage long term transport links and the borough's regeneration. |
| Options for Utilities Infrastructure | | | | | | |
| Utilities Infrastructure Option 1 (Allocate Sites for Renewable Energy) | The Option would involve allocating specific sites or areas in the SAD and/ or the AAP for development of large-scale renewable energy projects such as wind farms, solar farms, biomass plants and locations suitable for developing decentralised ('district') combined heat and power networks. | Study undertaken on behalf of West Midlands Local Authorities suggests that there is limited potential for generation of energy from renewable sources in Walsall on any scale, although it identifies some potential for wind power, biomass, and capture of residual heat and power. This Option has therefore been identified to assess whether there is a need / demand to allocate sites for this purpose or not. | + | The overall effects of Option 1 would be positive. Allocating sites for this purpose would encourage development of new renewable energy infrastructure, which will help reduce CO2 emissions from energy generation and increase production of energy from these sources. It also has the potential to benefit businesses and transport by providing a more reliable and possibly cheaper source of energy and fuel, and to provide a means of recovering value from waste that cannot be re-used or recycled. Effects on air quality are uncertain, as some biomass technologies (e.g. energy from waste) can generate harmful air pollutants, although it should be possible to control the effects through mitigation and regulation. Effects on biodiversity, heritage assets, amenity of local people, ground conditions and the water environment are also uncertain, and depend on which sites are allocated and whether they are affected by these constraints. | Rejected | This Option has been rejected in favour of Option 2. No proposals for large-scale new renewable energy infrastructure have been put forward in response to the Issues & Options consultation and no evidence has been provided to justify taking this option forward. No sites have been identified as having potential for development of new infrastructure in Walsall, except for a site at Fryers Road in Bloxwich, which has planning permission for a gasification plant which would be recovering energy from waste. The Council has considered the potential for a 'district' Combined Heat and Power (CHP) scheme in Walsall Town Centre, but the evidence suggests that this is not likely to be viable, so there is insufficient justification to support the inclusion of this project as a specific site allocation in the AAP. |

| Option | Summary of Option | Reasons for Choosing Option | Options Appraisal – Overall Score | SA Options Appraisal – Summary of Outcomes | Current Status of Option (January 2016) | Reason |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | + | | | <p>There have been previous proposals for individual wind turbines in Aldridge which have been either refused permission or have not been taken beyond the EIA screening stage. An EIA screening opinion has also recently been received for a solar farm in Aldridge, but it would be premature to allocate the site for this purpose in the SAD until the suitability of the site has been evaluated. As there is too much uncertainty about demand, feasibility and suitability of land for renewable energy development in Walsall, it is considered preferable for new renewable energy projects to be allowed to come forward on a case-by-case basis. Existing planning policies relating to provision of energy infrastructure (including BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4, CSP5, DEL1 and ENV7), and other relevant 'material considerations' will continue to apply.</p> |
| <p>Utilities Infrastructure Option 2 (Do Not Allocate Sites for Renewable Energy)</p> | <p>This is the 'do nothing' option – SAD would not allocate land for renewable energy generation but would rely on existing local plan and national policy guidance to assess any proposals for such developments that come forward.</p> | <p>The findings of the West Midlands Renewable Energy Capacity Study (2011) suggest that there is limited potential for generation of energy from renewable sources in Walsall on any scale. There is existing local plan policy and national policy guidance in place relating to the provision of energy infrastructure (including BCCS Policies CSP3, CSP4, CSP5, DEL1 and ENV7 and NPPF paragraphs 17, 93, 96 – 98), which can continue to be applied to any proposals that come forward during the plan period.</p> | ? | <p>The overall effects of Option 2 are uncertain as it is unclear whether proposals would come forward in the absence of any site allocations. The extent to which it would help reduce CO2 emissions, increase production of energy from renewable and low carbon sources and have related benefits for the economy and transport is therefore also uncertain. However, this may be the only realistic option for the SAD and AAP, if no projects are currently being promoted in Walsall by potential service providers, which could form the basis for site allocations. As with Option 1, effects on air quality are uncertain, as some biomass technologies (e.g. energy from waste) can generate harmful air pollutants, although it should be possible to control the effects through mitigation and regulation. Effects on biodiversity, heritage assets, amenity, ground conditions and the water environment are also uncertain, as the effects will depend on the sites that come forward, whether they are affected by these constraints and the effectiveness of existing local plan policies in preventing harmful effects.</p> | <p>Preferred Option – see Draft SAD Policy W3 and Section 10.3 and Draft Policies Map, see also Draft AAP</p> | <p>This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option for both the SAD and the AAP for the reasons stated above – there is insufficient evidence to justify the allocation of specific sites for the development of renewable energy infrastructure or combined heat and power ('district' heat and power) networks. Two responses to the Issues and Options consultation stated this would be their preferred option, and given the lack of support and evidence to allocate land for such schemes this is the Council's preferred option at the present time. However, the SAD policies on waste may identify sites or locations suitable for development with energy from waste plants, including a site at Fryers Road in Bloxwich, which has planning permission for a gasification plant.</p> |

Revised SAD and AAP SA Objectives (July 2015)

| | |
|-------------|--|
| SA1 | Air Quality - Minimise emissions of potentially harmful air pollutants from new development in Walsall and exposure of 'sensitive receptors' to poor air quality in the parts of Walsall Borough where monitoring shows that the national air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂) are not being met and/ or that there are high levels of other potentially harmful air pollutants |
| SA2 | Biodiversity and Geodiversity - Conserve, protect, enhance and restore Walsall's biodiversity and geodiversity by ensuring that new development contributes towards the establishment of coherent and resilient ecological networks, makes provision for enhancement of biodiversity and geological conservation wherever possible, and does not harm the integrity of European Sites or cause further loss, harm or deterioration of designated sites, other important wildlife habitats, and geological features, or compromise existing ecological networks |
| SA3 | Climate Change - Reduce Walsall's contribution towards climate change and adapt to the unavoidable effects of climate change on the Borough, by promoting developments that avoid, reduce or minimise emissions of harmful greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO ₂), and by identifying opportunities to mitigate the anticipated effects on key infrastructure and other important assets |
| SA4 | Communities and Population - Support the development of strong, sustainable and inclusive communities in Walsall by developing well designed housing that meets current and future housing needs in locations that support the transition to a low carbon future and are resilient to the unavoidable effects of climate change, have a good standard of amenity and are accessible to existing and planned employment areas and social infrastructure; enable the development of appropriately located new social infrastructure where there is a need, and ensure that other new developments will have a positive effect on the quality of life for local communities, and will not be harmful to their amenity, health and well-being |
| SA5 | Cultural Heritage - Conserve, protect and enhance Walsall's cultural heritage by encouraging better management of conservation areas and historic parks and gardens, by identifying appropriate, viable and beneficial uses for vacant historic buildings, and by ensuring that new development does not compromise the quality or character of heritage assets and their settings or destroy features or archaeology of national or local importance |
| SA6 | Economy and Centres - Promote sustainable, low carbon economic growth and retain businesses and jobs in Walsall by identifying and safeguarding sufficient land for employment and training of the right quality in appropriate and accessible locations to meet the needs of local businesses and potential investors, without compromising the amenity of local communities or the operation of other businesses, by helping to address barriers to sustainable economic growth and investment where possible, such as providing new infrastructure where it is needed to support existing and future businesses, and by identifying opportunities for retail, office and leisure development in centres to meet anticipated requirements |
| SA7 | Equality and Diversity - Reduce inequalities which result from social-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the diverse needs of communities in Walsall are met by planned housing and other developments, and ensure that groups or individuals with protected characteristics, as defined in the Equalities Act 2010, do not suffer direct or indirect discrimination as a result of policies that are included or omitted, including ensuring that developments intended for use specifically by protected or disadvantaged groups, or by them in conjunction with others, are in accessible locations, which are not exposed to significant environmental problems and are likely to be resilient to climate change effects |
| SA8 | Health and Wellbeing - Improve the health and well-being of Walsall residents and address health inequalities by ensuring that new development supports healthy lifestyles and wellbeing and does not present unacceptable risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of local communities and people who visit Walsall for work, shopping or leisure, by developing new health and social care facilities where there is a need, and by ensuring that health and social care facilities are accessible to those they are meant to serve and are likely to be resilient to climate change effects |
| SA9 | Landscape and Townscape - Conserve, protect and enhance the landscape and townscape by developing an environmental infrastructure network for Walsall that protects valued areas and provides opportunities to improve areas of lesser quality, and by ensuring that new development is well designed, of a type and scale appropriate to its surroundings, and respects the character of buildings, spaces and other features where they contribute positively to the environment |
| SA10 | Material Resources - Use Walsall's material resources prudently and efficiently by safeguarding mineral resources and mineral and waste infrastructure, by addressing identified mineral supply requirements, by supporting proposals that would reduce waste and manage unavoidable waste in accordance with the 'waste hierarchy,' and by enabling the provision of the infrastructure needed for treatment, transfer and disposal of waste and manufacture and distribution of mineral products in appropriate locations, where operations will not endanger human health, or cause unacceptable harm to the environment, or the amenity and wellbeing of local communities |
| SA11 | Renewable and Low Carbon Energy - Reduce Walsall's reliance on non-renewable, carbon based energy sources, by minimising energy consumption, by increasing the capacity available to generate energy and fuel from renewable and low carbon sources including waste that cannot be re-used or recycled, by identifying opportunities for co-location of new energy generating infrastructure near to complementary land uses where there is scope to use residual heat, and by delivering more affordable, secure and reliable supplies of energy to local communities and businesses, in ways that will not generate harmful pollutants or have other adverse effects on the environment, and will be resilient to climate change effects |
| SA12 | Soil and Ground Conditions - Maintain and improve the quality of Walsall's soils and land, by avoiding development of greenfield land, including the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land, where previously-developed land or lesser quality greenfield land is available, by encouraging development likely to use soils, land and buildings efficiently, re-use or recycle construction, demolition and excavation wastes, and bring previously developed and derelict land back into beneficial use, and by ensuring that new development deals with existing contamination and geotechnical problems and does not exacerbate existing problems or cause such problems on land not already affected |
| SA13 | Transport and Accessibility - Deliver the transport infrastructure required to improve connectivity, reduce congestion and support economic growth in Walsall and adjoining parts of the West Midlands urban area, reduce the vulnerability of transport infrastructure to climate change effects, reduce the impacts of transport on the environment and on the health, amenity and well-being of local communities, and ensure that new employment and social infrastructure is accessible to local people by a choice of transport modes, and encourages them to make smarter and healthier transport choices |
| SA14 | Water Environment - Conserve and protect Walsall's water resources, maintain water quality and reduce the risk of flooding, by minimising water consumption, by avoiding development in areas where water resources are present or areas at risk of flooding, by ensuring that new development will not have adverse impacts on hydrology or water treatment and supply infrastructure, including increasing vulnerability of such infrastructure to climate change effects, and that any waste water likely to be generated by new development can be managed in ways that minimise the risk of flooding and pollution of surface and groundwater |

Key to Options Appraisal Scoring

| Symbol | Meaning | Reasons for Scoring Selection |
|------------|---|--|
| ++ | Likely to have strong positive effects | This score has been applied where an Option is likely to be particularly beneficial/ complimentary towards the achievement of the SA Objectives, for example, where it would contribute directly towards meeting one or more of the SA Objectives. |
| + | Likely to have positive effects | This score has been applied where an Option is likely to have some beneficial/ complimentary effects on the SA Objectives, for example, where it would indirectly contribute towards meeting one or more of the SA Objectives or would be complementary, or where the potential positive effects identified are likely to outweigh any potential negative effects identified. |
| 0 | Likely to have neutral/ no effects | This score has been applied where an Option is likely to have no effects on the SA Objectives or where the effects would be negligible or net neutral overall, for example, where there would be both positive and negative effects, but overall there would be a balance between the positives and negatives so that one does not outweigh the other. |
| - | Likely to have negative effects | This score has been applied where an Option is likely to be detrimental/ harmful to the achievement of the SA Objectives, for example, where there would be an indirect conflict with one or more of the SA Objectives, or where the potential negative effects identified are likely to outweigh any potential positive effects identified. |
| -- | Likely to have strong negative effects | This score has been applied where an Option is likely to be very detrimental/ harmful to the achievement of the SA Objectives, for example, where it would directly conflict with one or more of the SA Objectives. |
| ? | Effects uncertain | This score has been applied where the effects of an Option on the SA Objectives are uncertain, for example, where there are a number of variables, or where there are likely to be both positive and negative effects, but it is not possible to determine whether one would outweigh the other, or that the overall effects would be neutral. |
| N/A | Not applicable – Option not subject to appraisal | This score has been applied where the Option has been rejected from the outset because it is not considered to be a 'reasonable alternative' for the plan, and has therefore not been subjected to SA. The SA only has to cover 'reasonable alternatives' so it is not necessary to appraise Options that are not considered to be 'reasonable.' A separate schedule of the Unreasonable Options for the SAD has been prepared, explaining the reasons why they are not 'reasonable alternatives.' |