

# **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Walsall Site Allocation Document (SAD) and Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP)**

## **Non-Technical Summary**

### **Introduction**

This is a plain language summary of the sustainability appraisal (SA) of two new plans being prepared by Walsall Council, to allocate land for homes, jobs, shops and community facilities in Walsall. The first is the Site Allocation Document (SAD). The other is the Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). Together with the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS), which provides the strategic policies, and some remaining Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, they will form the Local Plan for Walsall. It should be read alongside the SA Report and Publication Draft Plan for Walsall Site Allocation Document and Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan.

### **Overview of Walsall Site Allocation Document and Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan**

The SAD and AAP will:

- Update the UDP Proposals Map to take account of BCCS policies
- Identify enough land for a supply of housing to meet the targets set by the BCCS and national planning policy guidance.
- Allocate enough sites to meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people
- Identify and allocate sites for employment development, in order to maintain the Borough's economic base and encourage new investment
- Provide a strategy for investment in Walsall Town Centre
- Work out what we need to do about infrastructure needed in Walsall to support the levels of development and growth proposed in the BCCS

Both plans will therefore include the following elements:

- **Policies Map** - showing sites proposed for protection/safeguarding, and sites proposed for new development; and
- **Site Allocation Policies** – identifying specific requirements for new development proposed on or near to the sites identified on the Policies Maps.

The SAD objectives are based on the BCCS Spatial Objectives (see Chapter 3), but are more locally specific, reflecting the Council’s aspirations for Walsall Borough. The AAP objectives have been developed out of the objectives for the Strategic Centre identified in the BCCS, the objectives of the Council’s Corporate Plan, and the Council’s aspirations for the regeneration of the Town Centre.

**Table 1: SAD and AAP Objectives (January 2015)**

<b>SAD Objectives</b>
1. To provide a regeneration strategy for Walsall that promotes sustainable growth within the existing urban areas whilst protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
2. To deliver sustainable communities through the development of new housing on vacant, derelict, and under-used land (including redundant employment land), as well as the regeneration of existing housing areas to provide a range of homes that meet the needs of all members of the community.
3. To allocate high quality employment land in the best locations, allowing existing businesses to expand and attracting new businesses whilst retaining local quality employment land in long-term use to enable existing businesses to stay in Walsall.
4. To encourage and direct investment of a suitable scale to Walsall’s local centres meeting the needs of local communities.
5. To provide a high quality environment across Walsall, and with links to surrounding areas, to enhance biodiversity and help to address climate change by defining integrated environmental networks, protecting the natural environment, promoting green infrastructure and improving access to areas of open space.
6. To protect and enhance the built environment through the protection of heritage assets and the promotion of good design that addresses the character of the Walsall and helps provides safe and secure communities.
7. To improve accessibility in Walsall through the delivery of a first class transport network providing convenient and inclusive links within the borough and to surrounding areas, as well as supporting sustainable development.
8. To support and promote the provision of community services in accessible locations where they can serve all communities across Walsall.
9. To safeguard permitted waste management facilities and identify opportunities for new waste treatment, transfer and disposal facilities in employment areas and in other suitable and accessible locations, where operations will not have unacceptable harmful effects on health, the environment, amenity, or infrastructure.
10. To identify and safeguard mineral resources of local and national importance and mineral production and distribution infrastructure, and identify suitable sites and areas for production of secondary and recycled aggregates and mineral extraction, where operations will not have unacceptable harmful effects on health, the environment, amenity, or infrastructure.

<b>AAP Objectives</b>
1. Establish and allocate a series of high quality, ambitious and deliverable proposals for Walsall Town Centre that will enable Walsall to maximise its economic potential creating a thriving and prosperous centre that creates job opportunities for the residents of the Borough
2. Enhance and maximise Walsall's competitiveness for investment, both in its role as a sub-regional centre and in respect of competing with out-of-centre developments
3. Increase the choice, quality and diversity of the town centre retail offer in order to meet the needs of all sectors of the population. To secure a mix of occupiers in the town centre through the provision of units of sufficient size and quality in suitable locations to meet the requirements of modern retailers
4. Diversify and strengthen the economic base, promote new ways of working and deliver a strong office market that provides high standard office accommodation in suitable locations to meet the needs of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the area, accompanied by training and conference facilities
5. Strengthen the current cultural offer through increasing the mix of uses within the town centre such as a cinema, performance venues and community facilities (e.g. weddings and banqueting facilities), complemented by leisure uses such as restaurants, cafes and bars in order to provide an attractive centre for visitors both day and night
6. Support businesses to increase employment opportunities, skills and aspirations through high quality jobs in a variety of sectors, supported by good links with education and training providers in the town centre
7. Improve accessibility to and within the centre for all sectors of the community, through the provision of integrated transport and enhanced cycling and pedestrian links
8. Conserve heritage assets and seek opportunities for their enhancement whilst delivering high quality sustainable design that is well integrated, secure and encourages greater activity in the town centre with innovative and high quality design and architecture at the core.
9. Promote the sustainability of the centre by delivering environmental infrastructure and improvements that will deliver a range of benefits
10. Transform the experience and perception of Walsall town centre for those who shop, work, visit, invest and live in Walsall through measures such as improved public realm, civic spaces, quality of place, new homes, pedestrian access and security alongside the active promotion of the centre and organisation of community events

## **The SA Process**

By law, the Council must carry out a sustainability appraisal (SA) and a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of local plans before they are formally approved. An SA is an overall assessment of the effects of the plan on the environment, local communities and

the economy. An SEA is based on a European Union Directive and means we must cover mainly environmental effects and the reasonable alternatives of the proposed plan. Because there are significant overlaps between SA and SEA, we have combined them into a single assessment framework.

The assessment framework is used to identify and evaluate the impact of the SAD and AAP proposals on the economy, society and the environment. By doing this assessment we can improve the SAD and AAP as they are developed, or, where necessary, lessen harmful impacts ('mitigation').

A **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**, which assesses the impact of the SAD and AAP on nature conservation sites of European Importance, has been carried out at the same time as the SA. This type of assessment has to be done in a different way, so it is separate, but the SA has taken account of the results.

## SA of Walsall SAD and AAP – Key Stages

The SA has been carried out in stages, as the SAD and AAP develop. This has allowed us to identify potential problems early on, and to change the proposals or identify other ways of dealing with negative effects where possible. The appraisals of the SAD and AAP are being progressed in nine stages, as set out in Table 1 below.

**Table 2: Walsall SAD and AAP – SA Stages**

SAD & AAP Stage	SA Stage	SA Reports
1. Evidence Gathering	1. Scoping	SA Scoping Report
2. Issues & Options	2. Options Appraisal	Options Appraisal Report
3. Preferred Option	3. Appraisal of Preferred Options	Publication of Appraisals
<b>4. Publication</b>	<b>4. Appraisal of Final Plan</b>	<b>Final SA Report</b>
5. Submission	5. Appraisal of Significant Changes	Supplementary SA Report (if necessary)
6. Examination	6. Appraisal	Supplementary SA Report (if necessary)
7. Inspector's Report	7. Review Inspector's Recommendations	N/A
8. Adoption	8. Adoption	SA Adoption Statement
9. Monitoring and Implementation	9. Monitoring of Significant Effects	Annual Monitoring Report

The results of the appraisals carried out at each stage have been published, so that when public consultation takes place, people can comment on the SA appraisals as well as on the draft plan.

We are now at Stage 4 of the SA – the publications stage. The SA process and the results are summarised below, and further details can be found in the main report.

## **SA of Walsall SAD and AAP – General Approach**

By law, the SA has to consider the reasonable alternatives for a new local plan. This means that as we prepare the SAD and AAP, the Council must identify all the possible options, such as how much development we need, and where it should go, and which areas should not be developed and should be protected. The Council must then carry out an assessment of all the realistic options identified. It also has to take into account what existing local plans say.

The overall pattern of development – the spatial strategy – has already been decided by the BCCS, and this proposes that most development between now and 2026 will take place in the built-up areas of Walsall. The Core Strategy also sets targets for provision of housing and employment land and for shopping and office development in Walsall Town Centre. These are fixed points, and it would not be reasonable for the SAD and AAP to go against them. The Core Strategy’s SA predicted that following the spatial strategy would mostly have positive effects on sustainability.

We do not have to appraise options that are not reasonable, or repeat appraisals already carried out for other plans, for example options that form part of the Black Country. The “unreasonable” options identified by the Council are listed in the Appendices to the main SA Report.

The first stages of appraisal have been done at a high level and have not gone into much detail. The Final SA Report goes into much more detail where the high level assessments suggest there could be **significant harmful effects**.

At this stage of the SA we have also considered **mitigation** – how the SAD and AAP could prevent, minimise or compensate for harmful effects, or encourage developments to improve conditions where problems already exist. We also identified ways of **monitoring** the significant effects predicted once the SAD and AAP are adopted, to find out how development in Walsall has actually affected sustainability, and whether the measures put into place to control the effects have been effective.

The results of the SA have helped the Council decide between the alternative options available and the final content of the SAD and AAP, including the sites to be allocated for development, the sites to be protected or safeguarded, and policies to manage the effects of development on the environment and sustainability.

## **SA Stage One: Scoping**

In relation to scoping the first thing we need to do is show how the plan relates to other relevant plans, policies and programmes. The SAD and AAP will also have to comply with **European Directives** and **UK legislation** on environmental, economic and social issues. They will also be expected to be consistent with **national policy** on planning and wider environmental, economic, and social issues:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** (March 2012);
- **Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS)** (March 2012 and updated August 2015)
- **National Planning Policy (NPP) for Waste** (October 2014); and
- **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)** – ‘living’ online guidance (first published in March 2014 and subject to continuous updating).

At the West Midlands Metropolitan Area level:

- **West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan;**
- **West Midlands Freight Strategy; and**
- **West Midlands Low Emissions Strategy (LES).**

At the Black Country Level:

- **The Black Country Core Strategy**
- **The Black Country Strategic Economic Plan**

At Borough level:

- **Walsall UDP saved policies**
- **Supplementary Planning Documents**
- **Statement of Community Involvement**
- **Darlaston Local Development Order (LDO).**

These are explained in more detail in the full SAD chapter 3, and Appendix Oi and Oii give fuller details.

At the first stage of the SA in 2013 (“scoping”), we identified fourteen **SA Topics** covering the range of environmental, economic and social issues identified in existing plans, policies and programmes. The SA Topics are listed in Table 3 below. We then considered the existing

plans, policies and programmes relevant to the SAD and AAP and their aims and objectives for sustainability.

**Table 3: SA Topics and Issues Covered**

SA Topics	Issues Covered
<b>1. Air Quality</b>	Impacts on <b>air quality</b> , such as impacts from emission of pollutants into the atmosphere generally, impacts on areas where limit values for pollutants identified in European and UK legislation are already being breached.
<b>2. Biodiversity &amp; Geodiversity</b>	Impacts on <b>biodiversity and geodiversity</b> , such as impacts on designated sites, impacts on other important wildlife habitats (e.g. BAP habitats) and protected species, impacts on linkages between sites, such as wildlife corridors, and sites at risk.
<b>3. Climate Change</b>	Impacts on <b>climate change mitigation and adaptation</b> , such as impacts on causes (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions), and impacts on adaptation to unavoidable effects (e.g. vulnerability of key infrastructure to effects, implementation of measures to mitigate effects and improve resilience).
<b>4. Communities &amp; Population</b>	Impacts on development of <b>sustainable communities</b> , such as impacts on quality and amenity of residential areas, impacts on meeting housing needs, impacts on ability of communities to access the services and facilities they need, impacts on social deprivation.
<b>5. Cultural Heritage</b>	Impacts on the <b>historic environment</b> , such as impacts on heritage assets, including historic buildings and structures, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, historic landscapes and archaeological remains, impacts on sites at risk.
<b>6. Economy &amp; Centres</b>	Impacts on <b>economic sustainability</b> , such as impacts on infrastructure needed to support and sustain economic growth, impacts on existing businesses, jobs and employment land, impacts on investment, impacts on access to jobs and training.
<b>7. Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	Impacts on <b>equality and diversity</b> , such as potential for unlawful discrimination (direct or indirect), disproportionate impacts on people with "protected characteristics" (= age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or faith, sex, sexual orientation), impacts on integration and community cohesion.
<b>8. Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	Impacts on <b>physical and mental health and well-being</b> , such as impacts on the quality of the environment, impacts from specific hazards, impacts on encouraging participation in health activities such as walking, cycling, sport and recreation, access to health and social care facilities.
<b>9. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	Impacts on <b>landscape and townscape</b> , such as impacts on areas of local landscape and townscape value (e.g. Green Belt, conservation areas), impacts on visual amenity, local character and sense of place.
<b>10. Material Resources</b>	Impacts on <b>material resources</b> , particularly waste and minerals, such as impacts on safeguarding potentially valuable mineral resources, impacts on maintaining supplies of minerals to meet current and future needs, impacts on waste avoidance and sustainable waste management.
<b>11. Renewable &amp; Low Carbon Energy</b>	Impacts on <b>energy consumption and production</b> , such as impacts on energy generating infrastructure, impacts on reducing reliance on non-renewable, carbon based energy sources, impacts on rising energy costs, security of supply and fuel poverty.
<b>12. Soil &amp; Ground Conditions</b>	Impacts on the <b>quality and condition of land and soils</b> , such as impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land and other land not affected by dereliction, impacts on addressing "legacy" issues arising from contamination and instability.
<b>13. Transport &amp; Accessibility</b>	Impacts on <b>transport and accessibility</b> , such as impacts on transport infrastructure, impacts on reducing the effects of transport on the environment and health (e.g. from emission of pollutants, noise), impacts on encouraging smarter transport choices and improving accessibility to key jobs and services.
<b>14. Water Environment</b>	Impacts on <b>water resources, quality and management</b> , such as impacts on water consumption, water supplies and water management infrastructure, impacts on water quality (e.g. from pollution), impacts on management of flood risk and surface water management.

The main changes to environmental, economic and social policies between April 2013 and January 2016:

- The national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), originally issued in 2012 in parallel with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in August 2015. The NPPF revision has not changed the Government's aims that local planning authorities should plan for sites for travellers, but has revised the definition of "gypsies and travellers" for the purposes of this policy to exclude those who have ceased to travel permanently. At the same time as the PPTS revision, the Government also announced that it was to replace the guidance on assessing the accommodation needs of travellers. The Housing and Planning Bill, which is currently being progressed through Parliament, further proposes to amend Section 225 of the Housing Act, which forms the basis of the requirement to provide for traveller sites, to incorporate the assessment of need for people living in caravans into the assessment of general housing need.
- These recent and emerging changes have the potential to affect the assessment of need for a protected group as defined under the Equalities Act, so could impact on Communities & Population and Equality & Diversity. However, the current draft status of the Housing and Planning Bill means that it is not possible to be certain about this impact at present. More detail can be found in the draft Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Revision that is being published in parallel with the SAD Publication Document.

## **Review of Baseline Conditions**

We have looked at the current state of the environment and what would have happened if we did not implement the SAD and AAP. Establishing the baseline conditions helps us to understand the types of issues the SAD and AAP will have to deal with, such as existing problems that could be tackled or made worse as a result of new development. It also helps us to identify the "indicators" we can use to measure the impacts of development proposed in the SAD and AAP once they are in place. A description of current baseline conditions can be found in the main SA Report, and a brief summary is provided below:

### **Material Assets.**

These consist of housing, employment, shopping, leisure and community facilities, transport, waste management and utilities infrastructure.

The strategic **transport** network includes the M6 motorway, including Junctions 9 and 10 as well as an extensive network of 'A'roads. Walsall has several rail lines, including the Chase Line from Birmingham to Rugeley, and in addition to a station serving Walsall town centre there are two more in Bloxwich. The Walsall Canal, Tame Valley and Wyrley and Essington

canal cross the Borough. These are not used to convey goods but provide recreational assets. Walsall's canals, railway lines, historic town centres, industrial buildings and older housing areas are important features of the townscape and are also important elements of the borough's **cultural heritage**.

The eastern part of the Borough has some of the best and most versatile agricultural **land**. However, much the brownfield land is contaminated and subject to mining legacy issues as a result of Walsall's industrial past.

## **Natural Assets**

The following natural assets could be affected by development in Walsall:

- **water** resources, including canals, rivers and streams. The rivers drain into the Trent and are within the Humber River Basin District. All the groundwater in Walsall has been designated by the Environment Agency and Drinking Water Protected Areas and Nitrate Vulnerable Zones. The overall quality of the water in most of the borough's rivers, streams and groundwater bodies is not currently meeting the "good" standard required by the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), and is not expected to do so until 2027.
- 8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and 38 Sites of Importance for **Nature Conservation** (SINCs), which include important areas of lowland heathland, woodland and wetland habitat.
- The **Cannock Extension Canal** is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) of international importance, because it supports floating water plantain, which is a nationally rare species. The Core Strategy HRA ruled out any adverse effects from the Core Strategy proposals.
- Some Walsall housing developments might increase visitor pressure on the **Cannock Chase** SAC, just across the borough boundary.

As regards ground conditions, unlike many other urban areas, Walsall has significant mineral resources of local and national importance, comprising coal, sand and gravel, brick clay and limestone. . In Darlaston, Willenhall, Moxley, the Town Centre and Rushall, some sites are affected by potential contamination and ground instability as a result of the legacy of historic industrial and mining activities

## **Environmental Issues**

**Air quality** is an important issue in Walsall. There are high levels of air pollution in several road corridors in Walsall, notably the M6 corridor where nitrogen dioxide limits are being exceeded, as well as particulates from vehicles. Road traffic is the main generator of **noise**

in Walsall. The main sources of **carbon dioxide emissions** are energy consumption and transport in Walsall, as elsewhere.

Parts of Walsall are potentially vulnerable to unavoidable climate change effects which the evidence suggests are already starting to happen, such as heavy rainfall events. Because Walsall sits on the watershed between the River Trent and Severn, Areas at risk from **flooding** in Walsall comprise land near the River Tame, Ford Brook and Sneyd Brook.

### **Economic and social Issues**

Walsall's **economic base** is largely dependent on manufacturing industry. Its unemployment rate is persistently higher than nationally and regionally. The highest concentrations of unemployment and low incomes are found in south Willenhall, Bloxwich and central Walsall, which also tend to have the highest concentrations of environmental and social problems. By contrast, the areas with the highest levels of employment and high incomes are found in north Bloxwich, Aldridge, and Streetly which are also the areas with the fewest environmental and social problems.

Walsall Town Centre is the Borough's main commercial and shopping centre. There are District Centres of Aldridge, Brownhills, Darlaston, Bloxwich and Willenhall. There are 35 local centres, and out-of-centre retail parks at Redwood, Owen Road and close to Junction 10.

#### **In relation to social conditions:**

- Walsall's population is 270,000 according to the 2011 Census and increasing.
- There is a higher proportion of children and young people, and those over 65, than the average for England and Wales. .
- Non- whites make up around 17% of the population

Walsall includes some of the most deprived areas in the country but there are significant differences across the borough. The 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that the western and central areas of the borough are amongst the most deprived areas in the country.

In relation to health, average life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for both males and females is below the West Midlands and England. The overall health of people in Walsall is also poor compared to the national average.

Home ownership in Walsall is similar to the national average - nearly two thirds of households in Walsall (62.9%) are living in owner-occupied properties (either owned outright or with a mortgage). However, the socially rented sector in Walsall is stronger, with a lower than average number of private rented properties. A quarter of households are

living in socially rented accommodation, more than for England and Wales as a whole. . Conversely, there is a lower proportion of households living in privately-rented accommodation Walsall.

### **What would happen if we did not implement the SAD and AAP.**

Generally speaking, things would get worse:

- Existing pressure for housing development on greenfield sites, including sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, is likely to continue,
- Existing ground condition problems could remain
- Environmental improvements are likely to be sporadic, localised and site-specific instead of comprehensive
- Nature conservation sites and historic sites of local importance are likely to be more vulnerable to loss or harm,
- Going forward, the borough's infrastructure, buildings and open spaces are likely to become more vulnerable to the unavoidable effects of climate change, unless more adaptation measures are put in place to protect existing and new development from these threats.
- further decline in the local economy, and higher rates of unemployment, without further investment in new businesses and jobs and more diversification into other sectors;
- Walsall Town Centre could deteriorate
- There is a risk that the infrastructure needed to support economic growth will not be developed, making Walsall a less attractive area to invest.
- There is unlikely to be scope for significant improvement in the rates of deprivation in some areas of the borough, unless the underlying social, economic and environmental problems are addressed, including those relating to the quality of the environment and access to employment, housing and key facilities and services;
- Access to employment, services and social infrastructure could become more difficult for local communities in Walsall without continued investment in public transport

### **Areas Affected by Significant Effects**

The BCCS concentrates development in urban areas and on previously developed land. If Walsall's SAD proposed significant development elsewhere, such as in places remote from transport links, the main effects would be felt by people who do not have access to a car, who are concentrated in the western, southern and central parts of the borough (SA13). The SAD is therefore proposing to continue to safeguard the land likely to be needed to support industry and economic growth in accordance with the BCCS regeneration corridors.

Both the SAD and AAP is expected to have significant positive effects on the health and viability of Walsall town centre (SA6). Having the SAD and AAP in place will help the town centre avoid further decline.

Some developments proposed in the SAD and AAP could affect other areas. The overall level of development proposed in the SAD and AAP is not likely to exceed BCCS targets. The BCCS has already been subject to sustainability appraisal, and the effects have been found not to be significant. However, significant localised effects could arise as a result of new development proposed near the boundary with other authority areas in the SAD, for example an increase in road trips or pressure on schools and hospitals. Proposals for mineral extraction near or adjacent to the boundary could also have significant effects on local communities on both sides of the boundary who are living near to the proposed extraction areas. Equally, proposals to regenerate Walsall town centre may benefit those from outside the Borough that use it.

### **Development of the SA Framework**

Table 3 provides a summary of the **SA framework** that appraises the SAD and AAP. The framework is structured around fourteen **SA Objectives**, one for each SA Topic. The framework was developed at the scoping stage during 2012 and 2013, following a review of existing plans, policies and programmes relevant to the SAD and AAP, and a review of baseline evidence on existing and potential future conditions in Walsall. The SA framework was updated in May 2015, to reflect changes to national and local policy, and new evidence which has become available since 2013 developed.

The Revised SA Objectives have been tested against each other to check for consistency. The only areas of conflict are between SA Objective 10, which aims to maintain mineral supplies, and SA Objectives 3, 9 and 12, which aim to protect the natural environment and landscape, and to prevent further problems with ground conditions.

We have identified **Criteria and Indicators** linked to each SA Objective, to guide the appraisal process. The Criteria are in the form of questions, to prompt the assessors to consider the how the options and proposals for the plan will affect each SA Objective. The Indicators point to background information and trends identified in the review of evidence which could be relevant. For further details see Appendices A and B of the main report. The SA process involves checking whether options would have positive, negative, neutral or uncertain effects on each of the SA Objectives, using the SA Criteria and Indicators. Where positive or negative effects are identified, we also have to consider how significant they would be. The results are recorded in a table – **SA Matrix** - where the predicted effects on the SA Objectives are shown by symbols and colours.

Two types of SA Matrix were developed at the scoping stage, one to record the results of high level assessments carried out at the early stages of SA, and one to record the results of more detailed assessments carried out at later stages, into options that could have significant effects. These are shown in Appendices H and I of the Revised SA Scoping Report

**Table 3: Summary of SA Framework – Overview of SA Topics, Objectives and Criteria**

SA Topics	Relevant SEA Topics	SA Objectives	SA Criteria and Indicators
<b>1: Air Quality</b>	Air Climatic Factors Human Health	Minimise emissions of potentially harmful air pollutants from new development in Walsall and exposure to poor air quality in the parts of Walsall Borough where the national air quality objectives for NO <sub>2</sub> are not being met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to generate significant levels of NO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere?</li> <li>• Are options likely to generate significant amounts of other pollutants?</li> <li>• Do options involve uses likely to be harmed by exposure to high levels of NO<sub>2</sub> (e.g. in areas where limit values are already exceeded)?</li> </ul>
<b>2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b>	Biodiversity Flora Fauna Landscape	Conserve, protect, enhance and restore Walsall's biodiversity and geodiversity by ensuring that new development does not harm the integrity of European Sites or cause further loss of designated sites or other important wildlife habitats and geological features, and by identifying opportunities for new habitat creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will options affect protected species?</li> <li>• How will options affect European Sites and other sites designated for their national or local importance for biodiversity or geodiversity?</li> <li>• How will options affect other important wildlife habitats such as priority habitats identified in the BAP, or geological features?</li> <li>• How will options contribute towards the BCCS "environmental infrastructure network," such as the inclusion and protection inclusion of natural greenspace?</li> </ul>
<b>3: Climate Change</b>	Air Climatic Factors Material Assets Water	Minimise Walsall's contribution towards climate change and adapt to the unavoidable effects of climate change on the Borough, by promoting low carbon/ low emission developments and by identifying opportunities to mitigate the anticipated effects on key infrastructure and other important assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to generate significant levels of CO<sub>2</sub> or other "greenhouse gases"?</li> <li>• How will options impact on vulnerability of existing or proposed infrastructure and development to the unavoidable effects of climate change?</li> <li>• How will options contribute towards the BCCS "environmental infrastructure network," such as inclusion of environmental assets likely to improve resilience to climate change effects?</li> </ul>
<b>4: Communities and Population</b>	Population Material Assets	Support the development of strong, sustainable and inclusive communities in Walsall by developing high quality housing that reflects local housing needs in attractive locations that are accessible to employment and social infrastructure, and by ensuring that other new developments will have a positive effect on the quality of life for local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to improve the attractiveness of Walsall as a place to live, encouraging people to stay or move into the area?</li> <li>• How will options affect the amenity, quality of life and wellbeing of existing local communities?</li> <li>• Are options likely to help reduce poverty and deprivation affecting the western and central parts of the Borough?</li> <li>• Will options help to deliver high quality market and affordable housing to meet BCCS requirements, particularly in areas of local housing need?</li> <li>• Will options help to deliver housing in locations that meet BCCS and UDP standards for accessibility to jobs, shops, open spaces and other essential social infrastructure?</li> </ul>

SA Topics	Relevant SEA Topics	SA Objectives	SA Criteria and Indicators
<b>5: Cultural Heritage</b>	Cultural Heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage Landscape	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to enhance and/ or encourage better management of conservation areas, particularly those areas on the “at risk” register?</li> <li>• Are options likely to help conserve buildings of architectural or historic interest, including Great Barr Hall which is "at risk," and other vacant/ derelict historic buildings, by identifying appropriate and viable new uses for them?</li> <li>• Are options likely to encourage appropriate management of historic parks and gardens, including Great Barr Park which is "at risk"?</li> <li>• How will options affect archaeological sites/ remains, including Scheduled Monuments and other sites identified on the Black Country HERS?</li> <li>• How will options contribute towards the BCCS “environmental infrastructure network,” such as the inclusion and protection of important heritage assets and their settings?</li> </ul>
<b>6: Economy and Centres</b>	Population Material Assets	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 accessible locations to meet the needs of local businesses and potential investors, and by identifying opportunities for retail, office and leisure development in centres to meet anticipated requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will options support business growth, investment and job retention or creation within the Borough, particularly in sectors not currently well represented?</li> <li>• How will options improve access to education and vocational training for the local workforce, particularly young people?</li> <li>• How will options affect BCCS requirements for provision of readily available employment land suitable for development with B1b, B1c, B2 and B8 uses?</li> <li>• How will options impact directly on the environment and on the amenity, health and well-being of local communities from air pollution, noise and other potential nuisances?</li> <li>• How will options help local businesses to diversify and move towards a sustainable, low carbon economy?</li> <li>• How will options support the delivery and retention of “town centre” uses of an appropriate type and scale in the Centre and Local Centres, including the delivery of the BCCS requirements for new comparison shopping and office floorspace in the Town Centre?</li> </ul>
<b>7: Equality and Diversity</b>	Population Material Assets	Reduce inequality by ensuring that the diverse needs of communities in Walsall are considered when planning housing and other developments to be used by the public, by ensuring that specific needs are addressed where possible, by supporting development that would help reduce poverty and social and economic deprivation, and by improving access to key services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to have different impacts on people with "protected characteristics," compared to people in general?</li> <li>• How will options help to deliver the BCCS caravan pitch requirements for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, and other special housing requirements identified in local housing needs assessments?</li> <li>• How will options help to reduce inequality, poverty and social and economic deprivation for local communities, particularly communities with a high proportion of vulnerable groups?</li> <li>• How will options promote inclusive communities by ensuring that any new jobs, shops, open spaces and social infrastructure provided are accessible to all people living in the communities they are meant to serve?</li> </ul>

SA Topics	Relevant SEA Topics	SA Objectives	SA Criteria and Indicators
<b>8: Health and Wellbeing</b>	Human Health Population	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 health, and by ensuring that health and social care facilities are accessible to those they are meant to serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are options likely to affect the general health and well-being of Walsall residents, particularly in parts of the Borough where there are high levels of health problems?</li> <li>• Are options likely to increase risks to human health from existing hazards, or from potential new hazards?</li> <li>• Are options likely to encourage healthy and active lifestyles by improving access to sport and recreational facilities or incorporating opportunities for walking and cycling?</li> <li>• Are options likely to ensure that health and social care facilities are accessible to the people they are meant to serve?</li> </ul>
<b>9: Landscape and Townscape</b>	Landscape	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to adversely affect the openness and permanence of the Green Belt?</li> <li>• How will options contribute towards the BCCS “environmental infrastructure network,” such as the inclusion and protection of locally valued areas of landscape and townscape?</li> <li>• Are options likely to contribute positively towards landscape and townscape, by respecting and enhancing locally distinctive buildings, features and spaces, or improving areas where the landscape or townscape is of poor quality?</li> </ul>
<b>10: Material Resources</b>	Material Assets	Use Walsall’s material resources prudently and efficiently and in ways that will protect the environment and human health, by safeguarding mineral resources and mineral and waste infrastructure, by addressing identified mineral supply requirements, and by supporting proposals likely to reduce waste and provide the infrastructure needed to manage unavoidable waste arising in Walsall in ways that will make optimum use of resources and divert as much as possible away from landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are options likely to affect mineral resources and mineral and waste infrastructure, including infrastructure for bulk transport of materials by rail?</li> <li>• How are options likely to maintain supplies of mineral resources needed to support the local economy and contribute towards sub-regional requirements?</li> <li>• Are options likely to minimise waste and facilitate management of unavoidable waste arising in Walsall in ways that will divert as much waste away from landfill as possible and optimise the use of resource?</li> <li>• How are options likely to help deliver the BCCS waste management infrastructure requirements or meet other local requirements for waste management infrastructure?</li> <li>• Are options likely to address the potential harmful effects of mineral extraction and waste management on the environment, human health or the amenity of local communities?</li> </ul>

SA Topics	Relevant SEA Topics	SA Objectives	SA Criteria and Indicators
<b>11: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b>	Climatic Factors Material Assets Population	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, and by delivering more affordable, secure and reliable supplies of energy to local communities and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to help reduce Walsall's energy and fuel consumption, particularly from sources that generate significant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions such as housing, businesses and transport?</li> <li>• Are options likely to increase Walsall's capacity to generate energy and fuel from renewable and low carbon sources?</li> <li>• Are options likely to improve access to more affordable and reliable energy supplies for local households and businesses?</li> </ul>
<b>12: Soil and Ground Conditions</b>	Material Assets Soil	Maintain and improve the quality of Walsall's soils and land, by encouraging development that uses land and buildings efficiently or brings 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are options likely to affect the quality of soils and the ecosystems that depend on them?</li> <li>• Are options likely to affect agricultural land within Walsall, and if so, what effect would they have on the best and most versatile agricultural land?</li> <li>• Are options likely to make efficient use of land, such as re-use of previously-developed land and existing buildings?</li> <li>• Are options likely to increase risks to human health or the environment from existing contamination or geotechnical problems or by creating new problems?</li> </ul>
<b>13: Transport and Accessibility</b>	Air Human Health Material Assets Population	Deliver the transport infrastructure required to improve connectivity, reduce congestion and support economic growth in Walsall, reduce the impacts of transport on the environment and on the 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are options likely to improve connectivity within Walsall and between Walsall and wider transport networks?</li> <li>• How are options likely to help reduce congestion on road and rail networks, for example, by improving the flow of traffic and efficiency of train services?</li> <li>• Are options likely to help mitigate the harmful effects of road and rail transport on the environment and on the amenity and well-being of local communities (e.g. air quality, noise, safety)?</li> <li>• Are options likely to improve the efficiency and sustainability of freight movements by enabling goods and services to be moved by rail or inland waterway?</li> <li>• Are options likely to encourage people to make smarter, healthier transport choices, such as using public transport or cycling and walking for shorter journeys?</li> <li>• Are options likely to provide jobs, shopping facilities and other key facilities and services in centres or in other locations accessible to the communities they are meant to serve by a choice of transport modes?</li> </ul>

SA Topics	Relevant SEA Topics	SA Objectives	SA Criteria and Indicators
<b>14: Water Environment</b>	Material Assets Water	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 and that any waste water generated can be managed in ways that minimise the risk of flooding and pollution of surface and groundwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are options likely to require abstraction of significant quantities of water or increase water consumption?</li> <li>• How are options likely to affect important water resources (e.g. Primary Aquifers and Groundwater Source Protection Zones)?</li> <li>• How are options likely to affect the water quality status of Walsall's surface water bodies or groundwater, and are they likely to prevent further deterioration of water quality status?</li> <li>• Are options likely to increase the risk of flooding from drains, culverts or groundwater?</li> <li>• Are options in locations likely to be at risk of flooding, and if so, are the risks acceptable?</li> </ul>

## SA Stage Two: Options Appraisal

The first stage of plan development involved identifying the objectives of the SAD and AAP, the key issues they need to look at, and the options available. These were identified in the Issues & Options Plans (April 2013). Before the plans were published, the second stage of SA was carried out, which was in two parts:

- **Objectives Testing** - checking that the objectives for the SAD and AAP are compatible with the SA Objectives; and
- **Options Appraisal** - identifying and assessing all of the “reasonable” options identified for the SAD and AAP.

The results of the SA were presented in the Options Appraisal Report. An updated summary is set out below.

### SAD and AAP Objectives Testing

The results of testing the Objectives of the Publication version of the SAD are recorded in the Revised SAD Objectives Compatibility Matrix (Excel Spreadsheet), and in **Appendix F** of the main SA report. The Appendix identifies the changes made to the Objectives when the Preferred Options were identified in July 2015 (changes in **blue text**), and before the final plan was published in January 2016 (changes in **purple text**). The most recent changes to the SAD and AAP objectives were simply additions to the wording and therefore had no impact on the objectives testing findings.

The SAD and AAP objectives are much the same as the SA objectives. The only area of tension is between SAD Objective 10, relating to mineral resources and production, and SA objectives 2, 9 and 12, dealing with protection of the natural environment and landscape and transport. This tension is because the SAD identifies suitable sites for minerals working. This might put more pressure on local transport networks and involve greenfield sites in the Green Belt.

In relation to the AAP there is tension between AAP Objective 7, to improve access to the town centre by all types of transport and SA objectives 1 and 3, because this might imply a deterioration in air quality.

There were several options related to mitigating the effects of the SAD on Cannock Chase SAC. The appraisal of these options indicates that options 1, 2 and 7 are likely to have

negative effects on many of the SA Objectives. These effects would mean that the Council would be unable to achieve a sustainable pattern of development in relation to its residential allocations because it would render residential brownfield allocations unviable within the zone of influence of the SAC. Walsall Council's preferred option is option 4 as it no longer appears that there is a requirement for a package of mitigation funded by developer contributions in order to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure. The selection of this option is discussed in Appendix H of the SA Report and the HRA screening assessment that accompanies the SAD and AAP. The Council intends to proceed on this basis. has selected this option having concluded that there are no measures required to mitigate the potential effects resulting from the residential allocations of the SAD and AAP.

### **SAD and AAP Options Appraisal**

The SA Options Testing process has involved:

- Testing the Issues and Options in April 2013
- Refining and updating the options in 2015. The appraisals of the options were published on the Council's website alongside the Preferred Options for the SAD and AAP.
- A final review of the Options carried out at the end of 2015 following the Preferred Options consultation.

The choice of Options available has reflected the need to deliver the BCCS.. So some Options that might otherwise be considered are not appropriate for the SAD and AAP – for example if they would involve proposing development that is contrary to the Black Country spatial strategy.

The Council has identified 32 sets of alternative Options for the SAD under 9 topic areas, based on the structure of the plan and the types of land use it needs to make provision for. A total of 101 separate Options have been identified. A full listing of all of the Options identified for the SAD can be found in **Appendix H**. The Options are listed in the left-hand column of the schedule, which includes a description of each Option and the reasons for identifying it, a summary of the outcome of the Options Appraisal, the current status of the Option (January 2016), and the reasons for including it in the SAD or for rejecting it.

The Options identified for the SAD are not site-specific – they are based on different approaches towards delivering the BCCS requirements or local requirements for each type of development. It would not have been feasible or helpful to have carried out a detailed appraisal of every site-specific option for the SAD, because this would have involved appraising hundreds of individual sites. But some options identified included groups of sites, or assumed that particular sites would be included. In these cases the appraisal did

consider the overall effects of allocating these sites. The main overall results of the Options Appraisal are summarised below.

The AAP Options are more detailed than those for the SAD and many relate to policy or land use choices for particular sites or areas of the Town Centre. As with the SAD, the Options for the AAP have been refined at each stage in the development of the plan, to take into account the outcome of the public consultation on the plan and the comments made on the options for the Town Centre.

As a result of this, there are many more options for the AAP than there are for the SAD. The Council has identified 47 sets of alternative options, and 144 options in total. A full listing of the Options identified for the AAP can be found in **Appendix I**. The Options are listed in the left-hand column of the schedule, which includes a description of each Option and the reasons for identifying it, a summary of the outcome of the Revised Options Appraisal, the current status of the Option, and the reasons for choosing it as part of the Preferred Options or for rejecting it.

## **SA Stage Three: Appraisal of Preferred Options**

### **Options Appraisal Outcomes and Reasons for Choosing Preferred Option**

The results of the options appraisal are set out in the Revised SAD and AAP Options Appraisal Completed Matrix (January 2016). This presents the results of the appraisal of all the Options identified for the SAD throughout the plan preparation process. Options identified at the Issues & Options stage (April 2013) are in black text, new or refined Options identified at the Preferred Options stage (September 2015) are in **blue text**, and new or refined Options identified prior to Publication (March 2016) are in **purple text**

In relation to the SAD, the only Preferred Options where negative effects have been identified are:

- Sand and Gravel Extraction - Minerals Option 4b: BCCS Areas of Search Only;
- Brick Clay Extraction – Minerals Option 5a: Stubbers Green Area of Search and Permitted Sites Only;
- Fireclay Extraction - Minerals Option 6d: Do not Identify Yorks Bridge Area of Search - Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy; and
- Minerals Site Allocations - Minerals Option 8a: Allocate Sites for Mineral Extraction.

In the case of Minerals Options 4b and 5a, the effects are predicted to be significant. Unfortunately, such effects will be inevitable if mineral extraction takes place in the locations identified, and it is not possible to identify any 'reasonable' alternatives for the SAD that could prevent these effects.

### Summary of Preferred Options of SAD:

Preferred Options	Reasons for Choosing	Overall SA Score	Predicted Effects
<p><b>General Approach</b></p> <p>Option 2: Meet Core Strategy Growth Requirements</p>	<p>This is the only reasonable Option for the general approach towards most types of new development in the SAD, as the main purpose of the plan is to deliver the requirements of the BCCS. The only exception is provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people where evidence suggests the requirements in Walsall are lower than anticipated.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Significant positive effects are likely, as it will deliver the requirements of the BCCS spatial strategy up to 2026, including delivery of housing needed to support sustainable communities, industrial land to support sustainable economic growth, delivery of essential transport infrastructure and delivery of environmental network. Will also encourage regeneration of vacant and derelict land.</p>
<p><b>General Housing Provision</b></p> <p>Option 4: Surplus Employment Land, Non-Employment PDL and Surplus Open Space</p>	<p>This Option 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.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Significant positive effects are likely, as 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 are also more likely to be accessible to those in need, who are less likely to have access to a car. Overall effects from loss of surplus open space are likely to be neutral, because the open space to be lost would be relatively poor quality and not well-located. Any negative effects would be offset by improvements to visual amenity from redevelopment of poor quality industrial land.</p>
<p><b>Affordable and Special Needs Housing</b></p> <p>Option 3: New SAD Policy – Require specialist housing to be in locations with good public transport access: Sites in or close to centres will be particularly</p>	<p>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. A policy that seeks to direct such developments to locations with</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Policy seeks to direct specialist housing to locations with good walking access to shops and other amenities to encourage independence for residents, and locations with good access by public transport for care workers employed in the establishments as well as for visitors. This will reduce dependence on cars.</p>

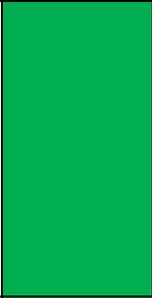
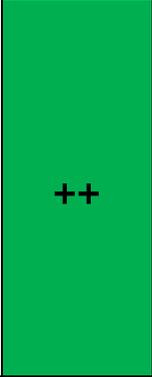
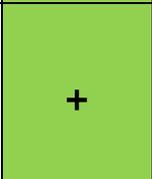
encouraged	good walking access to services for residents, and good access by public transport for care workers and visitors, would have positive benefits in reducing isolation for residents and improving access to employment.		
<b>Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people</b>  Option 4: Identify sites specifically for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Show-people	This option will ensure sites are made available in appropriate locations for travellers and showpeople, who are often unable to compete with other higher value land uses	+	Policy seeks to avoid or reduce unauthorised encampments, including those on sites of nature conservation interest both within and outside the borough. However, the total land area of the proposed sites is negligible, especially compared with that for other land uses addressed by the SAD, so there will be no or almost no potential effects on the SAC
<b>Land for Industry</b>  Option 3: Existing Employment Land Supply, Additional Non-Employment PDL and Surplus Open Space	This Option will 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.	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve identifying surplus land not currently in employment land use, in addition to the existing employment land supply, to increase the amount of industrial land available. Also likely to increase energy consumption and road traffic, therefore 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.
<b>Local Centres</b>  Option 2: Review to Reflect New Housing Proposals  Option 4: Allocate Development Opportunities	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.	++	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.
<b>Out-of-Centre Developments</b>  Option 2: Allocate Declining Sites for	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 alternatives uses such as employment or housing. These	++	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. Would support objectives towards the promotion of sustainable communities and sustainable

Other Uses	allocations would help meet the BCCS targets but also support the strategy of focussing centre use investment within the established centres.		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.
<b>Open Space</b> 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	This option was developed to be in accordance with the council's Green Space Strategy (2012). It provides a framework with which to protect and re-allocate sites based on an open space hierarchy. Low value open sites are re-allocated for other uses and resources can be generated or focused on improving standards and provision where possible.	+	Likely to have a positive effect 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; but could exacerbate existing lack of open space in some areas. Would have to be mitigated through improving the quality of other open spaces in the borough. 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.
<b>Community and Leisure Facilities</b> Option 1: No Site Allocations	The SAD does not allocate land for community and leisure facilities and deals with applications for such uses on an individual basis in accordance with the relevant planning policy.	0	The overall effects of Option 1 are likely to be neutral overall, although there are uncertainties about some effects. 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. 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 (SA4, SA7, SA13).
<b>University Campus</b> Option 2: Replace 'saved' UDP Policy LC10	An update of UDP Policy LC10. To provide for the needs of the university whilst safeguarding the environment and amenity of local residents.	++	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 and manage the needs of the University with the environment.

<p><b>Environmental Network</b></p> <p>Option 3: Enhancement Where Opportunities Arise and Targeted Investment</p>	<p>Support enhancement of the Environmental Network where significant opportunities arise to improve it, but target improvements in areas of deficiency</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>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 lack of access to green spaces.. To rule out areas of surplus green space completely from any enhancement could result in missed opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Green Belt Boundary</b></p> <p>Option 2: No Green Belt Review</p>	<p>No change to Green Belt boundary currently defined in Walsall UDP.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>The “do nothing” option and would mean no change to the Green Belt boundary currently defined on the “saved” Walsall UDP Proposals Map. This Option is likely to have significant positive effects in terms of openness and maintaining biodiversity and agricultural land and land for minerals extraction. Also likely to continue to encourage redevelopment of previously-developed land. Impacts on SA3, SA11 and SA14 are likely to be positive overall. However, effects on SA1 are uncertain, as some previously-developed land is in road corridors where the statutory limit values for NO2 are being exceeded.</p>
<p><b>Green Belt Policy</b></p> <p>Option 2: New Green Belt Policy</p>	<p>Replace UDP Green Belt policies with new policies that are consistent with the NPPF.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Likely to have significant positive effects overall. Would involve replacing the existing polices with new ones that are 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.</p>
<p><b>Natural Environment</b></p> <p>Option 4: Update Natural Environment Designations and refer to existing policy</p>	<p>Update UDP nature conservation designations shown on the UDP Proposals Map and include cross-references to relevant BCCS and "saved" UDP policies</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Likely 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 and ensure that the policy framework for conservation of the natural environment is robust, and opportunities to conserve important elements of the natural environment and sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity are identified. Development of greenway networks for walking and cycling to improve access to active transport modes and improve health and well-being of local communities.</p>

<p><b>Cannock Chase SAC – Mitigation of Effects</b></p> <p>Option 4: Adopt findings and conclusions of more recent HRA</p>	<p>Adopt the findings and conclusions of most recent HRA work undertaken by the AONB Partnership</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Likely to have a positive effect on most of the SA Objectives as more recent HRA work has screened out likely significant effects associated with increased recreational pressure. 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 rather than greenfield sites. The benefits of a sustainable pattern of development are wide ranging.</p>
<p><b>Flood Risk</b></p> <p>Option 2: Update Local Plan Flood Risk Policies</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Likely to have positive effects overall. It would involve updating 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). 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.</p>
<p><b>Canals</b></p> <p>Option 2: Additional Policy on Canals</p>	<p>Expand on existing BCCS policy on canals to provide more locally specific guidance on new development adjacent to canals and in canal corridors in Walsall</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p> <p>Option 2: Update Historic Environment Policies and Designations</p>	<p>Update UDP historic environment policies and designations shown on the UDP Proposals Map</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Likely to have significant positive effects, and greater benefits than Option 1. It would involve updating the existing UDP Policies ENV8 and ENV25 - ENV30 on the historic environment and showing the most up-to-date boundaries of designated heritage assets on the SAD Policies Map. This Option is likely to have significant positive effects on SA5 and SA9, 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</p>

			<p>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 positive effects on SA10 and SA12, by encouraging 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 SA4 and SA8, as it is likely to encourage well-designed developments that will benefit the health and well-being of local communities who value heritage assets and local character. While there is some uncertainty about the effects on SA1, SA2, SA3, SA7, SA10, SA11, SA13 and SA15, because the option is not site-specific, effects are considered to be neutral overall, as it is assumed that other local plan policies and relevant national policy guidance would also be applied, which would minimise or prevent harmful effects on air quality, biodiversity and geodiversity, climate change mitigation and enhancement, economic growth, equality and diversity, use of energy, transport and accessibility, and the water environment.</p>
<p><b>Waste Recovery Targets</b></p> <p>Waste Options 1a and 1b Combined: General Recovery Targets and Recycling Targets</p>	<p>National Planning Policy for Waste expects local plans 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. While addressing this requirement, the Option takes into account an existing permission for energy recovery, and recognises that new waste management projects will be delivered by the market, so there are no guarantees that new recycling capacity will come forward. It is therefore preferable to the other Options, including ‘do nothing’ (Option 1d).</p>	+	<p>Positive effects are likely, as SAD waste management targets will include specific requirements for delivery of new municipal waste recycling and composting infrastructure as well as infrastructure for other types of recovery. 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, as well as helping to meet the targets in the BCCS for recovery of household, commercial and industrial waste.</p>
<p><b>Existing Waste Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Waste Options 2a and 2b Combined:</p>	<p>As well as giving priority to safeguarding the most important waste sites in Walsall, this Option would also allow smaller permitted waste management facilities, which could be important for local communities and businesses or may be</p>	++	<p>Significant positive effects are likely, as safeguarding all permitted waste management facilities will help Walsall to retain existing waste capacity that is important for managing waste generated by local industry and local communities, as well as</p>

<p>Safeguard All Existing Waste Sites but Prioritise Safeguarding of Strategic Waste Sites</p>	<p>providing a specialist service, to be safeguarded. By identifying these sites in the SAD, developers seeking to build other types of development in the area will 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 and reduce the need to develop new sites. It is therefore considered preferable to prioritisation of Strategic Waste Sites only.</p>		<p>infrastructure that is of national and sub-national importance which is accepting waste from other areas and is diverting significant amounts of waste away from landfill. Identifying existing sites may also help to reduce potential conflicts between existing waste operations and proposed new developments. Effects on the environment, health and amenity are likely to be neutral, as changes to existing facilities must comply with BCCS Policy WM4 and relevant national policy guidance, and will also be subject to regulation.</p>
<p><b>Suitable Waste Management Locations</b> Waste Option 3b: SAD to Provide Additional Guidance</p>	<p>While BCCS Policy WM4 would still apply, this Option would provide more locally specific guidance to the waste industry on 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. It would also identify specific sites likely to be suitable for development of new waste facilities where such sites can be identified. It is therefore considered preferable to the ‘do minimum’ Option of relying on the existing BCCS policy (Option 3a).</p>		<p>Significant positive effects are likely, as it will support delivery of new waste infrastructure in appropriate locations such as on industrial sites, and will also help to reduce potential conflicts between waste operations and other land uses. Clearer guidance on the types of operation suitable on open land would also enable harmful effects on landscape to be prevented or minimised. Effects on the environment, health and amenity are likely to be neutral as they would be localised, and all proposals must comply with BCCS Policy WM4 and relevant national policy guidance, and will also be subject to regulation.</p>
<p><b>Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA)</b> Minerals Option 1a: Single MSA</p>	<p>Defining a single MSA covering most of Walsall Borough on the SAD and AAP Policies Maps will 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. Further details of where mineral resources can be found in Walsall can be provided in a Technical Appendix.</p>		<p>Positive effects are likely overall, as the Option is consistent with the approach in the BCCS – Black Country MSA has already been subject to SA and no significant harmful effects were identified. 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.</p>
<p><b>Aggregates Recycling</b> Minerals Option 3b: Site Allocations and/or Additional</p>	<p>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 is to safeguard existing permitted recycling sites and</p>		<p>Positive effects are likely overall. Providing further guidance in the SAD on suitable locations for recycling facilities 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</p>

<p>Locational Guidance</p>	<p>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 &amp; AAP Minerals Study (2015), but none of them 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.</p>	<p></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Sand and Gravel Extraction</b> Minerals Option 4a: BCCS Areas of Search Only</p>	<p>This is the 'do minimum' option. The BCCS Areas of Search (MA1: Birch Lane and MA2: Branton Hill) include quarries which were operating until relatively recently as well as other unpermitted resources around them. There is no evidence of any serious interest in working any of the sand and gravel resources elsewhere in Walsall, therefore other potential Options have been rejected. Defining the boundaries on the SAD Policies Map, and including linked policies to provide further guidance on the key issues that proposals for further sand and gravel working will be expected to address will provide greater certainty to prospective mineral operators, and will also help to prevent or mitigate the harmful effects identified in the SA.</p>	<p>--</p>	<p>Potential for significant harmful effects without mitigation, taking into account the need to complete restoration of areas already worked, which has not been progressed, and the potential additional effects of further mineral extraction, although there would be some positive effects from maintaining supplies of construction aggregates. However, the Walsall SAD &amp; AAP Minerals Project (2015) has shown that there are no reasonable alternatives to the Areas of Search identified in the BCCS, and in some cases the negative effects of mineral extraction in alternative locations are likely to be greater.</p>
<p><b>Brick Clay Extraction</b> Minerals Option 5a: Stubbers Green Area of Search and Permitted Sites Only</p>	<p>This Option was identified following the consultation on the Preferred Options for the SAD in 2015 and has been chosen in preference to the Preferred Option identified in 2015. The Preferred Option identified in 2015, to identify a second Area of Search around the 'dormant' permission at Highfields North, has been rejected because the main land owner in this area is unwilling to support mineral extraction. However, there is a need to identify sufficient Etruria Marl resources in Walsall to meet the long-term supply requirements of all three brickworks in the borough if at all possible. The resources in the Stubbers Green Area of</p>	<p>--</p>	<p>Significant harmful effects will be unavoidable if there is an expansion of working at Stubbers Green, and if the 'dormant' permission at Highfields North is implemented. While there would be some positive effects from the potential increase in supply of brick clay to local brickworks, and mitigation of effects of further working at Stubbers Green is likely to be feasible, working at Highfields North would cause significant harm to a SSSI (Jockey Fields) as around 90% of the permitted site is covered by the SSSI designation, would have harmful visual effects on a relatively unspoiled area of open land, and would result in the loss of some of the best quality agricultural land . It</p>

	<p>Search are unlikely to be sufficient to provide a 25-year supply of clay to Sandown Brickworks as well as to Aldridge and Atlas Brickworks. Implementing the 'dormant' permission at Highfields North is likely to be the only means of meeting this requirement. The Preferred Option is therefore to identify the BCCS Area of Search at Stubbers Green, plus other permitted sites, including Highfields North and two other sites currently undergoing restoration.</p>		<p>could also have indirect harmful effects on another SSSI (Swan Pool &amp; The Swag), due to impacts on hydrology. However, there is no realistic alternative to the Preferred Option, as the SAD cannot override an existing planning permission. There is also no alternative to brick clay extraction in the areas identified at Stubbers Green and in/ around Highfields North, as these are the only resource areas for Etruria Formation clays in Walsall. The Option of identifying a second Area of Search around the Highfields North site, which has been rejected, did not perform significantly better in terms of reducing the negative environmental effects.</p>
<p><b>Fireclay Extraction</b> Minerals Option 6d: Do not Identify Yorks Bridge Area of Search - Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy</p>	<p>This Option was identified in 2015 as an alternative to the Options identified in the Issues &amp; Options Report (2013) for boundaries for the Yorks Bridge Area of Search identified in the BCCS. There is insufficient justification for defining an Area of Search for fireclay at Yorks Bridge in the SAD on the basis of the evidence currently available. The Preferred Option is therefore to provide guidance on new or revised proposals at permitted clay and coal extraction sites in the Brownhills area, and more specific guidance on potential future proposals for clay and coal working in the Yorks Bridge area indicated in the BCCS. The viability and deliverability of fireclay and coal extraction in the Brownhills area was evaluated in the Walsall SAD &amp; AAP Minerals Project report (2015), and the conclusion was that there is unlikely to be any realistic prospect of fireclay and coal being worked in this area during the plan period. However, there is a 'dormant' permission for clay and coal working at Brownhills Common, and there is an outstanding application for modern conditions to be applied to this site and the Birch Coppice site, which was previously worked. The proposal has been determined by the Council to be EIA development, and the application is in abeyance pending the submission of an environmental statement. There is a need for further guidance in the SAD on revised or new proposals for working conditions for these sites.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Likely to have negative effects. Not designating an Area of Search at Yorks Bridge in the SAD does not override the identification of an indicative Area of Search in this location in the BCCS, which will remain in effect at least until the BCCS is reviewed. However, it does mean there is greater flexibility over where working could take place. The Option would also have no effect on the 'dormant' permission for coal and clay extraction on part of Brownhills Common. Implementing this permission would lead to unavoidable loss of part of the Brownhills Common and The Slough SINC, loss of open space, and would also affect several Public Rights of Way. The effects would be very long-term if clay is allowed to be stockpiled on-site, as is proposed in the current application for working conditions, although this will not necessarily be permitted. There could also be indirect effects on adjacent designated sites including the Chasewater and Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths SSSI. If a proposal for opencast coal and clay working came forward in the Yorks Bridge area in addition to this, or as an alternative, it could have much greater harmful effects, because it would involve working over a much larger area. It is likely to have significant harmful effects on biodiversity, because like Brownhills Common, it would result in the loss of part of the Brownhills Common and The Slough SINC and could also have indirect effects on other designated sites. Designated sites in the area include Chasewater and Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths</p>

			SSSI, Cannock Extension Canal SAC/ SSSI, Pelsall Common North SINC, and Wyrley & Essington Canal SLINC. It would also have significant harmful effects on the landscape, including Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land, although the effects may be relatively short-term if restoration follows on immediately afterwards, and there is no long-term stockpiling of clay on-site. The effects of this Option would therefore be similar to the other Options considered, 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. There are no realistic alternative options for coal and fireclay extraction in Walsall other than in the Brownhills area, as this is the only part of the surface coal resource area in Walsall that is not sterilised by built development.
<b>Fireclay Stockpiling</b> Minerals Option 7b: Rely on Existing Local Plan Policy on Stockpiling of Clays	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 Project report (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 stockpiling is allowed for in BCCS Policy MIN3, the guidance in this policy and in BCCS Policy MIN5 is considered to be sufficient to evaluate the suitability of any proposals, and it is not proposed to identify any preferred locations for “strategic stockpiling in the SAD.	0	Effects are likely to be neutral as the Option would mean relying 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, 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. There is already a proposal for stockpiling of clay at the Brownhills Common site which is included in the current application for working conditions to be applied to this site and to the Birch Coppice site (see Fireclay Extraction above). The overall effects of this Option are considered to be neutral as they would not add or subtract anything from the existing BCCS policy.
<b>Minerals Site Allocations</b> Minerals Option 8a: Allocate Sites for Mineral Extraction	Although this Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option, only one of the site Options considered is actually proposed for allocation. The Walsall SAD & AAP Minerals Project (2015) evaluated the viability and deliverability of five potential Site Allocation options, three for sand and	-	The combined effects of allocating all five of the potential site options identified would be negative, although there would be positive effects on meeting supply requirements for raw materials as it would provide some certainty over where mineral extraction is most likely to take place. The effects of mineral

	<p>gravel extraction, one for brick clay extraction and one for coal and fireclay extraction. However, given the lack of any serious interest in the other sites identified, the Recordon Land was the only one recommended for allocation. This site is within the Stubbers Green Area of Search and has been proposed by Ibstock as an expansion site for Atlas Quarry in response to the second “call for sites” (2013). There is also 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.</p>		<p>working on the surrounding area would vary, for example, three sites are near to residential areas where mineral extraction could have harmful effects on amenity and wellbeing of residents, four sites have poor or inadequate access and could therefore have 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.</p>
<p><b>Limiting the Impacts of Mineral Extraction</b></p> <p>Minerals Option 9c: Area/ Site- Specific Guidance</p>	<p>This Option has been chosen as it is considered impractical to include a phasing policy in the SAD (identified as an Option in the Issues &amp; Options Report). However, the ‘do nothing’ option 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 will be expected to address.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Transport</b></p> <p>Option 1: Safeguard Land</p>	<p>This option continues to safeguard land for transport purposes. The Issues and Options proposed to allocate and safeguard the current disused Walsall – Brownhills rail alignment, the DSDA Access Project and land for park and</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Option 1 is likely to have long-term positive effects on accessibility.. The safeguarding of the Walsall Brownhills rail alignment would provide the capacity for a potential strategic rail route that could be used for rail and freight passengers,</p>

	<p>ride at Moxley. In Aldridge a choice was identified between safeguarding a site for industry or park and ride to serve a new station. The DSDA project is now underway and therefore does not need safeguarding. Park and Ride at the Aldridge site has been discounted in view of the fact that the prospect of rail services is not sufficiently advanced to warrant this, and it is still unclear where the station will be sited (though it is identified diagrammatically as part of the saved UDP Aldridge District Centre Inset plan). The Bradley Lane site will serve an existing tram line and is therefore identified, on slightly revised boundaries following a public consultation in 2015.</p>		<p>improving the national rail network. Under option 2, this would have been lost, and there would instead have been probable pressure to release this Green Belt corridor for housing, exacerbating the problems caused by peripheral development.</p>
<p><b>Utilities Infrastructure</b> Option 2: Do Not Allocate Sites for Renewable Energy</p>	<p>There is no evidence to support the need to allocate specific sites for utilities infrastructure, which will continue to be delivered by the relevant providers as and when the need arises.</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>This can be taken forward through development management policies on a case by case basis.</p>

### **Summary of AAP Preferred Options - see table on following page.**

In relation to the AAP, the only negative effect was in relation to Cultural and Community Facilities Option 8 – no provision for outdoor events, as it would reduce the likelihood of major outdoor events taking place in the Town Centre, and therefore there could be opportunity costs/ economic impacts from the loss of the potential increased footfall/ expenditure that such events bring. This is being mitigated in the AAP through the Market policy AAP3 which looks to protect the space for public events as the new market design allows for dismountable stalls creating a space right at the heart of the centre.

Overall most of the AAP options had positive **equality and diversity** effects. There was however two options which scored negatively:

- The Council not investing in Gala Baths;

As the town centre is the most accessible location for leisure facilities, if the Baths has to close down or is unsuitable for use due to lack of investment then this reduces residents' ability to access leisure facilities. This option was therefore rejected and Gala baths is protected through the AAP

- The Council not providing a leisure facility in the town centre;

As the town centre is the most accessible location for leisure facilities and should be the focus of the Council's leisure provision. Lack of town centre provision would be likely to reduce residents' ability to access fitness facilities. The option was therefore Option rejected and Gala baths is protected through the AAP, there is also a number of development opportunities identified which could accommodate further leisure facilities.

Overall most of the AAP options had positive **health and wellbeing** effects. However three options which scored negatively as set out below:

- The Council not investing in Gala Baths;

Whilst in the short term the service provided by the Council for leisure in the town centre would not change, it is anticipated that without further investment in the near future that the Baths would fall into disrepair and would no longer be viable for the Council to run. If the Council had to close its only town centre based leisure facility this would be very negative on the health and well-being of Walsall's residents. The Baths would also be unlikely to attract any new users to the facilities without further investment. The option was therefore rejected and Gala baths is protected through the AAP

- The Council not providing a leisure facility in the town centre;

Closure of the Council's town centre fitness offer would be likely to reduce residents' ability to undertake exercise. The option was therefore rejected and Gala baths is

protected through the AAP, there is also a number of development opportunities identified which could accommodate further leisure facilities.

- The AAP recognises the issues around the air quality but sets no standards or process by which to reduce emissions within the Town Centre.

It is considered that reductions in road traffic emissions are best addressed in other ways than through the AAP and an air quality SPD has been produced to address this issue covering air quality throughout the Black Country which should have more of a positive impact than measures which address the town centre in isolation.

Preferred Options	Reasons for Choosing and Possible Effects	Score
<b>Town Centre Boundary Option 4 - Contracted and Expanded Boundary</b>	Allows for a realistic Town Centre boundary to be defined, to include areas that provide opportunities for new “town centre” development and to remove areas where there are no “town centre” uses, and which it is not appropriate to include in the Town Centre. This option would help create conditions for expanding and improving the range of facilities and services available in the Strategic Centre, making it more attractive for residents and visitors, and therefore more competitive with other centres of a similar size and scale. As the Town Centre is a highly accessible location it may also reduce the distance people need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure. However, there is potential for increased visitors to generate more traffic and congestion and related air quality problems, which would need to be addressed through improved access for pedestrians and cyclists and more effective management of road traffic through the Town Centre.	+
<b>PSA Option 3 - Contracted Boundary</b>	Reducing the PSA (Primary Shopping Area) could result in fewer vacant units and a more compact retail offer. This should result in the most accessible and vibrant Town Centre. This may, however, mean it is difficult to deliver the larger units required to meet modern retailers’ demands. As a result, larger units may locate on the edge of the centre as the PSA cannot accommodate them which may mean some are less well linked, although there is potential for the AAP to identify well-located edge-of-centre sites for convenience retailing or bulky goods to try and overcome this impact, by ensuring the most suitable locations are considered for development first in accordance with the sequential approach. A concentrated area for development may also result in more changes to the built environment and a impact on the centres character. However the AAP is supported by a characterisation study that aims to limit the negative impact on the centres character, and the plan also identifies area within the PSA which would benefit most from development avoiding the redevelopment of buildings with significant character.	+
<b>Location of New Retail Option 1 - Park Street &amp; St. Matthew's Quarter Only</b>	This would mean that shopping investment remains focussed and the heart of the shopping centre would be maintained. Part of Preferred Option, which is a combination of this Option and Option 4. By concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending.	++
<b>Location of New Retail Option 5 - Identify Appropriately Located Sites for Convenience and Bulky Goods Retailing Outside the PSA</b>	It is proposed to contract the PSA in order to concentrate investment, and to reflect the new lower retail floorspace targets. However, there are demands for convenience retailing and bulky goods that the Council is aware of. It would therefore be a reasonable option for the Council to identify preferred sites outside the PSA which have the potential to be well-linked to the PSA.	+
<b>Walsall Market Option 1 - The Bridge/ Bradford Street)</b>	The work being undertaken on the location for a new market at the Issues & Options stage in 2013 indicated that this was the most appropriate location for the Market. The Bridge is considered the most accessible location for Walsall Market, and is a large area of public space, allowing a high quality environment to be created, to improve the attractiveness of the Market and Town Centre as a whole.	+

<b>Location of New Offices Option 1 - Gigaport</b>	Gigaport has been a long term aspiration of the Council and the area has outline permission for office development. Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. There may be some increase in traffic and emissions along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air pollution on the scheme.	+
<b>Current Office Stock Option 1 - Encourage Investment in Current Office Stock</b>	There are a number of office blocks that would benefit from investment however there have also been a number of proposals to redevelopment these for housing. The policy therefore looks to promote the investment in office and to deter the loss of offices in the centre. Investment in current office stock that would make the units more appealing to businesses attracting new businesses into the centre supporting the local economy. It could also have a positive impact on the environment of the centre as buildings are enhanced.	+
<b>Social Enterprise Option 2 - Identify Social Enterprise Zone</b>	This would support development/ clustering of new social enterprises around the Goldmine Centre in line with the Black Country LEP Social Enterprise Prospectus. This would support further clustering of social enterprises focussing on different needs in the same area, offering more opportunities for young people to develop their skills and access jobs, or start their own businesses.	+
<b>Industrial Uses Option 2 - Allow Incremental Change to Other Uses</b>	It allows industry to be protected where appropriate without constraining the growth of the Town Centre and development of "town centre" uses. However, there are some uncertainties about the effects, as it may put pressure on business owners to relocate, so the effects on the local economy would depend on a mechanism for relocating industry being found, otherwise there is a risk that industry and jobs could be lost or be relocated outside Walsall.	+
<b>Leisure Facilities Option 2 - Retain and Invest in Gala Baths</b>	Gala Baths stays open, accessible and viable for a longer period of time, and is likely to attract more users to the facility as well as providing opportunities to enhance the quality of the building. Likely to be very positive as this option would help to retain an important historic asset in its existing location and setting, and would also provide an enhanced community facility, bringing similar uses together within the Town Centre.	++
<b>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 1 - Allocate Leather Museum Site</b>	This would bring the less accessible local history centre into the town centre and support the Walsall museum through relocating it as part of Walsall Leather Museum. This will create a lager visitor attraction in the centre which should encourage more users of the facilities and more visitors to the centre overall.	++
<b>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 4 - Promote Existing Performance Venues</b>	There are a number of facilities in the centre which could be made more use off and the AAP could look to promote this approach. While this option would not add to the provision for live performance venues in the Town Centre, it is likely to enhance the role of existing facilities and may help to make them more viable and secure their future.	++
<b>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 5 - No Provision for Performance Venues</b>	This is the most flexible option of those identified, as it does not strictly allocate land for a new performance venue, but would allow new performance venues to come forward on sites identified for mixed use development, allowing the market to consider where these types of leisure uses are viable.	?

<b>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 6 -Provide Performance Venues in Mixed Use Schemes</b>	There are a number of locations where this is possible use along with other centre uses. Under this option, cultural and community facilities would be delivered where and when the market determines. Overall, the effects of this option would be very positive, as a performance venue could be more viable as part of a mixed use scheme, and in combination with other leisure uses such a development would be positive for the vitality of the Town Centre.	++
<b>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 8 - No Provision for Outdoor Events</b>	There are spaces which already provide opportunities for public events without a formal allocation. However the overall effects of this option are likely to be negative, as it would reduce the likelihood of major outdoor events taking place in the Town Centre, and therefore there could be opportunity costs/ economic impacts from the loss of the potential increased footfall/ expenditure that such events bring, as well as forcing local communities to go elsewhere to less accessible locations for such events.	--
<b>Evening Economy Option 3 - Specific Locations for Development</b>	This is a variation on Option 1 and would involve identifying specific locations in the Town Centre which could be particularly suitable for development of new evening economy establishments, rather than "zones," for example, Walsall Waterfront. Impact is uncertain. Benefits include the synergies from co-location of evening economy establishments with other complementary leisure uses. By identifying specific locations rather than wider "zones," depending on the choice of location, there is also less risk of adverse impacts on other land uses which are not complementary to the evening economy, such as housing.	?
<b>Overnight Accommodation Option 3 - Specific Locations for Development)</b>	As new hotel development is likely to improve the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. Identifying specific locations or sites where hotel development is encouraged would also reduce the likelihood of land use conflicts or competition with other "town centre" land uses. This option could also have wider benefits for visitors and local communities, as hotels and associated restaurants and function spaces could be steered towards locations near to public transport hubs.	+
<b>Canal Option 1 - Development Required to Enhance Canalside Environment</b>	The Walsall Canal is an important asset to Walsall Town Centre and should be promoted and protected as much as possible. It is acknowledged that there is existing policy guidance in place and that much of the canalside environment in the Town Centre has already been developed. However, this option would allow higher standards of design to be set in the AAP for further new developments adjacent to the Canal, requiring them to create attractive routes and spaces.	+
<b>Location of Leisure Option 1 - Waterfront Only</b>	Waterfront is an attractive location for leisure development. Some leisure development has already taken place or is in the pipeline, and there is potential to capitalise on this and to develop it as a key leisure destination, by identifying Waterfront as the main location for large-scale leisure development in the Town Centre.	+
<b>Housing Option 1 - New Housing Allocations</b>	There are sites which may be most suitable for residential. This could however affect the delivery of targets for retail and office floorspace or the delivery of other "town centre" uses, depending on which sites are allocated. Provision of further housing in the Town Centre would help to improve its vitality and viability as well as providing homes in a highly accessible location where residents would have access to shops, jobs and a range of other amenities as well as to public transport networks. By allocating specific sites, it is possible to minimise harmful effects on occupiers from the surrounding environment, by avoiding sites at risk from flooding and sites exposed to noise or air pollution, and by requiring developers to provide a good standard of design and amenity.	?

<b>Housing Option 2 - Provide Housing through Mixed Use Schemes Only</b>	Residential is a suitable use as part of some mixed use schemes . This option is likely to deliver more new homes in areas where it would not compromise delivery of "town centre" developments. As the mixed use sites would be allocated in the AAP, it would be possible to minimise harmful effects on occupiers from the surrounding environment, by avoiding sites at risk from flooding and sites exposed to noise or air pollution, and by requiring developers to provide a good standard of design and amenity.	+
<b>Housing Option 3 - Providing Housing through LOTS &amp; Other Vacant Floorspace</b>	There are a number of vacant or underused buildings within the centre which could be promoted for residential. Not only delivering new homes and supporting the vitality and viability of the Town Centre, but also supporting the retention of existing buildings with positive effects on local character and townscape. However, there are some uncertainties if housing is provided in areas where no social infrastructure exists. There may also be impacts upon residential amenity from neighbouring "town centre" uses and exposure to existing environmental constraints, such as flood risk and air pollution, if any vacant building is allowed to be converted to housing.	+
<b>Residential Environments Option 1 - Minimum Standards for Residential Environments</b>	Requiring developers to provide safe and attractive residential environments is likely to attract more people to live in the Town Centre, and is also likely to enhance the townscape and attractiveness of the centre. However, such requirements can increase the costs of a residential development which could affect the viability of residential schemes.	+
<b>Education and Health Option 1 - Allocate Land for Expansion of Existing Education and Health Facilities</b>	There are existing facilities in and around the Town Centre, such as the Manor Hospital and Walsall College which may need space to grow and expand in the future. The Town Centre would benefit socially and economically from a strengthened health and education sector. However allocating sites specifically for education could impact on the ability to deliver the BCCS floor space targets for offices, particularly if there is no demand for expansion and land remains undeveloped as a result.	+
<b>Education and Health Option 3 - Protect and Promote Current Health Care Facilities</b>	There are a number of healthcare facilities in the Town Centre that should be protected, and there may also be a future need for new health and social care facilities in the Town Centre which should be supported. Also the proximity of the Manor Hospital to the Town Centre is a positive advantage which should be built on, where possible.	+
<b>Community Facilities Option 3 - The AAP does not allocate land for community facilities but provides criteria and identifies a priority site</b>	The Council received no consultation responses in support of the allocation from community groups that would use the facility and there has been no evidence made available to show there is need or demand for such a facility. Therefore the deliverability of a community facility is uncertain and allocating a site for this use may mean the site remains undeveloped for some time and that the other uses needed on site are jeopardised.	?
<b>Character Option 2 - Encourage Development in Places of Character</b>	The Walsall Town Centre Characterisation Study (2015) has provided up-to-date evidence on the character of different parts of the Town Centre, and the positive aspects of local character that it would be desirable to develop and enhance in each area through new developments. It would be possible to include a policy in the AAP requiring new developments to relate positively to local character in each of the character areas of the Town Centre.	++
<b>Conservation Option 4 - Improve Interpretation of Historic assets</b>	Heritage is often seen as being specialist, elitist and inaccessible to many people, so this option would look to address this issue by providing further information and guidance on the historic environment of the Town Centre and heritage assets.	+

<b>Conservation Option 5 - Rely on Existing Policy and Legislation</b>	Current legislation and local plan policy already offers the historic environment protection, but without further work through the AAP, further enhancement might not be possible and development may not have full regard to the key features of importance to local character in the Town Centre.	?
<b>Protected Views Option 1 - Protect Locally Important Views</b>	A policy could be included in the AAP which identifies locally important views that will be protected, to help to protect the character of the Town Centre. The objective would be to prevent further damage to these views, either by blocking or unacceptably imposing or by creating an intrusive element in the view's foreground or middle ground, and clarify development height thresholds where appropriate.	+
<b>Design Option 3 - Design Standards for Buildings in Key Locations</b>	It would be possible for the AAP to identify specific standards for design quality, enhancement of local character, and enhancement of the environment and image of the Town Centre for key buildings and sites.	?
<b>Design Option 4 - Apply BCCS Renewable Energy Requirements Only</b>	As there is no evidence of significant take up of renewable and low carbon energy technologies in the Town Centre, it would be a reasonable option to continue to rely on the existing policy framework to assess whether new development proposals have had sufficient regard to this.	0
<b>Public Realm Option 1 - Identify Priority Areas for Improvement</b>	The Council has already undertaken some work on the need for public realm improvements in the Town Centre, and this could be built on by including appropriate guidance in the AAP on which areas will be a priority. A high quality environment is also important in attracting further investment into the town centre. However such improvements can be costly. There would also be ongoing resource implications for the maintenance of these areas.	++
<b>Environmental Option 1 - Identify Assets Requiring Improvement</b>	This would help to give further protection to environmental assets in the Town Centre, and would also identify opportunities for improvement and enhancement of the environmental network through new development.	++
<b>Environmental Option 3 - Set Requirements for New Developments to Deliver Environmental Infrastructure</b>	Existing local plan policy may not provide sufficient justification on its own to secure green infrastructure through new developments in the Town Centre – the AAP could include further guidance on the circumstances/ sites where this will be sought.	++
<b>Urban Open Space Option 2 - Allocate Urban Open Space adjacent to Art Gallery</b>	The allocation of these areas of green space for protection would enhance the environment around Church Hill and in the Waterfront area, both of which are important residential areas. The Waterfront area is also identified as an important development area so it is important to have some green space in this area to maintain its quality. Safeguarding the open space in this area would also contribute towards the development of the green corridor along the Canal and improve linkages to wider ecological and greenway networks.	++
<b>Pedestrian Movement Option 1 - Further Requirements and Guidance on Pedestrian Movement</b>	Existing local plan policy is not specific about existing pedestrian linkages and does not identify the areas where improvements are needed in the Town Centre. If this guidance was provided in the AAP it would ensure that new developments take this into account. Also, identifying specific locations where improvements to linkages are needed in the Town Centre will provide more certainty and help to secure their delivery.	++

<b>Cycling Option 1 - Protection of Cycle Routes and Further Guidance on Enhancement</b>	There are number of cycle routes in the Town Centre which could be protected in the AAP, and improvements to cycle routes that would benefit the centre. New Greenways and other paths that need improving are identified. Many of these routes are used by pedestrians too so improvements will be for those access the centre on foot as well. This will help link the centre and encourage more sustainable transport which has environmental and health impacts. The protection of the canal footpaths for cycle routes also protects the canals historic environment and ensures it continues to provide a positive environment for communities and the wildlife.	++
<b>Public Transport Option 3 - Expansion of Bradford Place</b>	Bradford Place is running at capacity and would benefit from expansion. Creating extra capacity will improve passenger experience, safety and the reliability of services, but would have implications for neighbouring land uses.	+
<b>Walsall Rail Station Option 1 - Expand Walsall Railway Station</b>	There are proposals for a rapid transit scheme that would need a new platform at the railway station. By creating extra capacity it will mean Walsall is better linked and more attractive to visitors and investors. This will impact positively on the economic growth prospects of the Borough, enabling local rail services to be improved and increase the possibility of attracting national rail services. This could also reduce car usage with benefits to the environment and road congestion. The car park at station street would be lost and there may be some impact on the character of Station Street which does have some buildings of strong character, although improvements to the station may be the catalyst needed for improvements to Station Street overall. There may also be implications for the Saddler's Shopping Centre.	++
<b>Taxis Option 2 - No Additional Taxi Ranks</b>	The number and location of taxi ranks is determined outside of the plan making process. The current level of taxis remain and any additional ranks are decided outside of the plan making process. Uncertain impact as taxi will meet demand so it's unlikely to impact on the level of service overall.	?
<b>Coach Facilities Option 2 - No Provision for Coach Stop Facilities</b>	The current stopping location remains in use as there is no evidence of further demand. The current stopping arrangements would remain and any future issues would be addressed outside of the plan making process. This would not mean that current levels are reduced and may mean further operators are deterred from the centre.	?
<b>Road Network Option 3 - No Action to Reduce Vehicle Emissions</b>	The road network leading to the Town Centre, especially along the Ring Road, suffers from congestion, which is also having effects on air quality. If nothing is done to address this it could deter future investment in the Town Centre. However by improving the road network more development could be attracted to the centre especially within the Gigaport area. The better moving the traffic is the less impact on air pollution there is along the corridor although there may be an increase in car emissions overall.	?
<b>Road Network Option 4 - Identify Roads Requiring Investment</b>	Improvements are identified which will help secure any funding available. By improving the road network more development could be attracted to the centre especially within the Gigaport area. The better moving the traffic is the less impact on air pollution there is along the corridor although there may be an increase in car emissions overall.	?
<b>Car Parking Option 1 - Allocate Land for New "Super" Car Parks</b>	There is a need for more well-located, safe and accessible car parking in the Town Centre. This will enable 'super' car parks to support investment anticipated in the town centre, making it more attractive to a wider range of potential users. It will also improve the strategic highway network and customer safety.	+

<b>Car Parking Option 2 - Rationalise Current Car Park Provision</b>	There are some car parks that could be redeveloped as they are not well used and are in less accessible locations. The current stopping arrangements would remain and any future issues would be addressed outside of the plan making process. This would not mean that current levels are reduced by may mean further operators are deterred from the centre.	?
<b>Car Parking Option 4 - Standards for Off-Street Car Parking Charges</b>	The Council has an approach which is not implemented consistently by all car parks, which results in some car parks not meeting the needs of Town Centre visitors, impacting on the health of the centre. Having standards would result in a more attractive car parking offer to customers and businesses. Controlling the price may result in a loss of competition which may mean some car parks chose to close. Also means that car parking that is for developments, also serves the Town Centre as a whole, and that linked trips are encouraged supporting the centre economy.	0
<b>Approach Option 2 - Vision and Land Use Policies for "Big Three" and Park Street</b>	There is already an established approach in the UDP and BCCS of promoting particular types of land uses in certain locations in the Town Centre, and the AAP could continue and further develop this approach. Focusing on specific uses should result in a stronger town centre, with developments only being delivered in the locations which are most appropriate. This would allow clarity on how the BCCS targets would be met.	+
<b>Old Square Option 1 - No Land Use Change</b>	This would help to deliver the BCCS targets for retail floor space and protect the core of the Town Centre. This will help to deliver the targets for retail floor space and protect the core of the town centre. It may mean that the units remain vacant for longer but a flexible approach is already applied to alternative uses within the centre will minimising this risk.	++
<b>Old Square Option 2 - Expand/ Redevelop with Larger Retail Units</b>	This could help to attract retailers seeking larger unit sizes which are not generally available elsewhere in the Town Centre, therefore enhancing the overall shopping experience and vitality of the Town Centre.	++
<b>Shannon's Mill Option 1 - No Land Use Change to Front Site</b>	This would continue the current approach towards the site. This would provide a retail development opportunity close to the current retail offer. This would help deliver the retail floor space but could stretch the retail offer across a larger area resulting in vacancies in the heart of the centre as there may not be enough retail demand to support the number of units. This may mean the site remain undeveloped for some time as there could be limited demand for retail on the site	+
<b>Shannon's Mill Option 2 - Identify Rear Site as Mixed Use Development Opportunity</b>	The site has remained undeveloped for some time with limited retailer interest. Identifying other potential land uses may therefore be the best way to bring the site forward. This would allow the front end to be used as retail whilst the rear is developed for another use. This has the potential to maximise the site potential but would mean that the rear couldn't be developed for retail, this may restrict the size of retail development that could fit on the site	+
<b>Shannon's Mill Option 3 - Identify Whole Site as Mixed Use Development Opportunity</b>	Shannon's Mill is on the edge of the Primary Shopping Area and there has been little retail interest in the site over recent years, meaning that other potential uses for the site need to be considered. This would allow for more flexibility and could result in the site coming forward faster. Some uses may support the surrounding retail uses such as leisure or residential. It could however result in a retail opportunity site being lost	+
<b>Gigaport Option 1 - Identify as Walsall's Main Business/ Office</b>	The Gigaport has been identified for some time as the preferred location for office development in the Town Centre. This area has the potential to develop as a business district where offices can locate close to each other in an attractive	+

<b>Development Location</b>	planned environment. Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. There may be some increase in traffic along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion and some increase in emissions in the area. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme.	
<b>Gigaport Option 3 - Identify Land Adjacent to Littleton Street as Phase One</b>	These sites are the most prominent sites in the Town Centre, and their successful delivery could provide a catalyst for further investment in office developments in the same area. These sites are the most prominent and their successful delivery will provide impetus for further investment. However focusing on these sites could lead to other less prominent sites remaining undeveloped for longer periods of time.	+
<b>Waterfront North Option 1 - Allocate for Leisure Uses</b>	When the Issues & Options were identified in 2013 there was a proposal for a cinema and other leisure uses at this site. Waterfront area is near to the PSA and near to the railway station, so concentrating leisure uses in this area will complement the range of land uses already available in the vicinity, having positive effects on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. It would also have wider benefits for visitors and local communities, as it would mean that new leisure developments would be developed in the most accessible location in Walsall, near to public transport hubs. Should also have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area.	++
<b>Waterfront Lex Option 3 - Allocate for Any Town Centre Uses/ Mixed Uses</b>	The site is potentially suitable for a variety of land uses including housing or “town centre” uses. Waterfront North would be promoted as the key opportunity for strategic leisure developments. The area is a good location for leisure facilities, in close proximity to the Art Gallery, with the potential for an enhanced canal side environment, and good public transport links. However dismissing other investment on this site may mean that some investment is not secured in the town centre.	+
<b>Park Street Option 1 - Allocate Park Street Area as Walsall's Main Retail Development Location</b>	Park Street is the main shopping street in the Town Centre where most of the main retail outlets are located, and is the core of the Primary Shopping Area. The maximum benefit of the canal side frontage may not be realised, but a mixed use scheme may ensure deliverability of the site.	++
<b>Park Street Option 2 - Allocate Park Place and Saddlers' Centre as Walsall's Main Retail Development Location</b>	These two shopping centres are the main sites in the Park Street area with potential for new retail development. Both centres have a number of vacant units and there is potential for redevelopment/ reconfiguration to provide new retail opportunities. Retail investment is focused on Park Street and the retail heart of the town is maintained.	?
<b>Secondary Sites Option 1 - Allocate Secondary Sites as Development Opportunities</b>	There are a number of sites outside the “Big Three” and Park Street which would be suitable for investment and which would benefit the town centre if developed. This could conflict with the priorities but the policy can mitigate against this by requirements proposals to complement the regeneration strategy in the AAP. Identifying the sites may help them come forward and attract further investment in the centre.	+
<b>Flood Risk Management Option 2 - Site-by-Site Approach to Water</b>	It is possible to manage flood risk on a site-by-site basis by applying existing national policy guidance and local plan policies. Developers would need to provide drainage on a site by site basis, limiting the potential for more sustainable	+

<b>Management</b>	and innovative solutions to water management given site constraints including the land available for such solutions. There would be little benefit to the operation of the overall drainage network.	
<b>Constraints Option 1 - Policy on Development Constraints in the Town Centre</b>	There are a number of development constraints in the Town Centre and these can have a direct impact on the viability of schemes. It may be helpful for the AAP to identify these and provide guidance to developers on the main priorities and requirements.	+

## **Appraisal of Preferred Option Plan**

The appraisal of AAP Policies has taken into account the potential effects of environmental and physical assets and constraints, and information obtained from other sources such as land availability assessments and the outcomes of the Deliverability and Viability Assessments commissioned from consultants. As with the SAD, the assessors took into account the effects of existing local plan policies which would apply to any new planning applications for development in the Town Centre. Such policies could therefore reasonably be expected to control many of the environmental, economic and social effects likely to arise as a result of the proposals identified in the AAP.

### **Overview of Appraisal Results**

The table on the following page summarises the outcomes of the final appraisal of the AAP Policies completed in January 2016 prior to publication, the main effects identified in the appraisal, and the proposals for mitigation of the harmful effects identified through the AAP in combination with existing local plan policies, where feasible, or through other mechanisms where these are more appropriate or more likely to be effective. The paragraphs following summarise the types of effects identified in the appraisal, as required in Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations, and how they have been addressed.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
<b>2. Walsall Town Centre</b>			
Policy AAP1: Walsall Town Centre Boundary	<b>+</b>	The proposed changes to the boundary will allow expansion of "town centre" uses in areas where there is more likely to be a market demand for them, and in areas where there is likely to be space for them, while excluding areas of industry and other land uses that are less appropriate in the a town centre. This will also help create conditions for expanding the range of facilities and services available in the strategic centre, making it more attractive for residents and visitors, and therefore more competitive with other centres of a similar size and scale. As the Town Centre is a highly accessible location it may also reduce the distance people need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure.	There is potential for increased visitors to generate more traffic and congestion and related air quality problems, which would need to be addressed through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). There may also be a need for more effective management of road traffic through the Town Centre (Policy AAPT4). There is also potential for new developments to be vulnerable to air pollution, flood risk and other climate change effects, depending on where development would take place. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Part a) of Policy AAPI7 addresses floodrisk in the town centre and there is reference throughout the site tables to this issue to ensure it is mitigated against where possible. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre along with the implementation of policy AAPLV5.
<b>3. A Place for Shopping</b>			
Policy AAPS1: Primary Shopping Area	<b>++</b>	Likely to have positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible.	This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive overall however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The Characterisation Study will also help to mitigate against this by protecting areas of

			character. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The policy also requires any retail development that cannot be accommodated in the centre to apply the sequential approach and be as well linked with the PSA as possible. Furthermore any new developments for town centre uses which generate a significant amount of visitors are also expected to improve links to PSA and to show they do not have a negative impact on the PSA in terms of investment and footfall ensuring that the heart of the centre is strong and that all large new developments in the centre are well linked and accessible.
Policy AAPS2: New Retail Development	+	Likely to have positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. Providing new retail targets to the BCCS targets allows the plan to remain ambitious but also be more realistic about the amount of floor space to plan for which should have a more positive economic impact than unachievable targets which could mean the retail offer is spread out resulting in increased vacancies within the PSA. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible.	This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The Characterisation Study will also help to mitigate against this by protecting areas of character. The sites identified in part ii) have been chosen as they have more potential for change that will have a positive impact on the character of Walsall without impacting negatively on buildings which have a strong character or a historic listing. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
Policy AAPS3: The New Walsall Market	+	Likely to have positive effects overall, by investing in the market at the most accessible location in the centre this should have positive impacts on the markets sustainability and the economy of the centre. Brining life into the centre of town should also support the surrounding uses and	None identified

		bring vitality to the centre. The market is a historic part of the centres character and ensuring its future should have a positive impact of the centres cultural heritage as well as overall townscape. The investment in public realm and the ability of the area to be used for community events and performances should also have an impact in encouraging more visitors and further investment in the surrounding areas.	
<b>4. A Place for Business</b>			
Policy AAPB1: Office Development	0	Likely to have positive effects overall, Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. The policy also allows for schemes to come forward in other areas where it is demonstrated there will be no impact on the delivery of Gigaport.	There may be some increase in traffic along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion and some increase in emissions in the area. Policy AAPT4 looks to address this through proposed road improvements on the ring road. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The impact on townscape is also unknown for those sites which come forward outside of Gigaport as new large new office blocks in none office areas could impact on character. The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address this potential impact.
Policy AAPB2: Social Enterprise Zone	+	The current social enterprise will hopefully grow offering more opportunities for skills to help young people access work. Other social enterprises focussing on different needs will also be encouraged into area. The policy also allows for social enterprises to come forward in other locations that mean some of the impacts on townscape, traffic and air pollution are more uncertain.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre. The policy itself also promotes the re-use of buildings

			for social enterprises reducing further any impact on the centres character.
Policy AAPB3: Town Centre Employment Land	+	This policy identifies, allocates and safeguards land that could be released from employment to town centre uses because they are constrained and isolated, and surrounded by non-employment uses, making them less suitable for industry in the long term. However they currently provide a good source of local quality employment, and should only be released subject to Core Strategy Policy DEL2, and when it is clear it will no longer be required for industry. However it is also the case that should industry vacate these sites, there will be benefits in local amenity, given that most of these sites are surrounded by housing. It will also help to deliver the town centre uses needed to ensure the future of Walsall town centre.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre.
<b>5. A Place for Leisure</b>			
Policy AAPLE1: New Leisure Development	+	The waterfront area has traditionally been the area promoted as the key site for leisure investment in the town centre. Directing leisure uses here will provide an attractive area of leisure uses located together, improving viability of individual elements and creating an attractive area of public space. Should have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area. The policy also allows for leisure uses elsewhere to Waterfront where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact on delivering the Waterfront scheme. This provides opportunities for leisure development with jeopardising the cinema scheme resulting in an overall positive benefit. The impacts of leisure schemes in other locations on the townscape and traffic along with other site specific issues will not be known until a scheme comes forward.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre. The policy includes a number of points on drive-through facilities to reduce the impact these have on the town centre in terms of promoting use by private car and not be accessible by pedestrians. The policy looks to ensure leisure uses are safe and secure places reducing some of the potential negative impacts some leisure uses can have on the amenity of residents. This policy also connects to Policy AAPLE4 and AAPIN4 which look to protect the historic and natural environment of the canal mitigating against any potential negative impacts of leisure

			development at Waterfront.
Policy AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities	+	This policy will have positive impacts by protecting and enhancing current cultural and sports facilities in the centre it allows the community to access these facilities providing health and wellbeing benefits. Investing in these facilities should also encourage more visitors to the centre with potential for linked trips. Many of these buildings positively contribute to the historic character of the centre and the overall townscape. The policy will have positive impacts by providing the opportunity for a new consolidated Heritage Centre. This would bring the less accessible local history centre into the town centre and support the Walsall museum through relocating it as part of Walsall Leather Museum. This will create a larger visitor attraction in the centre which should encourage more users of the facilities and more visitors to the centre overall.	The site is on the Ring Road so there may be some uncertain impact from air quality also the new facility may generate more traffic than the current facilities into one location. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Also Policy AAPT4 looks to address any road capacity issues through proposed road improvements on the ring road.
Policy AAPLE3: Hotel, Conference and Banqueting Provision	+	As there is currently no evidenced demand a number of suitable locations have been proposed which means some of the impacts are uncertain. However such facilities will support the office developments proposed and also the college.	Some of the sites is on the Ring Road so there may be some uncertain impact from air quality also the new facility may generate more traffic than the current facilities into one location. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Also Policy AAPT4 looks to address any road capacity issues through proposed road improvements on the ring road. The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre.
Policy AAPLE4: Walsall	+	Increased canal side activities should have a positive impact overall as it creates a more desirable leisure attraction bringing further investment and visitors to the	There are uncertain impacts on the biodiversity and water quality as increased activity may have some impact, however more activity should mean the environment is better maintained as

Canal		centre. There are also positive impacts on the on townscape and character of the centre as the canal provides a key feature in the centre. The improved pedestrian and cycle access along the canal will ensure it provides a key pedestrian and cycle link to and from the centre to residential areas and the Manor hospital. This has positive impacts on how people access the centre, the health of the community and how sustainable the centre is	part of surrounding developments and uses. The policy along with AAPINV4 and AAPINV7 look to protect the natural environment and water quality. There are uncertain impacts on the increased costs to developers but generally ensuring the canal remains a pleasant and functioning environment will have positive impacts overall as it attracts investment and people to the centre.
<b>6. A Place for Living</b>			
AAPLV1: Residential Developmen ts	+	Increasing housing in the town centre is generally positive to the viability and viability of the town centre as it increases users of town centre services, provided it is not located so as to jeopardise the centre's retail and commercial functions. Two sites are allocated for residential-only development, these are currently industrial sites in residential areas, so should the industry relocate and sites be converted to residential use this will have a positive impact on these sites and the surrounding housing. The policy also encourages residential use at upper floors and the conversion of existing buildings, both of which are positive to the vitality of the town centre. Setting standards for the environment of residential developments should have an overall positive effect on the quality of life of residents, including ensuring high quality, secure and accessible environments.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed
AAPLV2: Education	+	The policy encourages higher and further education facilities and ancillary accommodation across the town centre in suitable locations, and provides standards to ensure that any new educational development is high quality design, accessible and relates well to the rest of the	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is a Grade II listed building within the site which the policy justification states should be brought back into use reducing the impact of the allocation on the historic

		town centre.	character of the centre.
AAPLV3: Health Care Facilities	+	The policy supports new and existing healthcare facilities in the town centre and aims to stop such facilities from leaving the town centre. The centre is the most accessible location in the borough for such facilities. Manor hospital is an important healthcare facility that has recently undergone significant investment, its location in close proximity to the town centre should be emphasised and encouraged as the hospital is easily accessible by public transport. Uses which will further support the hospital are encouraged within the town centre.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
AAPLV4: Community Facilities	+	Protecting existing community facilities will stop the loss of any key facilities within the town centre. The centre is the most accessible location in the borough for such facilities. A single location for combined community facilities will benefit Walsall's residents by bringing together a number of facilities into a single, accessible hub.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
AAPLV5: Protecting and Enhancing Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness	+	Generally positive as the policy proposes quality design of new buildings to strengthen the town centre's heritage and identity, which will have positive impacts on the townscape of the centre. Attractive buildings and environments will have positive impacts on the economy of the town centre. The policy sets criteria for the design of buildings which affect heritage assets, which will have a positive impact on ensuring high standards of design in sensitive locations.	The policy resists the harm or loss of buildings of historic interest which is positive to strengthening the historic character of the town centre. However it may be that such buildings are considered unviable for conversion and therefore they may become derelict which would be unattractive and therefore negative to the townscape of the town.
AAPLV6: Securing Good Design	++	Setting standards for good design of new buildings should have positive effects on the townscape of the centre, as well as cultural heritage, accessibility, and climate change mitigation and energy consumption. Attractive buildings and environments will have positive impacts on the	It may be that such design criteria could increase costs of development, impacting on viability.

		economy of the town centre.	
AAPLV7: Enhancing Public Realm	++	Maintaining existing and improved environment and public realm of the town centre will ensure the continued positive impacts on the townscape and identity of the area, and is likely to increase the attractiveness of the town centre for both investment and users, thereby improving the economy of the town.	Discussions will need to be undertaken with developers to understand how this policy can be implemented without impacting on scheme viability.
AAPLV8: Environmental Infrastructure	++	Protecting the existing environmental infrastructure assets will have a number of positive impacts including on the townscape and landscape of the town centre, providing open space and access routes have positive impacts on accessibility and biodiversity. Setting standards for environmental infrastructure for new developments will have positive impacts on biodiversity, air quality and climate change. Furthermore if renewable energy schemes are delivered the effect is likely to be positive as it reduces waste, creates renewable energy, good reduce energy bills for communities and will have wider environmental impacts.	It is possible that such standards could increase the costs of a development and therefore impact on scheme viability.
<b>7. Transport, Movement and Accessibility</b>			
AAPT1: Pedestrian Movement, Access and Linkages	++	This policy is likely to have a positive impact, by improving linkages throughout the centre there are more opportunities for linked trips and increased spending throughout the centre as people find it easier to navigate from one destination to another, this is especially the case for strengthen the Primary Shopping Area. The improvements across the Ring Road will also help the Gigaport proposals support other uses such as retail and	There is some uncertain impact on cultural heritage as some improvements may result in more signage or changes to historic layouts of the centre. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.

		leisure as office workers find it easier to access the entire centre. It can also make the centre more sustainable as people find public transport easier to use as well as walking and cycling becoming a more desirable option. The policy specifically looks to ensure that new developments are accessible for those with limited mobility.	
AAPT2: Cycling	++	This is likely to have a positive impact, protecting the cycle routes ensures the centre remains cycle friendly promoting this healthy and sustainable mode of transport. Protecting the current cycle parking is also positive as it supports the use of the cycle routes and people commuting to work or to public transport hubs then travelling on to other areas for work.	There could be some cost of developers who are required to provide cycle parking but this will be minimal and have no impact on overall positive impact of an accessible centre.
AAPT3: Public Transport	++	The allocation of Bradford Place Interchange is likely to have a positive impact overall, the ability of the centre to cater for bus services that make Walsall town centre as accessible as possible is crucial to the centre viability. Many people access the centre by bus for work, shopping, leisure and to access other public transport hubs. The allocation of Station Street Car Park for the expansion of the train station to include rapid transit is likely to have a positive impact overall through connecting the strategic centres to each other and making Walsall as accessible as possible. Ensuring the centre is accessible reduces car dependency and emissions.	There will be some impact on the businesses that will need to relocate for the expansion of Bradford Place but this should be short term and the Council will manage the process so the impact is as small as possible. This will be likely outweighed by the improved bus services which bring more footfall to the area in an improved environment. There will be some uncertain impact on the townscape as some buildings may need to be demolished. The improved public realm and attractiveness of the area should help to outweigh these negative impacts. There will also be some uncertain impact on the townscape around the station street area which could impact on the historic character of some of the buildings on the street. However given the run down nature of Station Street investment in the station is likely to attract further investment in the access to the station and properties/development opportunities on Station Street which will have a positive impact overall.  Ensuring the centre has a good bus service is also good for the environment as it reduces car dependency, so whilst there may

			be some increase in air pollution within that area the overall decrease in emissions will have a positive impact. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed
AAPT4: Road Improvements	+	In balance this policy will have a positive impact, by identifying improvements to the road network this will help secure any funding available preventing the congestion and access issue to road network from deterring future investment and visitors from the centre. By improving the road network more development could be attracted to the centre especially within the Gigaport area. The better moving the traffic is the less impact on air pollution there is along the corridor although there may be an increase in car emissions overall resulting in the impact being unknown.	There may be some developer contributions sought for road improvements but these would be set at a level that will have no impact on schemes viability.
AAPT5: Car Parking	+	This will enable car parks to support investment anticipated in the town centre, making it more attractive to a wider range of potential users therefore having an overall positive impact. It will also improve the strategic highway network and improve users safety.	<p>There will be some negative impacts as this may attract more people into the centre by car resulting in more emissions. These impacts are considered to be outweighed by the overall negative impact of investors and visitors being put off from Walsall because the centre does not have the right parking to meet customer needs. A reduction in investment and spending in the centre will have an impact on all elements of the centre including the overall economy of Walsall. This may mean there is increased car usage but as the centre is the most accessible location in the centre to meet the needs for the community for shopping, leisure and work improving access to the centre is considered the most sustainable approach.</p> <p>There are some uncertain impacts on the health of the communities from the possible reduction in air quality, however ensuring the centre is accessible including for those with mobility issues should have a positive impact of equalities as this ensure</p>

			<p>town centre services and facilities are accessible. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The Council is also currently consulting on a SPD with the aim of improving air quality.</p> <p>There is also an uncertain impact on the townscape as a new multi storey car park could change the character of an area and be a difficult development in integrate with the urban fabric. However the Characterisation Study has helped to shape the policies reducing the potential impact on the character of the centre.</p> <p>There is also some counter mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3) which should help to balance out any increase in car usage.</p>
<b>8. A Place for Investment</b>			
AAPINV1: Regeneration Strategy	<b>++</b>	<p>The resistance of proposals that are not in accordance with the regeneration strategy in the AAP should have an overall positive impact as these proposals could be detrimental to the delivery of priority sites and uses such as the Primary Shopping Area for retail or the Gigaport for offices. The use of temporary permissions will have a positive impact as it allows development to come forward without having a long term impact on delivering the regeneration strategy. This provides a positive economic impact in the short term and in the long term. This means less sites remain undeveloped in the short term having a positive impact on the townscape of the centre.</p> <p>Requirements for developments to be comprehensive, address highway impacts and have consideration of the character of the area and be of high design will have</p>	<p>It may mean that some sites remain vacant for longer but this will be outweighed by the knock on impacts of a successful regeneration strategy which will result in more investment overall. This possible delay in sites coming forward means there is an uncertain impact on the townscape. Some of the requirements may add additional costs to developers however, this is likely to be limited and the improvement to the centre overall is likely to be a positive. There is also an uncertain impact on biodiversity and geodiversity from the greening of vacant sites as whilst this will have a short term benefit the ultimate development of such sites will mean this benefit is limited.</p>

		positive impacts by ensuring that schemes make the best use of land and are high quality. It also looks to create a town centre that is accessible and attractive, encouraging further investment. Also requiring cleared or vacant sites to be managed and looked after, including possible greening of such sites, will have an overall positive impact as this provides environmental and visual improvements to the centre.	
AAPINV2: St. Matthew's Quarter	+	This policy will have a positive impact, St Matthew's has secured some delivery in the area already but further is needed to secure the future of the area as a retail destination and to secure the delivery of the planned investment. Proving larger retail units will attract further investment. Creating active retail frontages and allowing a flexible approach to other uses that support not prejudice the retail function will help to create a lively and attractive shopping destination. This will help to deliver the targets for retail floor space and protect the core of the town centre. Such uses may generate more car trips and the related negative impacts however the closer the stores locate to the rest of the centre the more accessible they are encouraging the use of public transport and reducing the need to travel. Finally the use of the Shannon's Mill site for other town centre use or a mix of centre uses will have a positive impact bringing investment and life into the area. Uses such as residential will mean there is more footfall in the area and increased natural surveillance making the area feel safer. Live/work units could connect well with the social enterprise area and provide a new form a living in the centre.	Whilst this is likely to result in changes to the townscape much of this area will benefit from updating and the areas have been identified for the ability for change that will positively impact on the towns character. As the policy provides a degree of flexibility over uses many of the impacts are uncertain as there is no certainty over the proposed use and scale. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.
AAPINV3: Walsall	+	Allocating sites for office development will have a positive impact overall as it will attract investment and create jobs.	There are some uncertain impacts from the generation of car parking and the location of Gigaport on the road network. The

Gigaport		<p>It will also help diversify the economy of Walsall overall. Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. This policy will have a positive impact as it looks to provide a desirable, accessible and high quality businesses environment that meets the needs of workers and the community whilst attracting further investment. There are also policy requirements that look to improve linkages to public transport and encourage electric car use and cycle use which help to mitigate some of the impacts on the ring road location and increased traffic generating by more people accessing the area. There may be some additional costs to developers but this negative is outweighed by the positive impact of a more desirable location that attracts visitors and investors.</p>	<p>centre is still the most accessible location and provides opportunities for more sustainable modes of transport which limits the negative impact of traffic increase. This is why there are allocations for improved linkages to encourage the use of public transport to the Gigaport. Some developments may need to be set away from the road or been designed in a way to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p> <p>Whilst a retail store in the Gigaport location could have less negative impacts than an out-of-centre development it is one of lesser sequential sites and does not relate as positively with the Primary Shopping Area as some other sites identified, meaning it could draw some footfall away from the retail core especially if it has its own car parking that doesn't serve the centre as a whole. The economic impact is therefore uncertain. The proposal would therefore need to show that other benefits could be delivered that would reduce any negative impact on the centre such as the development of the car park and/or community hub. The location of a retail unit here could also generate more car trips and congestion on the busy ring road.</p>
AAPINV4: Walsall Waterfront	+	<p>The waterfront area has traditionally been the area promoted as the key site for leisure investment in the town centre. Directing leisure uses here will provide an attractive area of leisure uses located together, improving viability of individual elements and creating an attractive area of public space. Should have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area. As Lex has been allocated for a mix of uses it is not possible to say what all the impacts will be. Generally there is a positive impact from securing investment in a</p>	<p>Lex site is located on the road network so some uses may need to be sited away from the road. The location does have the potential to create a high quality development. There is a need to ensure the development is accessible and that links along the canal are improved. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p>

		key site. The allocation of sites for residential within an already residential area will have positive impacts as it provides a high quality living environment. It also means that the former uses of industry have relocated away from housing. More housing in the centre helps supports the centre vitality and will increase demand for leisure uses. Centre living is sustainable and should help to reduce car trips as there is access to public transport.	
AAPINV5: Park Street Shopping Core	++	This policy will have a positive approach by maximising the retail potential of the area and ensuring it provides a high quality shopping environment. This will help to attract further investment in retail and in other uses such as leisure and increase the number of visitors. The strength of the retail core determines how Walsall performs and competes with other centres for investment and spending. This approach will have a positive impact on the townscape as there are less vacant units and investment in the public realm. The use of upper floors also brings more life to buildings meaning they are better looked after. It also makes the best use of the land in the centre.	The uncertain impacts are around air quality and climate change as improvements to the shopping offer should result in more people visiting the centre. The town centre and especially the Park Street area are very accessible and are served by public transport hubs which should mean that the impact is less than the investment in shopping locating in a less accessible locations which will generate more trips. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
AAPINV6: Secondary Developmen t Sites	++	This policy will have a positive impact as it should result in more sites being developed in the centre that support the priority sites identified and the regeneration strategy. Many of the sites identified as secondary development opportunities are Council car parks which are considered surplus or consider for release industrial land, meaning that the best use will be made of developed land in Walsall town centre bring in into life for town centre uses. This policy looks to protect the role of the centre and to make the best use of land ensuring where possible town centre uses are delivered. This is considered to have a positive impact on communities and the economy.	As these are secondary sites the uses and scale are less well known so there are some uncertain impacts in terms of traffic generation, air pollution, impact on cultural heritage. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre and the air quality policy will mitigate any negative impacts on development proposals. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.

<p>AAPINV7: Addressing Potential Site Constraints</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>The policy on floodrisk, water quality and air quality operates in conjunction with UDP policies and incorporate the latest national guidance. The likely effects of the policy are positive providing opportunities for improvements to biodiversity, townscape and landscape and mitigating against the effects of climate change, water and air pollution and managing the risk of flooding. The noise policy should reduce any conflict between uses such as residential and leisure, resulting in the best use of land in the centre. The land contamination part of the policy will have an overall positive impact as it looks to ensure that any ground contamination is remediated to an acceptable level. This will enable development to go ahead on sites where there is contamination and will have knock on impacts for the environment of the centre. This will also have positive impacts on the health of communities. The minerals policy is likely to have positive effect, because it would not prevent essential non-mineral development from taking place where there would be no impact on winnable mineral resources, and where winnable minerals are present and it is feasible to extract them.</p>	<p>There are some uncertain impacts on the economy of the centre because it may mean that the design costs more or that the site is not able to be fully developed as a result of having to be set back from the road due to air quality. This may also have some impact on the townscape. Although there are economic advantages to managing flood risk the effectiveness of the policy is influenced by viability and on the whole the benefits of operating the policy are considered to be neutral. There are also some uncertain impacts on the economy of the centre because the cost of remediation is a real barrier to developer viability. However development would not be able to come forward is contamination was not remediated and this would have a larger negative impact on the centre overall. The Council is committed to working with developers to overcome barriers to development.</p>
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## SA Stage Four: Publication - Appraisal of Final Plan

### Update on Options

Following the Preferred Option Stage the plans have been reviewed in light of the consultation representations received.

The main SAD options that were identified or modified after the Preferred Option are as follows

- Further options relating to **affordable and special needs housing**. Option 2, including a new policy in the SAD to provide up-to-date guidance on meeting requirements for affordable housing in Walsall.
- Further options dealing with **Gypsies and Traveller Sites**, to provide a reduced requirement that is in accord with a revised accommodation assessment.
- Further options covering **brick clay extraction** (in the Minerals section).
- Further options in relation to mitigating the effect of developments on Cannock Chase SAC

In relation to the AAP there were no further options identified. One option which was rejected at the Preferred Option stage is now the option being proposed in the publication plan. The Preferred Option for community facilities was to allocate for a community hub. However, no consultation responses were received during Preferred Option stage to support this and there is a significant question over the deliverability of such a use. Therefore the option being pursued in the Publication plan is to provide criteria for a community hub and suggest an ideal location rather than allocate a site and risk leaving making the site undeliverable for alternative uses.

### Update on Policies

There have been no new or deleted policies in the SAD Draft Plan compared with the Preferred option

### Amended Policies

The Draft Plan has some slight substantive amendments to the following policies compared with the Preferred Option (as opposed to grammatical or simple clarifications to the wording):

HC3, HC4

LC5

EN1, EN2, EN4

M1-M9.

SLC1

UW1

W1-W4

T4

Following the Preferred Options consultation a number of minor changes have been made to the wording of AAP policies. No additional policies have been included and none have been removed. Also none of the policy updates have changed the overall SA appraisal results. Where additional parts have been added to policies these have been appraised and included in the detailed AAP appraisal of policies.

## **Conclusions**

The table on the following page provides an overview of the appraisals of the policies in both the SAD and AAP under the main headings of the main SA report findings.

	<b>SAD</b>	<b>AAP</b>
<b>Positive Effects</b>	<p>There will be positive effects because of the concentration of development in areas that are in need of regeneration. Policies HC1 and HC2 will allocate and direct housing to locations close to facilities that can be reached on foot, including specialist housing, in areas that have a high degree of deprivation (HC3) and to meet the needs of gypsies and travellers (HC4). Local centres policies dovetail with this by protecting facilities with easy reach of the widest range of people.</p> <p>Industry is also protected and largely allocated in these areas (IND1-5) that are suffering high unemployment.</p>	<p>Many of the policies have a significant impact in terms of SA Objective 6 Economy and centres as they look to concentrate and attract investment in Walsall supporting businesses and providing jobs. As well as economic positives impacts the AAP includes a number of policies which have significant positive impacts in terms of SA Objective 9 Landscape and Townscape. For example policies AAPLV5, AAPLV6 and AAPLV7 look to protect and enhance the historic environment of the centre whilst requiring good design and improvements to public realm. A number of the policies also have significant positive effects on SA objective 12 Soil and Ground Contamination as the town centre is brownfield and in some areas contaminated the allocation of sites for development will result in ground contamination being cleared. Naturally a number of the transport policies have significant positive impacts on SA Objective 13 Transport and Accessibility as they look to make the town centre which is already very accessible even more accessible by sustainable modes of transport through for example improvements to the bus station and pedestrian access.</p>
<b>Negative Effects</b>	<p>Some industrial and waste management sites are close to people living deprived areas, who could also suffer poorer air quality on balance. Some residents could also be affected by increased traffic from industrial developments and mineral extraction. However, existing policies from the UDP and BCC can mitigate and regulate industry close to housing.</p>	<p>Whilst no significant negative effects were identified the following negative effects have been:</p> <p>Policy AAPT3 part a) which allocated Bradford Place for expansion has a potential negative impact on SA objective 5 Cultural Heritage as the development will potentially result in the loss of some surrounding buildings of character. This should however, be mitigated in some parts by the overall</p>

		<p>improvements to the area through a better functioning bus station with improved public realm and linkages.</p> <p>Policy AAPT5 part a) which allocates for the delivery of a new multi-storey car park has been identified as having a potential negative impact on SA objective 1 Air Quality and SA Objective 3 Climate Change as it can be seen as promoting car usage and increasing the level of emissions. This will be mitigated against to some extent by other policies in the AAP which looks to promote public transport and cycling. The policy also looks to promote recharging facilities for low emission vehicles. The council is also undertaking a consultation on a Air Quality SPD which looks to address air quality issues, especially as a result of transport emissions.</p> <p>Policy AAPINV3 which addresses car parking at Gigaport has been identified as having a potentially negative impact on SA objective 1 Air Quality and SA Objective 3 Climate Change as it can be seen as promoting car usage and increasing the level of emissions. The policy has also been identified as having a potential negative impact on SA objective 9 Landscape and Townscape as car parking is not necessary the most positive use of land and can have a negative impact on an areas character. This should however be mitigated through the design process of the application and through the policies within the AAP which require a comprehensive approach to schemes, strong frontages and good design.</p>
<p><b>Potential Risk to Human</b></p>	<p>There could be localised effects on air quality and noise on some residents in some areas from industry, though this depends on the type of</p>	<p>The key potential risk to human health is from air quality through development in areas of exceedence and the increase</p>

<b>Health</b>	industrial development. They can be mitigated through the operation of 'bad neighbour' policies that impose conditions relating to the operation of industry.	in traffic as a result of more people being attracted to the centre. The AAP looks to mitigate through applying BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality which ensures that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The council is also undertaking a consultation on an Air Quality SPD which looks to address air quality issues, especially as a result of transport emissions.
<b>Potential Risk to the Environment</b>	The plan essentially carries forward the implementation of a pattern of development that is environmentally sustainable, as it is based on the re-use of brownfield land, and because the location and protection of facilities close to where people live. But there are risks particularly on biodiversity, amenity, landscape, flood risk connected with the restoration of mineral extraction at several sites in the north and east of the Borough.	Further development in the town centre has a number of potential impacts on the environment. The Council is proactive at working with developers and landowners to address such issues and AAP Policy AAPINV7 provides the information to developers to allow these to be fully considered. The policy covers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood risk</li> <li>• Water Quality</li> <li>• Air Quality</li> <li>• Noise Pollution</li> <li>• Ground Contamination and Ground Conditions</li> <li>• Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA)</li> </ul> Therefore none of the impacts are considered to be significant and the plan looks to mitigate against these and in some cases such as water quality actually implement improvements through ensuring new development improved biodiversity near waterbodies.
<b>Probability/certainty</b>	There are some uncertain effects connected with mineral extraction proposals.	In some cases the potential effects of AAP Policies on the SA Objectives are uncertain, as they depend on factors outside the

		<p>control of the plan, such as whether planning applications for development will actually come forward in the locations identified for investment, and the effectiveness of existing national policy guidance and local plan policies in preventing harmful effects from any development that does take place. The plan has deliberately developed to have a degree of flexibility to meet market demands whilst giving clear guidance to ensure high quality schemes. This means however that in some cases it's not always possible to identify all the impacts. There is a limit to the extent to which the effects of development can be identified in the SA of a local plan, because some effects can only be determined with confidence at the planning application stage. To assist prospective applicants, AAP Policy AAPINV7 identifies some of the most common constraints affecting sites in the Town Centre and explains how they should be addressed in planning applications to prevent, manage and mitigate any harmful effects likely to arise, including how relevant BCCS and UDP policies will be applied.</p>
<p><b>Likely Duration/ Frequency/ Reversibility of Effects</b></p>	<p>The SAD is a long-term plan and covers the same period as the BCCS. The policies will therefore be in effect until 2026 or until such time as they are replaced by a new local plan. The developments proposed in the SAD will not be implemented all at the same time, but will be built progressively over the remainder of the plan period. The duration of the effects will also vary according to the type of development and the operations involved. For example, effects from construction and land remediation processes will be temporary, whereas the operational effects of developments once they</p>	<p>The AAP is a long-term plan and covers the same period as the BCCS. The policies will therefore be in effect until 2026 or until such time as they are replaced by a new local plan. The developments proposed in the AAP will not be implemented all at the same time, but will be built progressively over the remainder of the plan period. The duration of the effects will also vary according to the type of development and the operations involved. For example, effects from construction and land remediation processes will be temporary, whereas the operational effects of developments once they are built will be mostly permanent and irreversible, although sites may be subject to further redevelopment over the long-term,</p>

	are built will be mostly permanent and irreversible, although sites may be subject to further redevelopment over the long-term, depending on the future demand for land and development	depending on the future demand for land and development.
<b>Secondary effects</b>	<p>Development on sites already affected by industrial and mining legacy problems) may have secondary effects on adjacent land if there is a risk of contaminants migrating via underground voids or of further effects on ground stability.</p> <p>Development in areas vulnerable to flooding could increase risks to adjacent land if they impede water flow, further secondary effects on biodiversity, soils and water are possible on sites affected by industrial and mining legacy, as there is potential for contaminants to enter water bodies during heavy rainfall events.</p> <p>Open air waste management operations and mineral extraction operations may generate a range of secondary effects, including effects from noise, dust and increased HGV traffic, having potential harmful effects on air quality, amenity and highway infrastructure.</p>	<p>The AAP includes policies that look to provide development opportunities for investment which will provide the conditions for improving the range of facilities and services available in the Town Centre, making it more attractive for residents and visitors.</p> <p>Through strengthening the town centre it should result in a reduction in the distance people in Walsall need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure. This could also however lead to congestion and increased air pollution in the centre itself if not effectively managed.</p> <p>Office investment could trigger further investment in retail, leisure and housing as more people work in the centre creating further demand.</p> <p>Social enterprises working in the centre to address the needs of the surrounding community could help address wider social and economic issues in the borough.</p> <p>More housing in the centre may increase demand for services such as GPs</p> <p>Good design can also have a positive impact on energy consumption and climate change mitigation.</p> <p>Improved public transport and cycle facilities could result in a reduction in car usage and a reduction in emissions; however the opposite is likely for improved car parking facilities.</p>

<p><b>Cumulative</b></p>	<p>The main example of potential <b>cumulative</b> effects of the SAD on the SA Objectives is development of new waste management facilities or quarries in areas where there are already existing operations of a similar nature, which could have further cumulative harmful effects on amenity and transport infrastructure</p>	<p>The key cumulative impact is in regards to congestion and air quality as the town centre attracts further development and investment more people will potentially visit the centre with consequences to climate change and health. As stated above through this will be mitigated through improvements to public transport and the implementation of an air quality SPD. Also the more demand and investment there is in the centre the more potential there will be for schemes such as public transport.</p>
<p><b>Inter-relationships</b></p>	<p>Inter-relationships between <b>traffic generation</b> and effects on <b>air quality, amenity</b> and <b>noise</b>, where development is likely to increase road traffic in a road corridor which runs through residential areas and is identified as a NO2 Area of Exceedance and/ or Noise Action Area;</p> <p>Inter-relationships between effects on <b>biodiversity, landscape, climate change resilience</b>, and effects on <b>soil quality</b> and <b>water quality</b> where development that could increase risks from pollution is proposed near to inland waterways and in areas at risk from surface water or fluvial flooding; and</p> <p>Inter-relationships between effects on <b>biodiversity, ground conditions, townscape quality, soil quality</b> and <b>water quality</b> where development is proposed on sites affected by industrial and mining 'legacy'</p>	<p>The key to the relationship between effects is the creation of demand. By attracting investment into the centre, there should be more visitors which in turn acts as a catalyst for further investment. Unfortunately this has some less positive effects such as the increase in traffic and air pollution but the plan provides sufficient mitigation to ensure that in balance the AAP has a positive impact overall.</p>

	issues, near to inland waterways which are identified as wildlife corridors.	
<b>Effects on standards</b>	The general locations and overall quantity of sites allocated for development or designated for protection in the SAD are aimed at delivering the requirements of the BCCS. However, the BCCS was not generally site-specific: there is potential for development in specific locations on sites allocated in the SAD to have effects on national or international standards that could not be identified through the high level appraisal carried out for the BCCS. It is also possible that new effects or standards might have been identified or introduced since the BCCS was prepared.	The general locations and overall quantity of sites allocated for development or designated for protection in the AAP are aimed at delivering the requirements of the BCCS. However, the BCCS was not generally site-specific: there is potential for development in specific locations on sites allocated in the AAP to have effects on national or international standards that could not be identified through the high level appraisal carried out for the BCCS. It is also possible that new effects or standards might have been identified or introduced since the BCCS was prepared.
<b>Trans-boundary</b>	<p>Several large new industrial opportunities that were not in the industrial supply are located close to the boundary with Wolverhampton and Sandwell. It can be expected that residents close to the Walsall boundary will share the employment related benefits;</p> <p>Transport schemes will by their nature have cross boundary effects. The two examples of this are the rapid transit network, connecting Walsall to Wolverhampton and Wednesbury, and the Walsall - Brownhills rail line, which if reinstated could provide cross boundary services to Lichfield in Staffordshire;</p> <p>Potential harmful effects from further mineral extraction in Aldridge (Policies M4 and M5) on</p>	The proposals within the AAP will provide opportunities for further investment in the strategic centre, including in areas where there is likely to be space for new development and more market demand, enabling Walsall Town Centre to compete more effectively with other strategic centres in the area such as Cannock, Wolverhampton, West Bromwich and Sutton Coldfield.

	<p>local communities, businesses and highway infrastructure in adjoining parts of Lichfield District in Staffordshire, as haulage routes for exported sand and gravel could include roads in Staffordshire;</p> <p>Potential beneficial effects from identifying further sources of sand and gravel and brick clay in Walsall, which may reduce the need to import these materials from other areas, in particular, from Staffordshire, which currently supplies more than 60% of the quarried sand and gravel used in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area, and most of the imported clay at Sandown Brickworks;</p> <p>Potential effects from mineral extraction in Brownhills on local communities, businesses and highway infrastructure in adjoining areas of Cannock Chase District in Staffordshire, as coal and fireclay extraction could take place on both sides of the boundary in the Yorks Bridge Area of Search identified in the BCCS and haulage routes for exported coal and fireclay could include roads in Staffordshire;</p> <p>There is the potential for developments within the area covered by EN7: Great Barr Hall and Estate and the former St. Margaret's Hospital to impact on the setting of designated heritage assets outside the borough boundary as well as leading to increased traffic outside the borough in both Sandwell and Birmingham. These would be</p>	
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	mitigated against through the development management process as they are dependent on which locations within the site the development is proposed.	
<b>Significant effects</b>	The appraisal has considered the likely significance/ magnitude of the effects of the SAD Policies on the SA Objectives. The scoring system used in the High Level SA has distinguished between effects that are likely to be positive or negative, which are scored in green with a single plus sign (+) or red with a single minus sign (-), and effects that could be significantly positive or negative, which are scored in dark green with two plus signs (++) or dark red with two minus signs (--). Where significant negative effects have been identified (such as in the case of Policies M8 and M9), the magnitude of the effects on each SA Objective has been evaluated in further detail through the Detailed SA of these policies.	The SA has not identified any significant negative effects from any of the AAP Policies. There are a number of significant positive impacts which have been capture above.
<b>Mitigation Recommendations</b>	Where potential harmful effects have been identified which would not be addressed through application of existing national policy guidance and local plan policy in the BCCS or UDP, the effects have been mitigated through the relevant SAD Policies, where feasible. Table 31 above identifies	The key mitigation needed to address impacts identified through the SA process is the need to address potential increase in air quality and to ensure that schemes are designed in a way to limit the impact of air quality. This is address throughout the AAP.

	<p>the action taken for each SAD Policy, to address the potential effects identified in the SA.</p> <p>Adverse effects of bad neighbour industrial uses will continue to be regulated and mitigated through saved UDP policy JP8 as noted above.</p> <p>The significant harmful effects of Policies M8 and M9 have been mitigated to the extent possible by identifying requirements for provision of supporting information with new or revised applications for mineral extraction, so that the effects will be evaluated in more detail at the appropriate time, and the measures proposed to prevent, manage and mitigate the effects on the environment, amenity and infrastructure can be assessed by the Council's Development Management Team, the Local Highway Authority and other infrastructure providers, and the relevant statutory consultation, to ensure that they are effective.</p> <p>The effects of mineral developments – and indeed other types of developments - once they have been implemented can be mitigated through the working programme and the working conditions. The conditions can establish the timescale for mineral extraction and restoration and the stages</p>	
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	<p>where updated working plans should be provided. Conditions can also require certain measures to be implemented to control the anticipated effects on the environment or amenity, and to require outstanding details of the development to be provided within a specified timescale.</p> <p>Environmental permitting and waste permitting, which is outside the scope of the SAD, also has an important role in controlling and managing the ongoing effects of waste and mineral operations on the environment once they are implemented.</p>	
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## Monitoring

### Significant Effects Indicators – SAD

No further monitoring indicators have been identified, as the monitoring indicators identified in the SAD are considered to be sufficient to measure the environmental, economic and social effects of the plan, including any 'significant' harmful effects likely to arise. The potential 'significant' effects of SAD Policies M8 and M9 identified in the SA will be monitored through the following existing indicators:

- **EN1 (BCCS Indicator LOI ENV1)** – Net reduction in the area of designated nature conservation sites through development;
- **M7a (BCCS Indicators LOI MIN3 and LOI MIN5)** – Percentage of applications for brick clay extraction or restoration of former brick clay extraction sites which satisfy the general requirements and criteria in BCCS Policies MIN3 and MIN5 and the specific requirements in SAD Policies M7 and M8; and
- **M9a (BCCS Indicators LOI MIN4 and LOI MIN5)** – Percentage of applications for opencast coal and fireclay extraction (including applications for new conditions) which satisfy the general requirements and criteria in BCCS Policies MIN4 and MIN5 and specific requirements in SAD Policy M9.

### Significant Effects Indicators – AAP

No further monitoring indicators have been identified, as the monitoring indicators identified in the AAP are considered to be sufficient to measure the environmental, economic and social effects of the plan.