



Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the South Kesteven Local Plan Review

Interim SA Report to accompany Regulation 18
consultation on the Local Plan Review
Issues and Options Report

October 2020

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Ryan Putt Environmental Consultant	Nick Chisholm-Batten Associate Director	Steve Smith Technical Director	Steve Smith Technical Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
V1.0	8 th October 2020	Draft for client comment	8 th October 2020	Nick Chisholm- Batten	Associate Director

Prepared for:

South Kesteven District Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
Aldgate Tower
2 Lemn Street
London E1 8FA
United Kingdom
aecom.com

© 2020 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of our client (the “Client”) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

Table of Contents

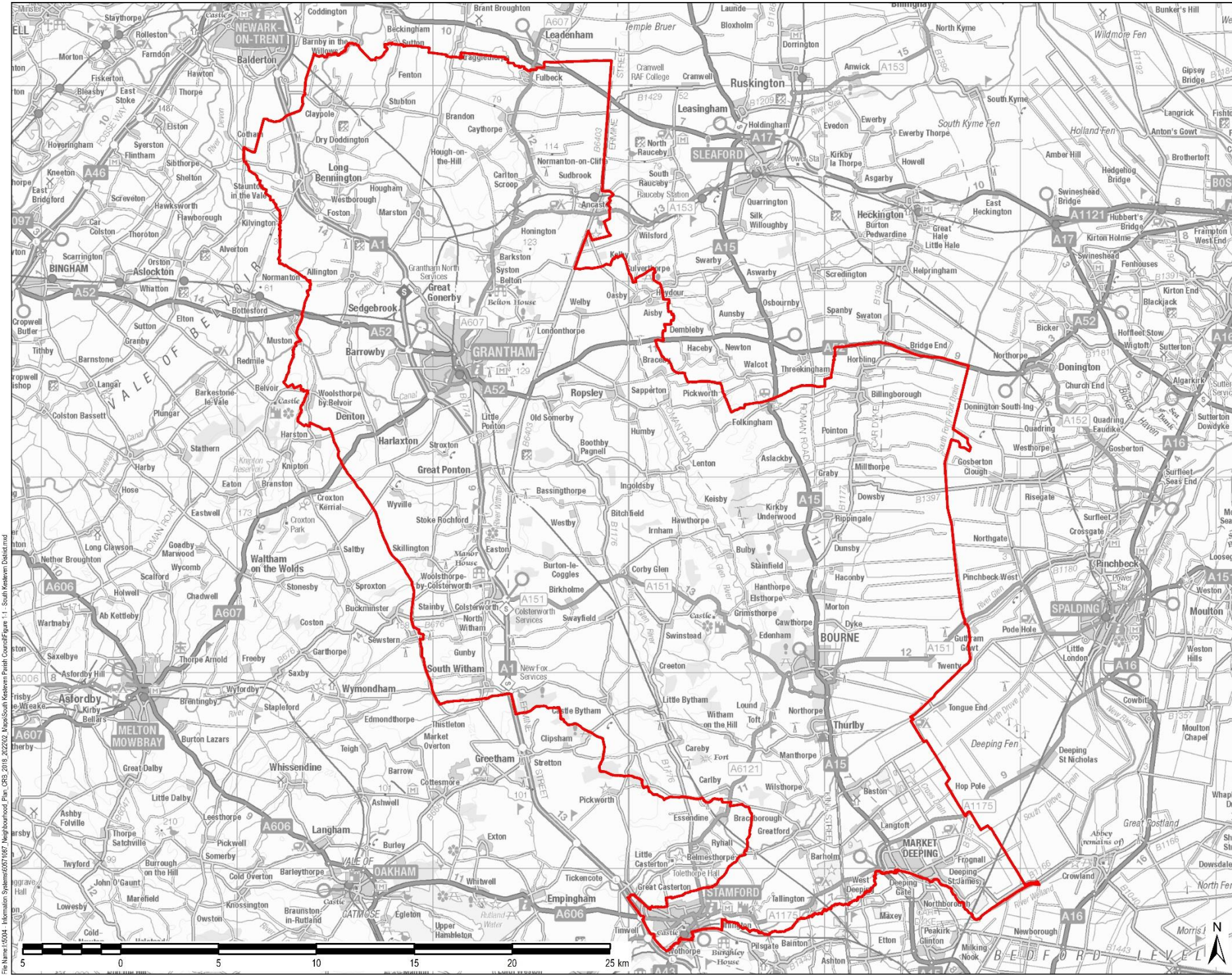
1.	Introduction.....	1
	Background	1
	Current stage of plan making	2
	Sustainability Appraisal (SA) explained	2
	This Interim SA Report.....	2
2.	Scope of the appraisal.....	4
	What is the scope of the SA?.....	4
	SA Scoping Report.....	4
	SA Framework.....	4
3.	Options appraised as reasonable alternatives	8
	Reasonable alternatives in SA.....	8
	Options appraised	8
	Approach to the appraisal	8
4.	Appraisal of options for key policy themes	10
	Key policy themes	10
	Appraisal of options for growth in Grantham.....	10
	Appraisal of options for growth in Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.....	16
	Appraisal of options for growth in the Larger Villages.....	23
	Appraisal of options for growth in the Smaller Villages.....	30
	Appraisal of options for a new community	33
	Appraisal of options for biodiversity net gain	37
	Appraisal of options for residential caravan and park home accommodation	41
	Appraisal of options for parking standards.....	44
5.	Next steps	48

This page is intentionally blank.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) in support of the emerging South Kesteven Local Plan Review.
- 1.2 South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) is currently undertaking a Local Plan Review (LPR) for South Kesteven District. This will replace the current Local Plan, which was adopted in January 2020.
- 1.3 Policy M1 of the adopted Local Plan commits the Council to undertake an early review of the plan. This is in light of updates to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), new evidence relating to employment land in the District, and an anticipated shortfall in Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the current plan period. An early plan review also enables the Council to consider whether its local housing need has changed significantly so as to warrant a re-evaluation of the strategic policies for housing.
- 1.4 The LPR, which will cover the period to 2041, will be the key planning policy document for the District and will guide decisions on the use and development of land. It is currently anticipated that the LPR will be submitted the Secretary of State and then undergo an independent Examination in Public by the end of 2023.
- 1.5 Key information relating to the LPR is presented in **Table 1.1** below.



THIS DRAWING IS TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ISSUE THAT IT WAS ISSUED FOR AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT

LEGEND
 South Kesteven District

Copyright
 Contains Ordnance Survey Data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020

Purpose of Issue
FINAL

Client
SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Project Title
SA FOR THE SOUTH KESTEVEN LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Drawing Title
SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT

Drawn CN	Checked JW	Approved BP	Date 30/07/2020
AECOM Internal Project No. 80571087		Scale @ A4 1:250,000	

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED PURELY FOR THE CLIENT'S USE. IT IS NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE. THE CLIENT ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY FOR ANY USE OF THIS DOCUMENT OTHER THAN BY ITS ORIGINAL CLIENT OR FOLLOWING EXPRESS AGREEMENT TO SUCH USE, AND ONLY FOR THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT WAS PREPARED AND PROVIDED.

AECOM
 Worcester
 Worcester Link, Bearings
 Herefordshire BS21 7PP
 Telephone 01296 310000
 Fax 01296 310001
 www.aecom.com

Drawing Number
FIGURE 1.1

Rev
01

File Name: 15004 - Information Systems\5071087 - Neighbourhood Plan_OCS_2019_202202 - Map\5071087 - South Kesteven District.mxd

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the South Kesteven Local Plan Review

Name of Responsible Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Title of Plan	South Kesteven Local Plan Review (LPR)
Subject	Development plan
Purpose	<p>The LPR will guide future development and land use within South Kesteven District over the period up to 2041.</p> <p>Replacing the South Kesteven Local Plan adopted in January 2020, the LPR will, alongside Neighbourhood Plans, comprise the development plan for the District and will be the primary basis against which planning applications are assessed.</p>
Timescale	To 2041
Area covered by the plan	<p>South Kesteven District</p> <p>(Figure 1.1)</p>
Summary of content	<p>The LPR will set out the vision, strategy and policies to manage growth and development in South Kesteven in the period to 2041.</p> <p>It will indicate the broad locations in the District for future housing, employment, retail, leisure, transport, community services and other types of development.</p>
Plan contact point	<p>Jake Horton, Planning Policy Officer, South Kesteven District Council</p> <p>Email address: J.Horton@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>

Current stage of plan making

- 1.6 This Interim SA Report accompanies the current consultation on the Issues and Options document for the LPR.¹
- 1.7 At the current stage of plan-making SKDC is not consulting on a full draft plan. Rather, the Council is consulting on an initial 'Issues and Options' document. The aim of the Issues and Options consultation is to gain stakeholders' views on the approach LPR policies can take on various key planning issues, including alternative development strategies for the District. The document is an initial stage in developing the LPR and has been prepared under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012).
- 1.8 The current Issues and Options consultation precedes the release of the draft LPR for further Regulation 18 consultation in 2022. Drawing on consultation responses received at the current stage of plan-making and new evidence base studies undertaken to inform the LPR, this document will set out the proposed policies for the LPR, including a preferred development strategy.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) explained

- 1.9 SA considers and communicates the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and the reasonable alternatives considered during the plan making process, in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SA seeks to maximise the emerging LPR's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.10 An SA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transposed into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive². SA also widens the scope of the assessment from focusing generally on environmental issues to also explicitly include social and economic issues.
- 1.11 The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.12 The 'likely significant effects on the environment', are those defined in the SEA Regulations as 'including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'. Reasonable alternatives to the plan need to take into consideration the objectives for the plan and its geographic scope. The choice of 'reasonable alternatives' is determined by means of a case-by-case assessment and a decision.³

This Interim SA Report

- 1.13 At the current stage of plan-making, SKDC is not consulting on a full draft plan. Rather, the Council is consulting on an initial 'Issues and Options' document
- 1.14 This Interim SA Report has therefore been produced voluntarily with the intention of informing this early stage of preparation of the LPR. Specifically, this report presents an appraisal of a series of high-level approaches and alternatives which are currently being evaluated as part of plan development. This is for the benefit of those who might wish to make representations

¹ South Kesteven District Council (October 2020) *South Kesteven District Council Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Report*

² Directive 2001/42/EC

³ Commission of the European Communities (2009) Report from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC). (COMM 2009 469 final).

through the consultation and for the benefit of the plan-makers tasked with selecting preferred approaches for the LPR.

- 1.15 Subsequent stages of the SA process will consider more detailed LPR options, including through an assessment of spatial strategy alternatives. The findings of these assessments will be presented in SA Reports accompanying Regulation 18 consultation on the draft LPR and Regulation 19 consultation on the Pre-Submission version of the LPR.
- 1.16 The next steps for the LPR's development and accompanying SA process are discussed in more detail in Chapter 0

2. Scope of the appraisal

What is the scope of the SA?

SA Scoping Report

- 2.1 The SEA Regulations require that: “When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.⁴ These authorities were consulted on the scope of the LPR SA in August and September 2020.
- 2.2 The baseline information (including baseline data and context review) initially included in the SA Scoping Report has been updated in the period since and provides the basis for the SA process.

SA Framework

- 2.3 Drawing on the review of the sustainability context and baseline, the SA Scoping Report identified a range of sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of SA, ensuring it remains targeted on the most important issues. These issues were then translated into an SA ‘framework’ of objectives and appraisal questions.
- 2.4 The SA Framework provides a way in which the sustainability effects of the LPR and alternatives can be identified and subsequently analysed based on a structured and consistent approach.
- 2.5 The SA Framework and the appraisal findings in this Interim SA Report have been presented under nine SA Themes, reflecting the range of information being considered through the SA process. These are:
 - Biodiversity and geodiversity;
 - Landscape;
 - Historic environment;
 - Air, land, water and soils resources;
 - Climate change;
 - Population and community;
 - Health and wellbeing;
 - Transport; and
 - Economic vitality
- 2.6 The SA Framework is presented in **Table 2.1** below.

⁴ In line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because “by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme”.

Table 2.1: SA Framework for the SA of the South Kesteven Local Plan Review

SA objective	Appraisal questions... will the option/proposal help to...
SA theme: Biodiversity and geodiversity	
1) Support the integrity of internationally, European, nationally and locally designated sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the integrity of the internationally, European, and nationally designated sites within and within proximity to South Kesteven? • Manage pressures on locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity in South Kesteven?
2) Protect and enhance habitats and species in South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species? • Protect key species during the construction and operational phases of new development areas? • Protect and enhance ecological networks? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of South Kesteven's biodiversity to the potential effects of climate change?
3) Enhance understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity? • Encourage opportunities for engagement with South Kesteven's biodiversity and geodiversity resource?
SA theme: Landscape	
4) Protect and enhance the character and quality of South Kesteven's landscapes, townscapes and villagescapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the distinctive qualities of the NCAs and LCAs within and surrounding South Kesteven? • Protect and enhance key landscape, townscape and villagescape features which contribute to local distinctiveness? • Protect locally important viewpoints contributing to sense of place and visual amenity? • Improve understanding of South Kesteven's distinctive landscape, townscape and villagescape resources?
5) Contribute to tranquillity and the quality of dark skies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that new infrastructure provision does not adversely impact on the quality of South Kesteven's dark skies? • Minimise the impact on and seek to improve areas of tranquillity?
SA theme: Historic environment	
6) Conserve and enhance South Kesteven's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting? • Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings? • Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of registered parks and gardens, and their settings? • Protect and where possible, enhance the wider historic environment, including historic landscapes?
7) Conserve and enhance South Kesteven's archaeological resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance archaeological resource, including features listed on the Lincolnshire HER?
8) Promote opportunities for enhancing the understanding of South Kesteven's distinct historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the environment? • Ensure that, where possible, development contributes to improved public understanding of assets and their settings?
SA theme: Air, land, soil and water resources	

SA objective

Appraisal questions... will the option/proposal help to...

Deliver improvements in air quality in South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce emissions of pollutants from transport? • Improve air quality within the Grantham Town Centre AQMA in line with the measures identified in the AQAP? • Promote the use of low emission vehicles? • Promote enhancements in sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?
---	---

Ensure the efficient and effective use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the sterilisation of the best and most versatile agricultural land (i.e. in the District, Grade 2 and 3a land)? • Protect the integrity of mineral safeguarding areas? • Support the remediation of contaminated land?
--	--

Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction, operation and maintenance of new infrastructure?
--	--

Manage South Kesteven's water resources in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality consistent with the aims of the Water Framework Directive? • Help to minimise diffuse surface water pollution? • Protect surface water and groundwater resources? • Minimise water consumption?
---	--

SA theme: Climate change

Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
--	---

Support South Kesteven's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development areas?
--	--

SA theme: Population and community

Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures? • Ensure delivery of high-quality, affordable and specialist housing that meets the needs of South Kesteven's residents? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?
---	---

SA objective

Appraisal questions... will the option/proposal help to...

Delivery of infrastructure to meet the foreseeable needs of the varied communities of South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the needs of a growing population? • Meet the needs of those living in rural areas? • Address the needs of all age groups? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life of residents?
--	--

Support the quality of neighbourhoods as a place to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help remove barriers to activities and reduce social isolation? • Enhance community infrastructure? • Support the energy efficiency of new and existing development, including in reducing fuel poverty?
--	--

SA theme: Health and wellbeing

Improve the health and well-being of South Kesteven's residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the impacts of pollution on health? • Support the health objectives as stated within the Public Health Profile, JSNA and JHWS? • Reduce health inequalities? • Enhance the provision of, and access to, open space and green infrastructure in the District, in accordance with national standards? • Improve access to the countryside and coast for recreation? • Encourage healthy lifestyles and active travel modes, including walking and cycling?
---	--

SA theme: Transport

Promote sustainable transport use and encourage accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of journeys made and the need to travel? • Improve access to and quality of sustainable transport modes for all communities to encourage modal shift? • Improve accessibility to services, facilities and amenities?
---	--

SA theme: Economic vitality

Support sustainable economic development in South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support traditional and emerging sectors of South Kesteven's economy? • Improve internet connectivity to support the digital economy and facilitate flexible working practices? • Enhance the vitality of the District's town and local centres? • Support rural diversification? • Improve accessibility to employment opportunities? • Enhance training and educational opportunities?
--	---

3. Options appraised as reasonable alternatives

Reasonable alternatives in SA

3.1 A key element of the SA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the LPR. The SEA Regulations⁵ are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the SA Report should present an appraisal of the "*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*".

Options appraised

3.2 In response to this, a number of alternative policy approaches have been considered for the LPR through the SA process to date. These relate to the following:

- Options for growth in Grantham
- Options for growth in Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings
- Options for growth in the Larger Villages
- Options for growth in the Smaller Villages
- Options for a new garden community
- Options for biodiversity net gain
- Options for residential caravan and park home accommodation
- Options for parking standards

3.3 Further detail on these options and their appraisal is presented in Chapter 4.

Approach to the appraisal

3.4 The options considered as 'reasonable alternatives' have been appraised against the SA Framework (**Table 2.1**).

3.5 In undertaking the appraisal, the proposed options were reviewed to determine the likelihood of positive or negative effects under each SA theme.

3.6 Where a causal link between the options and SA themes was established, impacts were identified on the basis of professional judgment with reference to the evidence base. The appraisal was undertaken with reference to the criteria in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, that is:

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
- the cumulative nature of the effects;
- the transboundary nature of the effects;
- the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to-
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;

⁵ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
- intensive land-use; and
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

3.7 The following chapters therefore:

- Provide more detail on the options considered as reasonable alternatives through the SA process; and
- Present the appraisal findings relating to these options.

4. Appraisal of options for key policy themes

Key policy themes

- 4.1 The aim of the current Issues and Options consultation is to gain stakeholders' views on the approach LPR policies can take on various key planning issues. At this early stage in the development of the LPR, it is anticipated that discussions on these issues will be broad and at a high level.
- 4.2 Reflecting this, SKDC would like to consider alternative approaches for number of key policy themes for the LPR. As such the SA process has appraised a series of options for a range of themes, with a view to informing the current consultation on Issues and Options.
- 4.3 The detail of the options appraised, and the appraisal findings, are presented below.

Appraisal of options for growth in Grantham

- 4.4 Grantham is located around 42km south of Lincoln and 38km east of Nottingham. With a population of 41,000, it is the largest settlement within the District, and the second largest settlement in Lincolnshire. The town has historically been of strategic importance due to its location on the River Witham, along with the Great North Road and with the East Coast Main Line running through it. It has good strategic connections to London, Peterborough, Newark, Lincoln and Nottingham.
- 4.5 In the current Local Plan, Grantham is the primary focus for the majority of housing growth within the District. This principle was established by the previous Core Strategy. This was with the view to providing Grantham with the scale of additional growth needed to furnish it with an appropriate critical mass that will support a range of services and facilities and ensure that Grantham sustains and builds upon its role as a sub-regional centre.
- 4.6 With regards to the LPR, there is the potential to continue this approach, intensify this approach or scale back this approach.
- 4.7 In light of the above, the SA process has considered three options, as follows:
 - **Option G1:** Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.
 - **Option G2:** Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.
 - **Option G3:** Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.
- 4.8 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the three options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.9 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '3' the least favourable ranking.

Table 4.1: Appraisal of options for growth in Grantham

Option G1: Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.

Option G2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.

Option G3: Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference		
		G1	G2	G3
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>No internationally or nationally designated sites are present in the immediate vicinity of Grantham. The closest SSSIs are Allington Meadows SSSI to the north west and Woodnook Valley SSSI. However, the SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) covering Grantham and its surroundings do not relate to residential development. In this context, none of the options would likely result in a significant negative effect on the integrity of statutory designated sites in the vicinity of Grantham.</p> <p>Regarding locally important wildlife sites, there are several areas of deciduous woodland BAP Priority Habitat surrounding the current developed settlement boundary, particularly to the north and to the south. Additionally, there is a local wildlife site (LWS) located directly to the north east of the town, at Belton House. Due to the relative constraints to development to the west of Grantham associated with the A1, new development areas are most likely to be located to the north, east and south of the town; as such this has the potential to negatively impact on the locally important wildlife sites within the vicinity of Grantham.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features and areas of biodiversity interest largely depends on the detailed location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures, it can be considered that continuing and increasing the focus of growth on Grantham through Option G1 and G2 increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on biodiversity sites present in the vicinity of the town. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value, and an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns. However, reducing the focus of growth on Grantham through Option G3 has the potential to redirect growth to more sensitive areas of South Kesteven District, with the south of the District relatively more constrained in biodiversity and geodiversity terms than the north of the District (where Grantham is situated).</p> <p>It should also be noted that, given the likely scale of development to be taken forward through Options G1 and G2, there may be additional opportunities for green infrastructure enhancements and net gain of biodiversity to take place through these options.</p>	2	3	1

Option G1: Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.

Option G2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.

Option G3: Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.

Landscape	<p>There are no National Parks or AONBs in the vicinity of Grantham (or the wider District). As such the options do not have the potential to lead to effects on nationally designated landscapes. There is also no Green Belt land in the District. In terms of local landscape and townscape character, the South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment defines Landscape Character Areas in different parts of the District. In this respect, Grantham is within the 'Grantham Scarps and Valleys' Landscape Character Area (LCA). Landscape Sensitivity ranges from low to high within this LCA, depending on the scale and type of development proposed. Generally, the conclusions of the assessment outline that new development proposals should avoid the higher valley slopes and should not establish new built development on the skyline.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that negative effects on landscape character could arise if development is poorly located and designed. Alternatively, development in some locations, such as on brownfield sites, could improve local townscape character, resulting in positive effects.</p> <p>Overall however, the higher levels of growth proposed through Option G2, and to a lesser extent, Option G1, has increased potential to impact on areas of sensitivity, including through the loss of greenfield land and local landscape features of interest. This includes through limiting the scope to direct growth to locations with lower landscape sensitivity. However, the scale of growth likely to be taken forward through these two options has the potential to deliver significant green infrastructure provision and other landscape-scale enhancements; this may help limit negative effects on landscape character.</p>	2	3	1
Historic environment	<p>There are a range of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets located within and within proximity to Grantham, including three scheduled monuments, three conservation areas and two registered parks and gardens. Furthermore, there are approximately 170 listed buildings within the town. This includes a cluster of listed buildings in the centre of Grantham, associated with the conservation area. A key feature of historic importance in the vicinity of Grantham is also Belton House, which is a Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden extending to an area of 505ha. In addition to containing numerous listed structures, Belton House and its gardens provides a significant contribution to historic landscape and townscape character to the north east of the town.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development, it can be considered that a higher level of growth within Grantham (as proposed through Option G2) increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the heritage assets present locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of features and areas of historic environment interest.</p> <p>Although reducing the level of growth within Grantham through Option G3 will help conserve and protect heritage assets, there may be less potential to rejuvenate existing heritage assets and their settings. However, given Grantham is likely to remain a focus for growth in the District, opportunities are likely to be available through all three options.</p>	2	3	1

Option G1: Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.

Option G2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.

Option G3: Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.

Air, land, water and soil resources	<p><i>Water resources</i></p> <p>There are a number of watercourses within proximity to Grantham, including the River Witham that runs south to north through the centre of the town; and the Grantham Canal, which runs from the east into the centre of the town. The southern and eastern boundaries of Grantham are underlain by a Zone 3 groundwater source protection zone (SPZ), while an area to the south of the town boundary is underlain by a Zone 1 groundwater SPZ.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on water resources and quality largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures (e.g. SUDs), it can be considered that renewing and increasing the focus of development within Grantham through Option G2 will increase the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on both surface water and groundwater resources. This is linked to increased levels of surface water runoff, increased suspended sediment loading and discharge of polluted runoff.</p> <p><i>Air quality</i></p> <p>SKDC designated Grantham Town Centre (from Brook Street to Bridge End Road including the High Street, London Road, Wharf Road, and part of Barrowby Road) as an AQMA in 2013 due to exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean and 1-hour objectives.</p> <p>Renewing and increasing the focus of growth on Grantham therefore has the potential to increase traffic and congestion in the town through increasing the number of journeys made by road. However, it is anticipated that facilitating higher levels of growth within the settlement with the largest range of services and facilities in the District should help to reduce the number of road trips required for day-to-day activities and encourage walking and cycling. It should also be noted that, as the largest town, Grantham has good public transport links, including bus routes within the town, to the north and south via the East Coast Mainline railway which provides fast links to Peterborough, London and the north, as well as destinations to the west/east. In this context, continuing and increasing development in Grantham (facilitated through Option G1 and G2) has the most potential to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport (supporting air quality), when compared to the other settlements.</p> <p><i>Land quality</i></p> <p>The ability of the development options to affect land resources is assessed in relation to land-take of agricultural land, as well as use of brownfield and greenfield land. Regarding agricultural land, there are 5 grades of agricultural land (Grades 1 to 5), with Grade 3 also sub-divided into two grades (Grade 3a and 3b). Of these grades, Grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land are classified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. In many cases however, the baseline data available does not provide a distinction between Grade 3a and 3b.</p>	?	?	?
-------------------------------------	--	---	---	---

Option G1: Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.

Option G2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.

Option G3: Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.

Air, land, water and soil resources (continued)	<p>In Grantham, the area within the settlement boundary is predominantly classified as urban, and the land surrounding the town contains a mixture of Grade 1, 2 and 3 agricultural land. While brownfield sites for development are available within the town, it is likely that a renewed and increased focus of development through Option G2 will result in the loss of a greater proportion of greenfield land in comparison to Option G1 and G3. However, potential effects will also depend on the location and scale of development sites, with development to the west and east having a relatively higher potential to be taken forward on Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land.</p>	?	?	?
Climate change	<p><i>Climate change mitigation</i></p> <p>Road transport is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in South Kesteven, given the rural nature of the much of the District, as well as issues relating to public transport provision. However, Grantham is well connected by public transport, including the mainline railway network and an extensive bus network. The town also, as a sub-regional centre, contains a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities.</p> <p>In this respect, from a District-wide perspective, a continued and increased focus of development within Grantham through Option G2 and G3 will help limit greenhouse gas emissions from transport through encouraging new development in locations with closer proximity to key amenities and public transport networks.</p> <p>In terms of the other aspects relating to greenhouse gas emissions, the sustainability performance of developments depends on elements such as the integration of energy efficient design within new development and the provision of renewable energy. It should be noted though that the higher quantum of development proposed through Option G2 will do more to increase the built footprint of Grantham, with associated overall increases in greenhouse gas emissions. This should be seen in the context of District-wide emissions from growth however, which may be limited by a focus on Grantham.</p> <p><i>Climate change adaptation</i></p> <p>In Grantham, the main sources of fluvial flood risk are the River Witham, Mow Beck and Barrowby Stream. In this respect, flood risk issues are a constraint to new development within Grantham. Whilst all options have the potential to lead to development in the flood zones, or elevated levels of flood risk, it is considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy in relation to flooding will help guide development away from flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. However, new development areas have the potential to increase flood risk through factors such as changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk.</p>	2	1	3

Option G1: Continue the main focus of the District's growth on Grantham.

Option G2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Grantham.

Option G3: Reduce the focus of growth on Grantham.

Population and community	<p>Accessibility to community services and facilities is a key influence on community cohesion, settlement vitality and the quality of life of residents. In this respect, Grantham contains the most comprehensive range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the District, as well as public transport links. A continued and enhanced focus of development in Grantham through Option G1 and Option G2 is therefore likely to do more to support accessibility to the wider choice of amenities present in the town.</p> <p>Comparatively, Option G3 is likely to deliver less growth within the most accessible settlement in the District, which has the broadest range of services and facilities.</p> <p>Depending on existing pressures on services and facilities, a renewed and increased focus on growth within Grantham through Option G2 may have additional potential to place increasing demands on existing amenities that will affect the quality of services used by residents. In addition, an increased proportion of growth in Grantham may undermine the viability and vitality of other settlements in the District including the three market towns and the Larger Villages.</p>	1	2	3
Health and wellbeing	<p>As the largest settlement in the District, Grantham has a range of health services, including primary health care services and Grantham and District Hospital. It also has a wide range of sports and recreational facilities. In this respect, locating more housing in closer proximity to the facilities available in Grantham will support access to key health services and recreational and leisure opportunities. Given the proximity of these amenities, it will also encourage the use of healthier modes of travel including walking and cycling, contributing to active lifestyles. For these reasons, directing increased growth to Grantham through Option G1 and G2 is likely to bring benefits for health and wellbeing.</p>	1	1	3
Transport	<p>Grantham is the best-connected settlement in the District by public transport networks. This is given the presence of the mainline railway station in the town and an extensive bus network. As a sub-regional centre, the town also contains the broadest range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the District.</p> <p>In this regard, continuing and increasing the focus of growth in Grantham through Option G1 and G2 will locate an increased proportion of growth in closer proximity to a broader range of services and facilities and public transport networks. This will help reduce the need to travel, and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and rail and bus use.</p>	2	1	3
Economic vitality	<p>Grantham is a key employment centre for the District. A continued and renewed focus of growth within the town (facilitated through Option G1 and G2) would direct growth to a location with good access to employment and training opportunities. Provision of new housing and employment growth also has the potential to promote inward investment and entrepreneurial development into the town utilising its good transport links. This is significant given the existing regeneration opportunities within the town and ongoing issues regarding the town's economic vitality.</p>	2	1	3

Appraisal of options for growth in Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings

- 4.10 Stamford is the second largest town in South Kesteven. The town is located adjacent to the strategically important national north-south route, the A1, meaning cities such as Peterborough and Cambridge are commutable. London (160km away) is also accessible. There are direct rail services to Cambridge, Birmingham, Peterborough and Stansted airport, and the East Coast Main Line rail network is accessed via Peterborough. The town also acts as a service centre for nearby villages, such as Uffington and Tallington in the District and Great Casterton and Ryhall in Rutland.
- 4.11 The market town of Bourne is the third largest settlement in South Kesteven. Bourne is a historically important market town because of its location on the A15 Lincoln to Peterborough route. There are regular bus services to Peterborough via Market Deeping, Stamford and Spalding. Bourne is also important as a service centre for nearby smaller settlements in the south and east of the District, especially those located along the A15 corridor and the edge of the fens. It also provides housing for large numbers of people who commute the 25km to Peterborough daily, and to those who commute the 34km to Grantham. Bourne has a range of facilities, including primary and secondary schools, several public houses, several doctors/dental practices and a leisure centre.
- 4.12 The parishes of Market Deeping and Deeping St James/Frognall together make up the fourth largest settlement within South Kesteven, The Deepings. Located approximately 15km north of Peterborough, and 42km south of Grantham, the settlement acts as the service centre within an identified rural 'hinterland'. Its catchment area is bordered to the north by the villages of Wilsthorpe and Baston, to the east by Deeping St Nicholas, to the south by Northborough and Maxey and the west by Tallington, Barholm and Greatford. This includes villages in the adjoining local authorities of South Holland and Peterborough. Many of those living in The Deepings and the immediate area commute to work, with Peterborough offering considerable employment opportunities. Locally, the Northfields Industrial Estate offers a widening range of employment associated with vehicle garages, warehouse operations, through to communications, navigation and surveillance activity. Elsewhere in the town, the role of the Eventus Business Centre as an important employment centre is increasing.
- 4.13 In the current Local Plan, the three Market Towns of Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings are, after Grantham, the main focus of growth in the District. This is given they offer services and facilities to their local communities as well as supporting the network of Larger Villages and smaller settlements located around them. The current Local Plan seeks to ensure the continued success of these Market Towns which through supporting and enhancing their role as service centres.
- 4.14 With regards to the LPR, there is the potential to continue this approach, intensify this approach or instead scale back this approach.
- 4.15 To explore these elements further, the SA process has considered three options, as follows:
- **Option MT1:** Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.
 - **Option MT2:** Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.
 - **Option MT3:** Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.
- 4.16 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the three options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.17 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '3' the least favourable ranking.

Table 4.2: Appraisal of options for growth in Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference		
		MT1	MT2	MT3
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Bourne</p> <p>There are two Natura 2000 sites within 5km of the developed settlement boundary of Bourne: Grimsthorpe SAC (approx. 4.6km to the west of the town) and Baston Fen SAC (approx. 3km to the south east). Regarding nationally designated sites, the Math and Elsea Wood SSSI is within the vicinity of Bourne. In this respect, the southern part of the town (The Austerby) is located within an SSSI IRZ for housing developments of over 100 dwellings within urban areas, or 50 or more houses outside existing urban areas; while the area on the southern boundary around the junction of the A15 and A151 relates to developments of over 100 dwellings within urban areas or 10 or more houses outside existing urban areas.</p> <p>Stamford</p> <p>Development in Stamford has some potential to affect internationally designated sites within the surrounding environs, including: Rutland Water SPA (approx. 6km to the west, designated for wintering wildfowl) and Barnack Hills and Holes SAC (located approx. 4km to the south east and which is designated for its habitats that support rare orchids). The likelihood of effects on these sites depends on the location and scale of development sites and will be considered through the Habitats Regulations Assessment process for the LPR. In terms of nationally designated sites in the vicinity of Stamford, the Great Casterton Road Banks SSSI is located to the north west of Stamford adjacent to The Old Great North Road. The SSSI IRZs within Stamford do not relate to residential development; excluding the immediate 50m zone surrounding Great Casterton Road Banks SSSI.</p> <p>The Deepings</p> <p>In relation to The Deepings, there are three SSSIs located in the area, including: The Deeping Gravel Pits SSSI to the south east; the Langtoft Gravel Pits SSSI to the north west; and Cross Drain SSSI to the north east. However, most land in Market Deeping is not within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for housing development. The exception to this is land to the north west of Market Deeping, located outside of the settlement boundary and north west of the A15, as well as land to the south east of Deeping St. James.</p> <p>At the local level, there are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats located within proximity to the market towns, primarily areas of deciduous woodland. Additionally, there are LWSs located to the north west of Bourne, the south east of Deeping St James, and within Stamford.</p> <p>Renewing the Local Plan's focus of growth to the Market Towns through Option MT2 has the potential to increase the likelihood of direct and indirect effects to biodiversity sites, such as from land take, disturbance or loss of key features of ecological value, reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns. With specific reference to nationally designated sites, Option MT2 has the potential to deliver a quantum of development within the towns which would exceed SSSI IRZ</p>	2	3	1

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

thresholds in some locations. In this respect, consultation with Natural England is likely to be required to avoid and mitigate any adverse impacts to nationally designated sites from new development areas.

Reducing the focus of growth within the Market Towns through Option MT3 will help limit potential effects from new development on features and areas of biodiversity interest and support the resilience of ecological networks. This may include potentially locating development in less sensitive areas of the District, relative to the Market Towns.

Landscape	<p>There are no National Parks or AONBs in the vicinity of the Market Towns (or the wider District). As such, the options do not have the potential to lead to effects on nationally designated landscapes. There is also no Green Belt land in the District. Regarding local landscape character, Bourne is located on the boundary between the Fen Margin LCA and The Fens LCA, with The Deepings located wholly within the Fens LCA. Reflecting the results of the South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential proposals within the Fen Margin LCA and The Fens LCA ranges from low to medium. In this respect, opportunities could exist in certain locations around the edge of existing settlements for some areas of new development (as facilitated through Option MT1).</p> <p>Stamford is in the Kesteven Uplands LCA. The South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment concludes that landscape sensitivity to new employment or residential proposals within this LCA is likely to be medium to high, because of the high proportion of valuable landscape elements and relatively undisturbed character. In this respect, larger-scale proposals within and surrounding Stamford (potentially resulting from an increased level of growth through Option MT2) are less likely to be successfully assimilated, given the openness and high visibility across the landscape.</p> <p>Generally, landscape and townscape impacts will principally depend on the scale, location and design of each proposed development. It is therefore considered that significant negative effects on local landscape and townscape character could arise at any of the settlements if development is poorly located and designed. Alternatively, development in some locations, such as on brownfield sites, could improve local townscape character, resulting in positive effects.</p> <p>Overall, and reflecting upon the results of the landscape character assessment and the landscape sensitivity and capacity studies, the options which deliver lower or medium growth across the market towns (Option MT1 and MT3) are those which are least likely to cause significant adverse impacts to the character of local landscape and townscape character in the vicinity of the settlements.</p>	2	3	1
-----------	---	---	---	---

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Historic environment	<p>Heritage assets in the vicinity of Bourne include two scheduled monuments (Bourne Castle and Car Dyke), approximately 63 listed buildings and a conservation area covering most of the town centre. There are five scheduled monuments and two conservation areas within and surrounding The Deepings. The two scheduled monuments located outside of the settlement boundary (Roman site at Priors Meadow and Iron Age and Roman settlement including a saltern on Hall Meadow) have the potential to be affected by greenfield development. Furthermore, there are approximately 103 listed buildings within the settlement, with clusters in the centre of Market Deeping and along the main road to the south-west of the settlement.</p> <p>Stamford has a rich historic environment resource. This includes 17 scheduled monuments (eleven in the town centre, and six either within the rest of Stamford or in its immediate surroundings), an extensive conservation area, and Burghley Park, which is a Grade II* registered park and garden located to the south-east of the town. Additionally, there are approximately 445 listed buildings within or within proximity to the town.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development, it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement (including, in particular, Stamford) will increase the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of significant negative effects on heritage assets locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of features and areas of historic environment interest in the vicinity of the settlement. Although reducing the level of growth within the Market Towns through Option MT3 will conserve and protect heritage assets, this option is perhaps less likely to lead to significant enhancements to the built environment overall. In this respect, redeveloping currently underutilised brownfield sites within the Market Towns presents an opportunity to enhance the quality and setting of heritage assets via the application of sensitive design.</p>	2	3	1
Air, land, water and soil resources	<p>Water resources</p> <p>Bourne</p> <p>In terms of the water environment, there is a wide network of drains that drain the land within and surrounding Bourne. Additionally, the Bourne Eau watercourse runs west to east through the town, and Car Dyke run south to north. Groundwater SPZs (Zone 1 and 2) encompass most of the settlement.</p> <p>Stamford</p> <p>The main watercourse passing through Stamford is the River Welland, located to the south of the town centre. However, the River Gwash traverses around the north and east of the town. The majority of Stamford and its surroundings is underlain by a Zone 3 groundwater SPZ, with areas of land to the east of the settlement underlain by a Zone 1 or 2 groundwater SPZ.</p> <p>The Deepings</p> <p>Water resources within The Deepings include the River Welland that runs west to east along the southern boundaries of the settlements. There is also a network of drainage ditches surrounding the settlements, as well as two lakes: Deeping</p>	2	3	1

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Lakes to the south west, and Tallington Lakes to the west.

Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on water resources and quality within the market towns largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures (e.g. SUDs), it can be considered that renewing and increasing the focus of development (as proposed through Option MT2) will increase the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on both surface water and groundwater resources. This is linked to increased levels of surface water runoff, increased suspended sediment loading and discharge of polluted runoff.

Air Quality

The three Market Towns are, outside of Grantham, the settlements with the broadest range of services and facilities in the District. They are also relatively well connected by bus, and, in the case of Stamford, rail. Directing an increased level of development to these locations therefore has the potential to limit the need to travel for key services and facilities and support sustainable transport use. This may support air quality through limiting emissions from some transport sources.

However, whilst Bourne and The Deepings do not have significant air quality issues, Stamford has had historic air quality issues. In this respect the 'Rushmore Lodge at the junction of St Pauls Street, Brazenose Lane and East Street' AQMA within Stamford was rescinded in 2013. It was originally designated for exceedances in the annual mean of NO₂ and 24-hour mean for PM₁₀ from road transport. As such, renewing and increasing the focus of growth within Stamford through Option MT2, and to a lesser extent Option MT1 may impact on air quality in the town through stimulating an increase in road traffic, including within the area formerly designated as an AQMA.

Land quality

In Bourne, land to the north, west and south-west is a mixture of Grade 3 and land classified as 'other', with land to the east and south-east classified as Grade 2. In The Deepings, undeveloped land within the existing settlement areas is predominantly Grade 3, with surrounding areas all Grade 2. In Stamford, land surrounding the settlement is predominately Grade 3.

While there are some brownfield sites for development within the built-up areas of these settlements, these sites are unlikely to be able to deliver the number of dwellings required through renewing and intensifying the focus on growth within them. As such, Option MT2 has a higher potential for loss of BMV land and greenfield land in comparison to Option MT1 and MT3. Development in the vicinities of Bourne and The Deepings are considered the most likely for significant negative effects given the extent of Grade 2 agricultural land in these locations.

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Climate change	<p><i>Climate change mitigation.</i></p> <p>Road transport is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the District, relating to issues of rurality, and public transport provision. In this respect, Stamford is one of the only settlements within the District which benefits from a railway station, and therefore has the potential to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. The lack of a railway within Bourne and The Deepings has the potential to result in increased demand for private car journeys through Option MT1 and MT2. However, the Market Towns provide accessibility to a range of local services and facilities which reduces the reliance on private vehicles for undertaking some day-to-day activities. Therefore, continuing and increasing the focus of growth within the market towns through Option MT1 and MT2 will support a limitation of greenhouse gas emissions from transport through encouraging new development in locations with closer proximity to key amenities and public transport networks.</p> <p>In terms of the other aspects relating to greenhouse gas emissions, the sustainability performance of developments depends on elements such as the integration of energy efficient design within new development and the provision of renewable energy. It should be noted though that the higher quantum of development proposed through Option MT2 will do more to increase the built footprint of the market towns, with associated overall increases in greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p><i>Climate change adaptation</i></p> <p>Regarding flood risk concerns within the market towns, Stamford is located adjacent to the River Welland and within proximity to the River Gwash floodplain, where immediately upstream and downstream of the town the functional floodplain is in excess of 100m wide. Through the town itself, flood risk zones are confined to areas directly adjacent to the river.</p> <p>Bourne is situated on the western limit of the Fenland floodplain, with any extensive development to the east of the settlement likely to cover areas in Flood Zone 2 or 3. However, development to the west, north or south of the settlement is less constrained by flood risk issues. Furthermore, The Deepings are situated on the western boundary of the Fens, with areas of land to the east and north of The Deepings at greatest risk of flooding. Continuing and increasing the level of development within the market towns through Option MT1 and MT2 increases the likelihood of development within the surrounding floodplain.</p> <p>Whilst all options have the potential to lead to development in the flood zones, or elevated levels of flood risk, it is considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy in relation to flooding will help guide development away from flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. However, new development areas have the potential to increase flood risk through factors such as changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk.</p>	?	?	?
----------------	---	---	---	---

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Population and community	<p>Accessibility to social and community services and facilities is a key influence on community cohesion, settlement vitality and the quality of life of residents. In this respect, the three market towns have a range of services and facilities. A continued and enhanced focus of development within these settlements through Option MT1 and MT2 will therefore support accessibility to the wider choice of amenities present in these locations. In this respect, due to the requirements of developers to support infrastructure and services, for example through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements, payments may support the development of new and enhanced facilities. In contrast, reducing the focus of development within the three market towns through Option MT3 is perhaps less likely to support the vitality of these settlements and facilitate improvements to community provision. It also has the potential to direct growth to locations with fewer services and facilities, with implications for social inclusion.</p> <p>Given existing pressures on services and facilities in these settlements, an increased focus on growth within the Market Towns through Option MT2 may have additional potential to place increasing demands on existing amenities that will affect the quality of services used by residents.</p>	1	2	3
Health and wellbeing	<p>In terms of Options MT1 and MT2, the three Market Towns provide accessibility to some primary health care services, and sports and recreational facilities. Directing growth to these settlements will therefore support health and wellbeing. Furthermore, locating growth in closer proximity to the facilities available in the Market Towns will also encourage healthier modes of travel, including walking and cycling.</p> <p>However, Option MT1, and a greater extent, Option MT2, have the potential to place increased pressures on existing amenities, potentially affecting the quality of services received by existing residents. The higher growth options also have the potential to affect health and wellbeing through impacts on congestion, road safety and the quality of the public realm.</p>	?	?	?
Transport	<p>The three Market Towns are, outside of Grantham, the settlements with the broadest range of services and facilities in the District. They are also relatively well connected by bus, and, in the case of Stamford, rail. Directing an increased level of development to these locations through Options MT1 and MT2 therefore has the potential to limit the need to travel for key services and facilities and support sustainable transport use. Option MT2 however, through delivering additional growth, has the potential to increase existing traffic and congestion issues in the vicinities of the Market Towns.</p>	1	2	3

Option MT1: Continue the current Local Plan's focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT2: Renew and increase the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Option MT3: Reduce the focus of growth on Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.

Economic vitality	The provision of additional growth in Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings would place development in locations with good access to existing employment opportunities, including outside of the District in Peterborough. Additional development in these locations also has the potential to enhance the economic vitality of the towns and support employment and training opportunities. A greater focus on the functionality and purpose of market towns is likely to be required in response to the changing habits of consumers as they continue to shop online, and in response to the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Maintaining the quality and supporting the retail offer within these settlements is key, alongside encouraging opportunities for diversification where appropriate. In this respect, Option MT1 and MT2 has the potential to result in the greatest benefits for three market towns.	2	1	3
-------------------	---	---	---	---

Appraisal of options for growth in the Larger Villages

- 4.18 Larger Villages (formerly Local Service Centres) comprise 15 settlements in the District. They include: Ancaster; Barkston; Barrowby; Baston; Billingborough; Caythorpe & Frieston; Colsterworth; Corby Glen; Great Gonerby; Harlaxton; Langtoft; Long Bennington; Morton; South Witham; and Thurlby & Northorpe.
- 4.19 The Larger Villages not only support their own communities but also fulfil the role of being a service centre to the smaller settlements and rural areas around them. Whilst development within the Larger Villages may help to retain or improve the range of services available to both the Larger Villages and the other settlements served by them, capacity of services (such as education, sewerage and water disposal) in some of these Larger Villages is at or near capacity.
- 4.20 In the current Local Plan, development proposals which promote the role and function of the Larger Villages, and will not compromise the settlement's nature and character, is supported. The Larger Villages are identified as the most sustainable villages in the District and as such are the focus for development in the current Local Plan outside of Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings.
- 4.21 With regards to the LPR, there is the potential to continue this approach, intensify this approach or instead scale back this approach.
- 4.22 In light of the above, the SA process has considered three options, as follows:
- **Option LV1:** Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.
 - **Option LV2:** Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.
 - **Option LV3:** Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.
- 4.23 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the three options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.24 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '3' the least favourable ranking.

Table 4.3: Appraisal of options for growth in the Larger Villages

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference		
		LV1	LV2	LV3
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>With regard to the Larger Villages, SSSI IRZs for residential development cover three of the settlements: Ancaster, Langtoft and Thurlby. In this respect, Ancaster is in close proximity to three SSSIs, two designated for biodiversity (Moor Close SSSI and Ancaster Valley SSSI) and one (Copper Hill SSSI) designated for both biodiversity and geodiversity. The SSSI IRZs covering most of Ancaster relate to residential development exceeding 100 units within the urban area or 50 units outside the urban area. However, in areas to the east of Ancaster, and on land immediately adjacent to the SSSIs, the number of residential units required to exceed the IRZ threshold reduces. Langtoft is relatively close to the Langtoft Gravel Pits SSSI, designated for biodiversity. The SSSI IRZ which covers the south-west of the settlement relates to residential development exceeding 100 units within the urban area or 50 units outside the urban area. Additionally, Thurlby is surrounded by three SSSIs: Math and Elsea SSSI to the north, Dole Wood SSSI to the south west, and Baston and Thurlby Fens SSSI to the south east. Development close to the current boundary of Thurlby has the potential to affect the SSSIs, depending on location. However, the SSSI IRZ suggests that development would relate to residential development exceeding 100 units within the urban area or 50 units outside the urban area.</p> <p>At the local level, there are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats and LWS located within or within proximity to the Larger Villages, particularly surrounding the settlements of Baston, Colsterworth and Corby Glen. Additionally, there are local geological sites (LGS) surrounding the settlement of Ancaster and regionally important geological sites (RIGS) located to the south of Harlaxton and South Witham.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features and areas of biodiversity interest largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures, it can be considered that continuing and increasing the focus of growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV1 and LV2 increases the likelihood of negative effects on the biodiversity sites present in the vicinity of these settlements, including through exceeding SSSI IRZ thresholds. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value, and an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns. However, some Larger Villages could potentially accommodate increased levels of growth without necessarily leading to adverse impacts.</p> <p>Reducing the focus of growth within some Larger Villages through Option LV3 (particularly Ancaster, Thurlby, Langtoft, Baston, Colsterworth, Corby Glen, Harlaxton and South Witham) will help limit potential effects from new development on features and areas of biodiversity interest and support the resilience of ecological networks. This includes through potentially locating</p>	2	3	1

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

		development in less sensitive areas of the District, relative to the Larger Villages.		
Landscape	<p>There are no National Parks or AONBs in the vicinity of the Market Towns (or the wider District). As such, the options do not have the potential to lead to effects on nationally designated landscapes. There is also no Green Belt land in the District. Regarding local landscape character, the results of the South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment indicate that the following settlements are within LCAs which have a medium-high sensitivity to new residential or employment development proposals: Ancaster, Barkston, Barrowby, Caythorpe, Great Gonerby, Harlaxton, Colsterworth, Corby Glen, South Witham, and Thurlby.</p> <p>In this respect, the scale of proposals likely to come forward through Option LV1, and in particular, Option LV2 has the potential to adversely impact landscape character in the vicinities of these Larger Villages. Therefore, it will be important for new development proposals to incorporate sensitive design which contributes to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Reducing the level of growth within Larger Villages through Option LV3 will help to safeguard locally important landscape features and conserve the character of these settlements.</p>	2	3	1
Historic environment	<p>All Larger Villages within the northern part of the District contain a range of heritage assets within the settlement boundary that may be affected by new development proposals. Additionally, five of the settlements also have heritage assets outside the settlement boundary that may be affected by development. Heritage assets include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancaster: approximately seven listed buildings, three scheduled monuments, and a conservation area. • Barkston: approximately ten listed buildings and a conservation area within the settlement boundary; • Barrowby: approximately 28 listed buildings and a conservation area within the settlement boundary; • Billingbrough: approximately 15 listed buildings and a conservation area. In addition, there are a number of listed buildings surrounding the settlement, as well as two scheduled monuments. • Caythorpe: approximately 21 listed buildings, conservation area, and a scheduled monument. There are three listed buildings to the north of the settlement, as well as a cluster of listed buildings and a conservation area in Frieston to the south of Caythorpe. • Great Gonerby: approximately 18 listed buildings and a conservation area within the settlement boundary. • Harlaxton: approximately 59 listed buildings, a scheduled monument and a conservation area. Harlaxton Manor is a Grade II* listed registered park and garden directly on the eastern boundary of Harlaxton, which also contains a cluster of 16 listed buildings. • Long Bennington: approximately 24 listed buildings and a scheduled monument within the settlement boundary. <p>Heritage assets within the Larger Villages located in the southern part of the of District include:</p>	2	3	1

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

- Baston: approximately 20 listed buildings.
- Colsterworth: approximately 19 listed buildings in addition to 13 listed buildings and a conservation area in Woolsthorpe (to the north west of the settlement).
- Corby Glen: approximately 30 listed buildings, three scheduled monuments and a conservation area.
- Langtoft: approximately 15 listed buildings and a conservation area within the settlement boundary.
- Morton: approximately 21 listed buildings and a conservation area within the settlement boundary.
- South Witham: nine listed buildings and a conservation area, as well as a scheduled monument (Remains of Knights Templar preceptory, watermill and fishponds) 500m to the north of the settlement.
- Thurlby: twelve listed buildings within and adjacent to the settlement boundary.

Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development, it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the heritage assets present locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of features and areas of historic environment interest in the vicinity of the settlement. In this respect the facilitation of an additional level of growth in the Larger Villages through Option LV2 has increased potential to lead to impacts. However, existing historic environment designations offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings.

It should be noted though that new development need not be harmful to the significance of a heritage asset, and there may be opportunity for new development to enhance the historic setting of its Larger Villages through incorporating sensitive design which reflects the findings of the relevant conservation area appraisals and management plans.

Air, land, water and soil resources	<p>Water resources</p> <p>The Larger Villages located in the northern part of the District are within proximity to the following water resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancaster: features include a network of lakes at Willoughby Moor to the south west and The Beck (watercourse) which runs west to east through the settlement. • Barkston: features include the River Witham in the western section of the settlement which flows south to north, a lake to the south, as well as some drainage ditches to the north. • Billingbrough: features include a network of drainage ditches surrounding the settlement. • Harlaxton: features include Mow Beck, and a lake/reservoir to the east adjacent to the settlement. • Long Bennington: features include the River Witham which flows south to north, to the east of the settlement. <p>The Larger Villages in the southern parts of the District are within proximity to the following water resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baston: features include a large series of lakes to the east, 	2	3	1
-------------------------------------	--	---	---	---

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

associated with sand and gravel pits; as well as a network of drainage ditches surrounding the settlement.

- Colsterworth: features include the River Witham in the western section of the settlement which flows south to north.
- Corby Glen: features include West Glen River along the western settlement boundary which flows north to south.
- Langtoft: features include Tallington Lakes to the south-west, and other lakes to the north-east, all previously sand and gravel pits; and an extensive drainage channel network.
- Morton: a series of drainage ditches around the settlement.
- South Witham: features include the River Witham which flows west to east between the two distinct parts of South Witham.
- Thurlby: features include an extensive drainage network surrounding the settlement.

Additionally, seven of the Larger Villages are underlain by groundwater SPZs, specifically: Ancaster, Billingborough, Colsterworth, Corby Glen, Morton, South Witham and Thurlby.

Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on water resources and quality largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures (e.g. SUDs), it can be considered that renewing and increasing the focus of development within Larger Villages through Option LV2 will increase the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on both surface water and groundwater resources. This is linked to increased levels of surface water runoff, increased suspended sediment loading and discharge of polluted runoff. In addition the option is likely to increase existing pressures on water and sewerage provision in many of the Larger Villages.

Air Quality

None of the 15 Larger Villages within the District have a designated AQMA. However, the cumulative effect of development across the Larger Villages has the potential to increase road traffic on some key routes in the District, including those to and from the main settlements and main employment centres located within and outside of the District. In this respect, limiting the level of growth in Larger Villages through Option LV3 is less likely to adversely impact air quality in this regard.

Land quality

12 of the 15 Larger Villages within the District contain some areas of Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land which is classified as BMV land. The undeveloped areas of land surrounding the remaining three Larger Villages (Corby Glen, Folkingham, and South Witham) are classified as Grade 3 land.

As with elsewhere in the District, while some brownfield sites are likely to be available for development within the Larger Villages, this is unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the number of dwellings required in each of the settlements through increasing the level of growth. As such, Option LV1 and, in particular, Option LV2 have the potential to result in the loss of an increased proportion of BMV land in comparison to Option LV3. Additional growth would also likely facilitate higher levels of development on greenfield land, likely resulting in a greater loss of natural features which help to regulate soil and water quality.

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

Climate change	<p><i>Climate change mitigation</i></p> <p>An additional level of development in the District's Larger Villages instead of Grantham and the three Market Towns has the potential to increase the use of the private car. This is given the Larger Villages have fewer services and facilities and less comprehensive public transport networks than the larger settlements. As such, an additional level of growth in the Larger Villages through Option LV2 has the potential to encourage car use, with implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.</p> <p><i>Climate change adaptation</i></p> <p>Regarding flood risk, the settlements of Barrowby, Caythorpe, Great Gonerby, Harlaxton and Corby Glen have limited or no fluvial flood risk issues. Nonetheless, the remaining eleven Larger Villages all either contain or are surrounded by areas of land within either Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3. High risk areas include Ancaster, Baston, Barkston, Billingborough, Colsterworth, Long Bennington, Morton and South Witham.</p> <p>In addition, there is the potential for cumulative effects where development in a number of settlements along the same river will lead to a change to the flow rate to the watercourse and increased risk of flooding. For example, Barkston, Long Bennington, Colsterworth, and South Witham are all located along the River Witham.</p> <p>Whilst all options have the potential to lead to development in the flood zones, or elevated levels of flood risk, it is considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy in relation to flooding will help guide development away from flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. However, new development areas have the potential to increase flood risk through factors such as changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk.</p>	2	3	1
Population and community	<p>Accessibility to social and community services and facilities is a key influence on community cohesion, settlement vitality and the quality of life of residents. In this respect, the Larger Villages are less well served by local amenities and sustainable modes of transport when compared to Grantham and the Market Towns. However, a renewed and increased focus of growth within the Larger Villages through Options LV1 and LV2 has the potential to support the provision of additional services and facilities which will support community vitality. Growth in the Larger Villages will also help provide an increased variety of housing for a range of groups, including affordable housing, which has the potential to facilitate mixed, balanced and sustainable local communities.</p> <p>A greater focus on the functionality and role of Larger Villages is likely to be required in response to the changing habits of residents as they travel less and continue to work from home in response to the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, maintaining the quality of local offer, alongside encouraging opportunities for diversification where appropriate is key. In this respect, limiting growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV3 has the potential to undermine the vitality and viability of these settlements.</p>	1	2	3

Option LV1: Continue to plan for a level of housing growth across the Larger Villages within South Kesteven where there a range of available services and facilities.

Option LV2: Renew and increase the focus of growth in the Larger Villages.

Option LV3: Limit the level of growth in the Larger Villages.

	Given existing pressures on services and facilities in these settlements, a renewed and increased focus on growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV2 may however have additional potential to place increasing demands on existing amenities that will affect the quality of services used by residents.			
Health and wellbeing	An increase in population in the Larger Villages stimulated by Options LV1 and LV2 has the potential to support the viability of local leisure, recreational and health services in these settlements. However, in certain settlements, an increase in population may place increasing pressures on existing (limited) services without an improvement in the capacity of such amenities. As such, depending on the existing provision, effects may be positive or negative. Nonetheless, it is likely that residents will continue to travel to Grantham and the market towns to access key medical services and recreational and leisure facilities.	2	3	1
Transport	A relative lack of public transport provision serving Larger Villages when compared to the four larger settlements in the District has the potential to result in a greater reliance on private vehicles for accessing local services and facilities, including those in Grantham and the market towns. In this respect, continued and increased growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV1 and LV2 has the potential to encourage new development in locations which are at additional distance from key amenities and public transport networks. However, an increased level of growth in the Larger Villages has the potential to contribute to an enhancement in services and facilities in these settlements. This may help reduce the need to travel for some amenities. Growth may in some circumstances also support enhancements to local bus services. Alongside, the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have the potential to continue to affect travel patterns, including linked to increased levels of working from home and a limitation of traffic at peak times. The impact on local transport networks from a renewed and increased focus of growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV1 and LV2 may therefore be more limited than otherwise seen.	2	3	1
Economic vitality	In many cases, the Larger Villages provide a range of community services as well as some employment opportunities. Therefore, continued and increased growth in these locations through Option LV1 and LV2 will help to support the diversification of the local economy (including the rural economy) through supporting local labour availability and promoting new business opportunities, as well as helping to promote and sustain the viability of existing local services and facilities. A greater focus on the functionality and role of Larger Villages is likely to be required in response to the changing habits of residents as they travel less and continue to work from home in response to the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, maintaining the quality of local offer, alongside encouraging opportunities for diversification where appropriate is key. In this respect, limiting growth within the Larger Villages through Option LV3 has the potential to undermine the vitality and viability of these settlements.	2	1	3

Appraisal of options for growth in the Smaller Villages

4.25 There are also in the region of 60 Smaller Villages in the District. These are identified in the current Local Plan as follows:

Aisby	Dry Doddington	Hough on the Hill	Ropsley	Witham on the Hill
Allington	Dunsby	Ingoldsby	Sedgebrook	West Deeping
Aslackby	Dyke	Irnham	Skillington	Woolsthorpe By Colsterworth
Barholm	Edenham	Kirby Underwood	Stubton	Woolsthorpe By Belvoir
Belton	Folkingham	Lenton	Sudbrook	
Braceborough	Foston	Little Bytham	Swayfield	
Boothby Pagnell	Frognall	Manthorpe (Bourne)	Swinstead	
Burton Coggles	Fulbeck	Marston	Syston	
Carlby	Greatford	North Witham	Twenty	
Carlton Scroop	Great Ponton	Oasby	Toft	
Castle Bytham	Haconby	Old Somerby	Tallington	
Claypole	Hanthorpe	Pickworth	Uffington	
Denton	Horbling	Pointon	Welby	
Dowsby	Hougham	Rippingale	Westborough	

4.26 Whilst these settlements are not deemed to be sustainable locations for site allocations in the current Local Plan, the plan supports sensitive infill housing development within the built-up part of the settlements and the redevelopment of previously developed sites. In this context the current Local Plan highlights that there is limited capacity to accommodate new development in Smaller Villages, but allows small, sensitive infill developments (generally expected to be no more than three dwellings) to take place.

4.27 With regards to the LPR, there is the potential to continue this approach or deliver an additional level of growth in these settlements.

4.28 To explore this further, the SA process has considered two options, as follows:

- **Option SV1:** Continue an approach which does not seek to allocate sites in Smaller Villages whilst recognising that some development will occur through 'windfalls'.
- **Option SV2:** Facilitate an additional level of growth in Smaller Villages.

4.29 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the two options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.

4.30 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the more favourable ranking and '2' the less favourable ranking.

Table 4.4: Appraisal of options for growth in the Smaller Villages

Option SV1: Continue an approach which does not seek to allocate sites in Smaller Villages whilst recognising that some development will occur through 'windfalls'.

Option SV2: Facilitate an additional level of growth in Smaller Villages.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		SV	SV2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features and areas of biodiversity interest largely depends on the detailed location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures, it can be generally considered that a higher level of housing provision in a location increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the designated sites and habitats and species present in the vicinity. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value, and an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns or an increase in recreational activity.</p> <p>In this respect the facilitation of an additional level of growth in the District's Smaller Villages through Option SV2 has increased potential to lead to impacts on habitats, species and ecological networks in the vicinities of these settlements. Due to site allocations in these locations being unlikely to comprise major development of a larger scale, there is also potentially less potential for significant green infrastructure or biodiversity net gain provision to be incorporated with new development areas. This would be likely to limit opportunities for facilitating biodiversity enhancements through new development sites in these locations.</p>	1	2
Landscape	<p>Many of the Smaller Villages in South Kesteven are in locations sensitive for landscape character. The settings of these villages also comprise an important element of local character, distinctiveness and a sense of place.</p> <p>Given their smaller size, an inappropriate scale of development is likely to have a disproportionate effect on landscape character in the vicinity of these settlements. Option SV2 therefore has increased potential to lead to additional effects on landscape character and a sense of place.</p> <p>Option SV1, through facilitating small-scale and piecemeal development through windfalls, will (in conjunction with the wider policies of the LPR relating to landscape, design and local distinctiveness) do more to reflect local sensitivities in terms of landscape character.</p>	1	2
Historic environment	<p>The Smaller Villages in South Kesteven often have a sensitive historic environment, with numerous designated and undesignated features and areas of cultural heritage interest. The settings of these villages also comprise an important element of historic character.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development, it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the heritage assets present locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of features and areas of historic environment interest in the vicinity of the settlement. In this respect the facilitation of an additional level of growth in the Smaller Villages through Option SV2 has increased potential to lead to impacts. However, whilst development has the potential to have negative effects on the fabric and setting of the historic environment, it should also be noted that well sited development coupled with high quality design and layout can support enhancements to cultural heritage assets and their settings. Likewise,</p>	1	2

Option SV1: Continue an approach which does not seek to allocate sites in Smaller Villages whilst recognising that some development will occur through ‘windfalls’.

Option SV2: Facilitate an additional level of growth in Smaller Villages.

	<p>new development areas can offer opportunities to rejuvenate disused and underutilised heritage assets and enhance their settings. As such, effects on the historic environment have the potential to be both positive and negative.</p> <p>Overall though, Option SV1, through facilitating small-scale and piecemeal development through windfalls, has increased potential to (in conjunction with the wider policies of the LPR relating to the historic environment, design and local distinctiveness) do more to reflect local sensitivities in terms of settlements’ historic environment resource.</p>		
Air, land, water and soil resources	<p>An additional level of development in the District’s Smaller Villages has the potential to increase the use of the private car. This is given such settlements tend to have fewer services and facilities and less comprehensive public transport networks than larger settlements. As such, higher growth in the Smaller Villages will lead to an element of car dependency, stimulating an increase in traffic levels. Whilst key air quality issues in the District are located away from the Smaller Villages, such an approach may contribute (albeit in a limited manner) to existing air quality issues elsewhere, including in the larger settlements.</p> <p>In terms of Option SV2’s impact on soils resources, given the lack of available brownfield sites in the Smaller Villages, an increased proportion of development in these locations has the potential to promote an increased level of greenfield development. The option will also do less to facilitate the remediation of areas of land contamination.</p> <p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on water quality largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures (e.g. SuDS), it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on both surface water and groundwater resources. This is linked to increased levels of surface water runoff, increased suspended sediment loading and discharge of polluted runoff.</p>	1	2
Climate change	<p>An additional level of development in the District’s Smaller Villages has the potential to increase the use of the private car. This is given these settlements tend to have fewer services and facilities and less comprehensive public transport networks than larger settlements. As such, higher growth in the Smaller Villages has the potential to encourage car use, with implications for greenhouse gas emissions from transport.</p> <p>Flood risk in the Smaller Villages varies depending on location. However, it is considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy in relation to flooding will help guide development away from flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. For example, the NPPF does not permit development within flood risk areas or where the effect would be to increase flood risk elsewhere without appropriate mitigation measures. Likewise, adherence to the recommendations and guidance presented in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) undertaken to inform the LPR will help limit effects.</p>	1	2
Population and community	<p>The delivery of an additional level of growth at the Smaller Villages through Option SV2 has the potential to help meet locally specific housing needs. This includes through supporting the provision of housing for those engaged in rural activities, including agriculture, forestry or tourism. An increased level of development may also promote the vitality of smaller communities.</p> <p>However, given these settlements tend to have fewer facilities and less comprehensive public transport networks than larger settlements in the District, the approach taken forward through Option SV2 will do less to</p>	1	2

Option SV1: Continue an approach which does not seek to allocate sites in Smaller Villages whilst recognising that some development will occur through ‘windfalls’.

Option SV2: Facilitate an additional level of growth in Smaller Villages.

	support accessibility to key services and amenities. This will undermine social inclusion. Smaller settlements also have less capacity to accommodate growth in terms of local infrastructure. This has the potential to undermine the resilience of existing communities.		
Health and wellbeing	The District’s Smaller Villages tend to be more poorly connected to health services and leisure and recreation facilities than larger settlements. In addition, they tend to be poorly connected to key amenities by active travel links, including pedestrian and cycle networks. A lack of accessibility to services, facilities and amenities in such settlements also undermines health and wellbeing and influences deprivation levels (which is a key determinant of health). As such, Option 1, through continuing to limit growth in Smaller Villages, will perform more favourably in relation to the health and wellbeing theme.	1	2
Transport	The District’s Smaller Villages are less well connected by public transport networks and have fewer services and facilities than larger settlements. This increases car dependency for those living in these settlements. As such an increased level of development in smaller settlements facilitated through Option SV2 will increase the need to travel and stimulate the use of the private car.	1	2
Economic vitality	The delivery of an additional level of growth at the Smaller Villages through Option SV2 has the potential to help meet locally specific housing needs, including for those engaged in rural activities, including agriculture, forestry or tourism. This may support the vitality of the rural economy. However, given windfall site can deliver similar types of development, the magnitude of effects in these regards is likely to be limited. Additional growth in Smaller Villages may also promote the economic vitality of these communities (although it should be noted that a growth in economic activities in these less accessible locations may be less appropriate than growth delivered elsewhere in the District).	2	1

Appraisal of options for a new community

4.31 Depending on land availability, there may be scope to deliver a significant proportion of South Kesteven’s housing and employment need through a new garden community in the District via an LPR allocation. Whilst the size of a garden community would be determined by evidence, it is anticipated that such a settlement would reflect the size of South Kesteven’s Larger Villages.

4.32 As defined by MHCLG, the main characteristics of a garden community are as follows:

- a purpose-built new settlement, or large extension to an existing town;
- a community with a clear identity and attractive environment;
- it provides a mix of homes, including affordable and self-build; and
- planned by local authorities or private sector in consultation with the local community.

4.33 As well as building new homes, the communities develop:

- job opportunities;
- attractive green space and public realm areas;
- transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle routes;
- community infrastructure, schools, community and health centres; and

- a plan for long-term stewardship of community assets.⁶
- 4.34 In light of the above, the SA process has considered two options, as follows:
- **Option GC1:** Delivery of a new community on garden village principles
 - **Option GC2:** Do not seek to deliver growth through such a development
- 4.35 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the two options introduced above. These are organised by the seven SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.36 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '2' the less favourable ranking.

Table 4.5: Appraisal of options relating to a new community

Option GC1: Delivery of a new community on garden village principles

Option GC2: Do not seek to deliver growth through such a development

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		GC1	GC2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Potential impacts on designated biodiversity sites through Option GC1 depend on the location of a new community, and its proximity to features and areas which contribute to designated sites' nature conservation value.</p> <p>Whilst the delivery of a new community of homes, employment land and associated community infrastructure has the potential to lead to impacts on habitats, species and ecological networks, the delivery of a new community on garden village principles offers opportunities for enhancements to biodiversity. This includes through enhancements to habitats and species through the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure provision and the implementation of a robust net gain principle through new development.</p> <p>The relative merits of the options with regards to biodiversity therefore depend on the location of development and the extent to which a new community is accompanied by the provision of a comprehensive approach to the natural environment which places biodiversity, nature recovery and net gain at its centre.</p>	?	?
Landscape	<p>Whilst the potential location of a new garden community has not been determined, the delivery of homes, employment land and associated community infrastructure is likely to concentrate impacts on landscape character in one location. Although delivering growth through a larger-sized community could limit growth in existing settlements (and thus limit impacts on landscape character in the vicinities of these settlements), development of this scale has the potential to negatively contribute to the particular qualities of the Landscape Character Areas in the locations for growth.</p> <p>In this respect directing a significantly higher quantum of development to locations which do not necessarily have the highest capacities for change may have increased potential for significant effects on landscape character, even with the green infrastructure provision and landscaping expected of a new community developed on garden village principles.</p>	2	1
Historic environment	<p>South Kesteven District has a rich historic environment, with numerous features and areas nationally and locally designated for their historic environment interest. Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development, it can be</p>	?	?

⁶ MHCLG (August 2018) Garden Communities <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/garden-communities>

Option GC1: Delivery of a new community on garden village principles

Option GC2: Do not seek to deliver growth through such a development

considered that a higher level of growth in one location increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the fabric and setting of heritage assets locally.

However, the delivery of growth through a new community may also reduce impacts from growth that would otherwise take place on the historic environment elsewhere, including in settlements with a large heritage resource. A new community on garden village principles also offers opportunities to restore and rejuvenate existing heritage assets' fabric and setting.

Overall however, the significance of the effects from each option on features and areas of historic environment interest depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the realisation of enhancements opportunities.

<p>Air, land, water and soil resources</p>	<p>Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on water resources and quality largely depends on the location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures (e.g. SuDS), it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a location through a large scale new community increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on both surface water and groundwater resources. This is linked to increased levels of surface water runoff, increased suspended sediment loading and discharge of polluted runoff. However, the development of a new community on garden village principles offers significant opportunities for delivering sustainable drainage systems, green and blue infrastructure provision, and also support water efficiency, water saving and reuse infrastructure. Impacts on soils resources depend on the extent to which a new community is taken forward on previously developed or greenfield land, and the agricultural land classification of the land developed. In terms of impacts of the options on air quality, this depends on the location of development in relation to the areas with existing air quality issues in the District, which currently include parts of Grantham, and historically, Stamford.</p>	<p>? ?</p>
<p>Climate change</p>	<p>Road transport is an increasingly significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in South Kesteven. Option GC2 has increased potential to direct an increased level of growth to existing settlements with the broadest range of services and facilities. This will help limit the need to travel to services and facilities, therefore helping to limit emissions from transport. In contrast, a new community has the potential to increase the need to travel to existing higher tier services and facilities, with associated impacts on greenhouse gas emissions from transport. As such, to avoid significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, the delivery of a new community through Option GC1 would need to be accompanied by comprehensive measures to secure accessibility by non-car modes, including walking, cycling and public transport use and ensure linkages to existing higher level services (which would not be delivered in a community of a size comparable to one of the District's Larger Villages). In terms of the energy efficiency of new development, a new community developed on garden village principles would theoretically result in growth underpinned by high standards of sustainability. However, high energy efficiency standards should not only be limited to development which takes place in a garden community setting. In terms of renewable energy provision, while it is considered that this can only be assessed on a site by site basis, it is noted that there are generally more opportunities to integrate low carbon, renewable and community energy into large scale development. It is therefore considered that there may be greater potential for a new community on</p>	<p>? ?</p>

Option GC1: Delivery of a new community on garden village principles

Option GC2: Do not seek to deliver growth through such a development

	<p>garden village principles to lead to significant positive effects in this respect.</p> <p>In accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and national policy, it is anticipated that new development would seek to avoid the highest flood risk areas, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented in accordance the SFRA undertaken for the District. As such it is not possible to differentiate between the options in this regard. However, Option GC1 may however have increased potential to deliver significant green infrastructure provision through a new community, which will support both climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p>		
Population and community	<p>Depending on location, the delivery of a new community through GC1 has the potential to lead to the development of a new settlement which is relatively disconnected from existing settlements and the services/ facilities they provide. However, the delivery of a larger settlement comparable in size to the District's Larger Villages would help provide a critical mass which enables the delivery of a wider range of services/ facilities. This will help promote accessibility to day-to-day amenities and support the community cohesion of the new settlement.</p> <p>The delivery of a community developed on garden village principles has the potential to support the quality of life of residents, if accompanied by the delivery of high-quality community infrastructure and well-designed homes. This includes through the provision of: high quality multi-functional green infrastructure networks; shops, services and amenities; leisure and recreational facilities; comprehensive walking and cycling networks; and high quality and energy efficient development.</p> <p>Whilst Option GC2 offers less potential to deliver significant community provision in one location, it offers additional potential to deliver growth which is better integrated with existing settlements. In this respect it offers further scope for growth to reinforce the community offer of the District's towns and villages and support their vitality. The option also offers increased opportunity to deliver growth which meets settlements' specific needs in terms of the type and tenure of housing and employment provision. In addition, the option has increased potential to deliver growth in better proximity to key transport nodes (such as railway stations). This will support the quality of life or residents and social inclusion.</p>	2	1
Health and wellbeing	<p>The delivery of a new community on garden village principles through Option GC1 offers significant opportunities to deliver high quality multifunctional green infrastructure networks alongside new development with active travel routes and accessible networks of open spaces. In this context, the option has the potential to do more to deliver new infrastructure that will support health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Option GC2 however has increased potential to deliver development in locations with better proximity to existing health services and recreational and leisure facilities. The option also offers additional potential to help reduce the need to travel to key services and facilities, and support the use of healthier modes of travel such as walking and cycling to access key centres. This recognises the close link between accessibility, deprivation and wellbeing. The option will also do more to help support enhancements to health and leisure provision and green infrastructure provision in existing settlements.</p>	2	1
Transport	<p>Depending on location, the delivery of a new community through GC1 has the potential to lead to a new settlement relatively disconnected from existing settlements and the services/ facilities they provide. This has the potential to increase the need to travel when compared to Option GC2, which has the potential to deliver development which is better integrated with existing settlements. However, the delivery of a larger settlement</p>	?	?

Option GC1: Delivery of a new community on garden village principles

Option GC2: Do not seek to deliver growth through such a development

comparable in size to the District's Larger Villages would help provide a critical mass which enables the delivery of a wider range of services/ facilities. This will help reduce the need to travel for day-to-day services and facilities. A new community developed on garden village principles also offers significant potential to deliver comprehensive walking and cycling networks, and facilitate linkages with new and existing public transport networks.

The relative merits of the options therefore depend on the detailed location of development and the provision of new and enhanced sustainable transport links to key services, facilities and job opportunities.

Economic vitality	<p>Depending on location, the delivery of a new settlement through Option GC1 is considered less likely than Option GC2 to enhance the vitality and viability of existing town and local centres. This is given growth taken forward through this option is less likely to be integrated within existing towns and villages in the District.</p> <p>Option GC2 offers increased opportunity to deliver housing and employment growth which meets settlements' specific economic needs. In addition, the option has increased potential to deliver growth in better proximity to employment centres and key transport nodes (such as railway stations). This will support accessibility to employment and training opportunities.</p>	2	1
-------------------	--	----------	----------

Appraisal of options for biodiversity net gain

- 4.37 At present, Biodiversity Net Gain is required by local and national planning policy. This is accompanied by the provisions of the Environment Bill, expected to be enacted in late 2020, which sets out a mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.
- 4.38 With a view to helping to support enhancements to habitats, species and ecological networks in the District, SKDC would like to explore the possibility of extending the 10% provision through introducing a requirement through the LPR that at least a 20% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites is enacted.
- 4.39 In light of the above, the SA process has considered two options, as follows:
- **Option NG1:** Seek to deliver the soon-to-be mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.
 - **Option NG2:** Seek to deliver at least a 20% measurable biodiversity net gain on major development sites.
- 4.40 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the two options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.41 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '2' the less favourable ranking.

Table 4.6: Appraisal of options relating to Biodiversity Net Gain

Option NG1: Seek to deliver the soon-to-be mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

Option NG2: Seek to deliver at least a 20% measurable biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		NG1	NG2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>BNG approaches include habitat creation and avoided habitat loss, notably through steering development towards the least environmentally damaging areas and design practice. Through introducing a 20% net gain requirement, Option BNG2 would therefore contribute most positively towards the 25 Year Environment Plan's⁷ commitment to protecting and restoring nature.</p> <p>In many cases a 10% uplift in biodiversity where the previous baseline is zero (for example often seen on brownfield sites) provides limited benefit. In this respect the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) argue that 10% may be within the margin of error for the valuation of habitats, and it may be too low to deliver real benefits; at most it might achieve no net loss.⁸ CIEEM also highlight the importance of a minimum mandatory requirement, to ensure that the Lawton principles (more, bigger, better and joined up) approach is applied, and suggest that 20% is set as this minimum requirement.⁹ A requirement for 10% net gain (Option BNG1) would therefore lead to greater uncertainty over whether BNG would, in practice, be achieved at the site rather than the landscape scale.</p> <p>In the South Kesteven context, many species of conservation interest in the District are separated by large distances from other patches of suitable habitat which exceed their normal dispersion capabilities. Creating a more inter-connected network of habitats allows species to expand their range, counteracting the ongoing trend for habitat fragmentation and adapting to the threats of climate change.¹⁰ A requirement to demonstrate 20% net gain (Option BNG2) will likely provide greater certainty in terms of ensuring existing habitat is retained where possible and habitats and ecological connections enhanced. The obligation to deliver an increased level of net gain in biodiversity is also more likely to ensure that mitigation and compensation measures are adequately considered in relation to development, which may in some cases result in the need for offsite compensation.</p> <p>A stronger approach to BNG will also help to fund opportunities to work towards rebuilding the wider natural environment through the development of Nature Recovery Networks in South Kesteven, Lincolnshire and regionally.</p> <p>It is noted though that the requirement to secure a minimum 20% net gain could be difficult to achieve on major development sites where the site is more ecologically sensitive, or where the loss of higher value habitats is unavoidable. This would be likely to significantly increase the demand for habitat banks and biodiversity offsetting, and may lead to disproportionate implications for the viability of particular development types.</p> <p>Overall though, Option BNG2 is considered to be the best performing in</p>	2	1

⁷ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2019) 25 Year Environment Plan [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

⁸ CIEEM (2019) Defra Biodiversity Net-Gain Consultation Response Document [online] available at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CIEEM-Net-Gain-consultation-response-Feb2019-FINAL.pdf>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ SKDC (2012) South Kesteven Green Infrastructure Strategy <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2420&p=0>

Option NG1: Seek to deliver the soon-to-be mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

Option NG2: Seek to deliver at least a 20% measurable biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

terms of improving and enhancing South Kesteven's biodiversity resource.			
Landscape	<p>Delivering net gains in biodiversity has the potential to help conserve and enhance landscape character, including its special qualities and sense of place. For example, enhanced habitats (trees, hedgerows, grass, shrub, etc.) can form important parts of the landscape, and also provide a role in landscape buffering and planting, providing screening to restrict undesirable views. They can also play a role in contributing towards local distinctiveness and a sense of place. While positive effects in this respect may be delivered through Option BNG1, these are likely to be less significant than the benefits under Option BNG2.</p> <p>However, it is recognised that BNG needs to be appropriately designed to reinforce the special qualities of a landscape. The design of BNG will therefore need to be sensitive to the surrounding landscape, and exercises in habitat restoration and creation should be carefully selected to complement existing character and setting.</p>	2	1
Historic environment	<p>Delivering net gains in biodiversity can have beneficial impacts in terms of the built environment, and by extension, the setting of the historic environment. With regards to Option BNG2, the increased provision of green infrastructure that will be utilised in developments to facilitate a 20% net gain in biodiversity has the potential to enhance and improve the quality of the public realm. In this respect enhancements to the built and natural environment supported by BNG has the potential to support the setting of the historic environment and contribute to historic landscape character.</p> <p>While positive effects in this respect may be delivered through Option BNG1, these are likely to be less significant than the benefits under Option BNG2.</p>	2	1
Air, land, water and soil resources	<p>With respect to air quality, whilst Option BNG1 will provide benefits, Option BNG2 is likely to perform more favourably given green infrastructure enhancements will be a key element of biodiversity net gain (BNG). In this respect the provision of enhanced green infrastructure is recognised as an important element of the solution to addressing air pollution in built up areas, including through removing different types of air pollution, including particulate matter, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and ozone. BNG can also deliver air quality benefits at the microscale. For example, the introduction of green walls and roofs trap pollutants which in turn deliver cleaner air.</p> <p>As such, an increased requirement for net gain through Option BNG2 has additional potential to lead to positive effects in relation to air quality. Biodiversity enhancements have the potential to deliver a range of ecosystem services which will support land, soil and water resources. These include soil formation; flood and erosion protection; and water quality regulation. The provision of green infrastructure within new developments can support flood risk management through the provision of permeable surfaces and the introduction of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).</p> <p>Option BNG2 is therefore likely to perform most positively in this respect. given its increased net gain requirement.</p>		
Climate change	<p>As highlighted by the NPPF, well planned green infrastructure can help an area adapt to, and manage the risks of climate change (including flood risk). In addition, green infrastructure provision can support climate change mitigation through enhancing natural features which act as carbon sequestrers. In this respect, Option BNG2 is likely to perform more</p>		

Option NG1: Seek to deliver the soon-to-be mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

Option NG2: Seek to deliver at least a 20% measurable biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

	favourably given green infrastructure enhancements will be a key element of biodiversity net gain (BNG).
Population and community	<p>From a development viability perspective, Option BNG1 seeks a requirement for biodiversity net gain which is in line with figures which respond to the evidence available, and is therefore not expected to have adverse impacts on housing development and infrastructure delivery. Under Option BNG2, there is potential for this stricter requirement to affect the viability of new developments, potentially reducing the overall rate of housing and employment delivery. The implications of BNG on the viability of development is likely to be disproportionate for certain development types, for example public service infrastructure and redevelopment of post-industrial developed land.¹¹ Risks are uncertain. While further evidence is required to understand the scale of the risk involved, it is noted that elsewhere Lichfield District Council requires a net gain of 20% on new development, and experience there to date suggests that developers are able to meet this requirement and often achieve much greater levels of biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Otherwise, attractive and wildlife-rich green spaces support the quality of neighbourhoods, often supporting a high-quality public realm. 'Green' neighbourhoods are also more desirable places to live, with access to green space found to markedly increase property values. The Office for National Statistics (2019) estimates that green and blue space add £2,813 to the price of the average house in Great Britain, and this is likely to increase in light of Covid-19 and the increased value placed on accessible green space.¹²</p>
Health and wellbeing	<p>Biodiversity is of intrinsic value to people through supporting healthy lifestyles, however development often makes a significant contribution to land use change and to the loss of natural habitats that reduces biodiversity.¹³ The 25 Year Environment Plan recognises this, acknowledging that there is unequal access to nature and green spaces, and therefore sets out commitments to better connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing.¹⁴ It is therefore considered that delivering at least a 20% net gain (Option BNG2) provides an increased opportunity to facilitate the wider social and wellbeing benefits that healthy ecosystems offer.</p> <p>A 20% net gain requirement may also encourage developers to take a strategic approach to protecting, restoring and creating quality habitat that contributes towards a network of multifunctional green infrastructure. This can have significant wellbeing benefits, including providing open space, leisure and recreational opportunities which in turn support healthy and active lifestyles. Numerous mental and physical health benefits can be anticipated as a result; with the potential for significant positive effects in the long-term.</p> <p>In light of the above, it is considered that a higher net gain requirement (Option BNG2) is anticipated to perform most positively of the two</p>

¹¹ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2019) Net gain: Summary of responses and government responses [online] available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819823/net-gain-consult-sum-resp.pdf

¹² ONS (2019) Urban green spaces raise nearby house prices by an average of £2,500 [online] available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/urbangreenspacesraisenearbyhousepricesbyanaverageof2500/2019-10-14>

¹³ RSPB (2016) State of Nature UK Report [online] available at

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/documents/conservation-projects/state-of-nature/state-of-nature-uk-report-2016.pdf>

¹⁴ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2019) 25 Year Environment Plan [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

Option NG1: Seek to deliver the soon-to-be mandatory minimum measurable 10% figure for biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

Option NG2: Seek to deliver at least a 20% measurable biodiversity net gain on major development sites.

options.			
Transport	Whilst with regards to Option BNG2, the increased provision of green infrastructure that will be utilised in developments to facilitate a 20% net gain in biodiversity has the potential to enhance and improve the quality of walking and cycling networks, the relative merits of each option in this regard are likely to be negligible.		
Economic vitality	Attractive and wildlife-rich green spaces support the quality of neighbourhoods, often supporting a high-quality public realm. 'Green' neighbourhoods are also more desirable places to live, with access to green space found to markedly increase property values. Wider benefits to the economy are similarly high, with biodiversity being a significant contributor to the economy. In this respect South Kesteven's various habitats and wildlife, whether found in urban or rural greenspaces, bring substantial economic value through tourism and leisure, and indirectly supporting food production and agriculture. ¹⁵	2	1

Appraisal of options for residential caravan and park home accommodation

- 4.42 In South Kesteven there are a number of small existing developments for caravan accommodation, designed for low cost residential accommodation rather than for tourism. Whilst the demand for such accommodation is unknown, it is recognised that residential caravan and mobile home sites currently make a contribution to residential provision in the District, particularly with regard to low cost accommodation.
- 4.43 Given the contribution of such provision to delivering low cost housing needs in the District, there is potential for the LPR to set out specific policies and proposals for delivering this type of residential provision.
- 4.44 Two options have therefore been considered through the SA process to explore whether to plan positively for mobile home and caravan accommodation in the District. These are as follows:
- **Option C1:** Continue as per the current Local Plan, which does not set out specific policies relating to caravan accommodation.
 - **Option C2:** Assess the need for caravan and park home sites and, depending on the evidence of need, include specific policies and proposals.
- 4.45 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the two options introduced above. These are organised by the nine SA themes and use the SA Framework set out above.
- 4.46 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '2' the less favourable ranking.

¹⁵ Ecological Expertise, Evolved (Building Biodiversity Net Gain into Housing https://assets.website-files.com/5e5fb414845bab39bfd2015f/5e6809ce13930fcb39f12bce_EPR-Report-NetGain-v01-compressed.pdf)

Table 4.7: Appraisal of options for caravan accommodation

Option C1: Continue as per the current Local Plan, which does not set out specific policies relating to caravan accommodation

Option C2: Assess the need for park homes and caravan sites and, depending on the evidence of need, include specific policies and proposals.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		C1	C2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	The significance of the effects from each option on habitats, species and ecological networks largely depends on the detailed location, scale and nature of caravan and mobile home site provision and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures. Both options have the potential to lead to impacts on biodiversity, depending on the application of other policies in the LPR with regards to biodiversity. However, a specific policy on residential park homes and caravan sites through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to the protection and enhancement of habitats, species and ecological networks.	2	1
Landscape	Park homes and residential caravan sites can detract significantly from local landscape character. In this respect the significance of effects from each option largely depends on the detailed location, scale and nature of caravan and mobile home site provision and the incorporation of design and layout provisions which seek to limit impacts on landscape character. Both options have the potential to lead to impacts on landscape character, depending on the application of other policies in the LPR with regards to landscape, local distinctiveness and design. However, a specific policy on park homes and caravan sites through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to the protection and enhancement of landscape character.	2	1
Historic environment	Park homes and residential caravan sites can detract significantly from the setting of features and areas of historic environment interest and historic landscapes and townscapes. In this respect the significance of effects from each option on the historic environment largely depends on the detailed location, scale and nature of caravan and mobile home site provision and the incorporation of design and layout provisions which seek to limit impacts on the historic environment. This in part depends on the application of other policies in the LPR with regards to the historic environment, local distinctiveness and design. However, a specific policy on park homes and caravan sites through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.	2	1
Air, land, water and soil resources	Park homes and residential caravan sites' contribution to air, water and soil pollution is likely to be limited compared to other types of housing provision given the likely number of such homes being delivered of this type and tenure. Due to their lack of permanence, such provision is also unlikely to lead to the permanent sterilisation of productive agricultural land.	?	?
Climate change	Residential caravans and park homes are frequently less energy efficient than homes of a more permanent nature. In this respect it is uncertain as to the extent to which a specific policy on caravan and park home sites will limit or encourage such provision, and as such affect overall emissions from residential uses. Impacts on climate change mitigation are likely to depend on the proximity and accessibility of residential caravan and park home sites to existing services, facilities and amenities and the extent to which the location is likely to encourage car use. In this respect a specific policy through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of specific provisions	2	1

Option C1: Continue as per the current Local Plan, which does not set out specific policies relating to caravan accommodation

Option C2: Assess the need for park homes and caravan sites and, depending on the evidence of need, include specific policies and proposals.

	<p>relating to the location of residential caravan and park home sites in terms of accessibility to services, facilities and sustainable transport links.</p> <p>In relation to climate change adaptation (including flood risk), it is not possible to differentiate between the options given this depends on the location of development and the incorporation of mitigation measures such as sustainable drainage systems. It is also considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy will help guide development away from flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. However, Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to fluvial, groundwater and surface flood risk and appropriate locational policies.</p>		
Population and community	<p>Caravan and park homes are often of a lower standard than homes of a more permanent nature in terms of quality and energy efficiency. In this respect it is uncertain as to the extent to which a specific LPR policy will limit or encourage residential caravan or park home provision alongside other residential types. However, Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of a policy which sets out specific requirements relating to the quality, location and minimum standards expected from such provision. With regards to social inclusion, a policy on residential park homes and caravan sites through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to the location of these types of homes in terms of accessibility to services, facilities and sustainable transport links.</p>	2	1
Health and wellbeing	<p>Caravan and park homes are often of a lower standard than homes of a more permanent nature in terms of quality and energy efficiency. This has the potential to affect health and wellbeing. In this respect Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of a policy which sets out requirements relating to the quality, location and minimum standards expected from residential caravan and park home provision.</p>	2	1
Transport	<p>The need to travel and sustainable transport use will depend on the proximity of residential caravan and park home provision to existing services, facilities and amenities. In this respect a specific policy through Option C2 provides scope for the inclusion of provisions relating to the location of residential caravan and park home sites in terms of accessibility to services, facilities and sustainable transport links.</p>	2	1
Economic vitality	<p>It is unlikely that the delivery of specific policies and proposals with regard to residential caravan and park home provision would have significant impacts in relation to the economic vitality of the District. This is given the relatively small scale of such provision and its limited impact on employment growth.</p>	=	=

Appraisal of options for parking standards

- 4.47 Whilst SKDC is committed to improving sustainable transport options, car travel will remain a significant mode of travel in the District for the foreseeable future.
- 4.48 In light of this, SKDC would like to explore the possibility of delivering flexible parking standards across the District, which would be applied on a case-by-case basis. This would augment the Council's existing Car Parking Strategy.¹⁶
- 4.49 In response to the above, the SA process has considered two options, as follows:
- **Option P1:** Provide priority for car parking within new development proposals including private driveways, garages and parking courts
 - **Option P2:** Allow parking standards to be developed flexibly on a case-by-case basis taking into account the needs of the development, area and local communities.
- 4.50 The following table presents appraisal findings in relation to the two options introduced above. These are organised by the seven SA themes.
- 4.51 For each SA theme, a commentary on the likely effects is presented. Options are also ranked numerically reflecting their relative sustainability performance, with '1' the most favourable ranking and '2' the less favourable ranking.

Table 4.8: Appraisal of options relating to parking standards

Option P1: Provide priority for car parking within new development proposals including private driveways, garages and parking courts

Option P2: Allow parking standards to be developed flexibly on a case-by-case basis taking into account the needs of the development, area and local communities.

SA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		P1	P2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Delivering flexible parking standards through Option P2 may lead to more land being made available for other uses, including green infrastructure which may support ecological networks in the area. The option will enable this to be considered on a case-by-case basis, dependent on the detailed location, scale and nature of development and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures. While it is difficult to differentiate between the two options, Option P2 performs marginally more positively for this reason.	2	1
Landscape	Option P1 may support landscape, townscape and villagescape character through limiting on street parking and reducing the impact of parking on the public realm. However, the delivery of flexible parking standards through Option P2 has the potential to deliver parking provision which better responds to local character and a sense of place.	2	1
Historic environment	Option P1 may support the setting of the historic environment through limiting on street parking and reducing the impact of parking on the built environment. However, the delivery of flexible parking standards through Option P2 has the potential to deliver parking provision which better responds to local historic environment constraints, as well as opportunities for enhancements.	2	1

¹⁶ SKDC (2017 South Kesteven Car Parking Strategy <http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s16342/CAR%20PARKING%20STRATEGY%20v3.pdf>)

Option P1: Provide priority for car parking within new development proposals including private driveways, garages and parking courts

Option P2: Allow parking standards to be developed flexibly on a case-by-case basis taking into account the needs of the development, area and local communities.

Air, land, water and soil resources	<p>The restriction of parking spaces in accessible locations can stimulate modal shift away from use the private car towards use of active (walking, cycling) and public (bus, train) modes of transport. However, in some cases, residents may respond to a restricted number of parking spaces by parking on roads, which can also cause problems in respect of localised traffic congestion. In terms of air quality, increased stop-starts can lead to increased air pollution.¹⁷</p> <p>While it is recognised that providing private driveways, garages, etc. within development would reduce potential for bottlenecking along streets (and subsequent congestion), this may also facilitate increased day-to-day private vehicle use.</p> <p>It is also noted that providing priority/off-road parking (Option P1) may also support the shift towards Electric Vehicles (EVs), as EVs require designated parking spaces with access to a charging point. Given they produce negligible emissions, an increase in EVs will help support air quality in the District.</p> <p>Overall, adopting a 'case-by-case' approach through Option P2 would likely be best performing of the options as locational constraints and opportunities could be weighed up through decision making (i.e. good access to sustainable/active travel modes in towns vs limited accessibility and anticipated long-term car reliance in the rural hinterlands).</p> <p>Option P1 also performs less positively in terms of land and soil resources due to its potential to increase the requirement for land take for parking provision.</p>	2	1
Climate change	<p>The restriction of parking spaces in accessible locations through Option P2 can stimulate modal shift away from use the private car towards use of active (walking, cycling) and public (bus, train) modes of transport. Adopting a 'case-by-case' approach through Option P2 would also help limit emissions from transport as locational constraints and opportunities could be weighed up through decision making (i.e. good access to sustainable/active travel modes in towns vs limited accessibility and anticipated long-term car reliance in the rural hinterlands).</p> <p>However, providing priority/off-road parking through Option P1 may support the shift towards Electric Vehicles (EVs), as EVs require designated parking spaces with access to a charging point. EVs produce no emissions when driving, leading to positive effects in the short, medium and long term with regards to climate change mitigation.</p> <p>In terms of adapting to the effects of climate change, Option P1 has the potential to perform less positively in terms of flood risk due to the option's increased delivery of impermeable hard-standing and its likely contribution to increased surface water runoff. In this respect Option P2 has increased potential to respond to flood risk issues that may be present locally.</p>	?	?

¹⁷ Zhang K, Batterman S. Air pollution and health risks due to vehicle traffic. Sci Total Environ. 2013;450-451:307-316. doi:10.1016/j.scitotenv.2013.01.074 [online] available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4243514/>

Option P1: Provide priority for car parking within new development proposals including private driveways, garages and parking courts

Option P2: Allow parking standards to be developed flexibly on a case-by-case basis taking into account the needs of the development, area and local communities.

Population and community	<p>It is recognised that parking is a sensitive and contentious area for many communities. This reflects the importance of the private vehicle in South Kesteven, particularly outside of higher tier settlements where sustainable travel opportunities are limited. Option P2 therefore provides more opportunity for providing appropriate parking provision on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the accessibility of the location in terms of public transport and proximity to facilities and services. Adopting flexible standards through the options therefore recognises that where car use is necessary, it will be appropriate to maintain parking standards to support communities, ensuring access to services, facilities and employment.</p> <p>Furthermore, where sustainable/active travel opportunities are present (e.g. in larger centres such as Grantham and the market towns), the planning of new developments offers an important opportunity to influence behaviour, as part of wider packages to encourage modal shift and promoting walkable neighbourhoods.</p> <p>However, in some cases, residents may respond to a restricted number of parking spaces by parking on-road, which can also cause problems in respect of localised traffic congestion (impeding both safe cyclists and walkers – including those with mobility challenges i.e. mobility scooters and wheelchair users), and impact on the public realm. Potential issues can though be considered and addressed through the flexible approach taken forward through Option P2.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that Option P2 is best performing, meeting the needs of individual development proposals and supporting active/sustainable travel where possible, whilst offering the flexibility to reflect local circumstances.</p>	1	2
Health and wellbeing	<p>Option P2 will do more to support health and wellbeing through facilitating a flexible approach to parking provision. In this respect, through delivering an approach to parking which reflects local circumstances, the option will enable parking provision to be tailored to maximise sustainable transport use and healthier modes of travel whilst also ensuring that accessibility is secured for residents to key services and facilities. The option also has increased potential to respond to local road safety issues, including those linked to parking provision.</p>	1	2

Option P1: Provide priority for car parking within new development proposals including private driveways, garages and parking courts

Option P2: Allow parking standards to be developed flexibly on a case-by-case basis taking into account the needs of the development, area and local communities.

<p>Transport</p>	<p>It is recognised that parking is a sensitive and contentious area for many communities. This reflects the importance of the private vehicle in South Kesteven, particularly outside of higher tier settlements where sustainable travel opportunities are limited. Option P2 therefore provides more opportunity for providing appropriate parking provision on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the accessibility of the location in terms of public transport and proximity to facilities and services. Adopting flexible standards through the options therefore recognises that where car use is necessary, it will be appropriate to maintain parking standards to support communities, ensuring access to services, facilities and employment.</p> <p>Furthermore, where sustainable/active travel opportunities are present (e.g. in larger centres such as Grantham and the market towns), the planning of new developments offers an important opportunity to influence behaviour, as part of wider packages to encourage modal shift and promoting walkable neighbourhoods.</p> <p>However, in some cases, residents may respond to a restricted number of parking spaces by parking on-road, which can also cause problems in respect of localised traffic congestion (impeding both safe cyclists and walkers – including those with mobility challenges i.e. mobility scooters and wheelchair users), and impact on the public realm. Potential issues can though be considered and addressed through the flexible approach taken forward through Option P2.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that Option P2 is best performing, meeting the needs of individual development proposals and supporting active/sustainable travel where possible, whilst offering the flexibility to reflect local circumstances.</p>	<p>1 2</p>
<p>Economic vitality</p>	<p>Adopting a ‘case-by-case’ approach through Option P2 would help ensure that locational constraints and opportunities are weighed up through decision making (i.e. good access to sustainable/active travel modes in towns vs limited accessibility and anticipated long-term car reliance in the rural hinterlands). This has the potential to help support the economic and community vitality of town and village centres in the District through delivering parking provision which 1) appropriately considers the need to support the quality of the public realm and local distinctiveness through limiting the impacts of traffic, congestion and parking provision whilst 2) recognising the specific accessibility needs of each settlement.</p> <p>Within employment land provision, the application of parking standards on a case-by-case basis through Option P2 increases the potential to deliver parking which meets specific economic needs through enabling a consideration of the likely accessibility needs of each location and its economic function.</p>	

5. Next steps

- 5.1 This Interim SA Report accompanies the current consultation on the South Kesteven Local Plan Review (*South Kesteven District Council Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Report*).
- 5.2 Following the receipt of consultation responses, the draft LPR will be prepared by SKDC and released for Regulation 18 consultation. Development of the draft LPR will be informed by the findings of this Interim SA Report, representations made through the current consultation and the outcomes of further evidence base studies prepared to inform the LPR.
- 5.3 A central element of the development of the draft LPR will be the appraisal of further alternative options for the Local Plan Review through the SA process. A key element of this process will be to undertake appraisal of more detailed development strategy options, including strategic site allocation options and policy options. Alongside this process, a site assessment will be undertaken for the SA, as well as a 'points of the compass' appraisal which identifies the key constraints around each of the larger settlements in South Kesteven.
- 5.4 To support the draft LPR, a further Interim SA Report will be prepared. The Interim SA Report (2), which will be presented for consultation alongside the draft LPR, will present the information required by the SEA Regulations.
- 5.5 In line with the SEA Regulations, the SA Report will answer the three questions:
 - What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
 - Including with regards to the consideration of 'reasonable alternatives'
 - What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the policies currently proposed for the LPR, as presented in the draft LPR document
 - What are the next steps for plan making?
- 5.6 These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which set out 'the information to be provided within the [environmental] report'.
- 5.7 It is currently anticipated that Regulation 18 consultation on the draft LPR and accompanying Interim SA Report (2) will take place in September 2022.
- 5.8 Following the receipt of consultation responses, the LPR will be updated and released by SKDC for Regulation 19 consultation with a full SA Report. This is anticipated to take place in April 2023.
- 5.9 Once the period for representations on the Regulation 19 version of the LPR document / SA Report has finished, the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by SKDC, which will then consider whether, in light of representations received, the plan can still be deemed 'sound'. If this is the case, the LPR will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination, alongside a statement setting out the main issues raised during the consultation. The Council will also submit the SA Report alongside it.
- 5.10 At Examination, the Inspector will consider representations (alongside the SA Report) before then reporting back. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the LPR, these will be prepared (and undergo SA) and will then be subject to consultation (with an SA Report Addendum published alongside).
- 5.11 Once found to be 'sound', the LPR will be formally adopted by SKDC. At the time of adoption, a SA 'Statement' must be published that sets out (amongst other elements) "the measures decided concerning monitoring the Plan".

This page is intentionally blank.

